

Serving children aged 2 through 21 with intensive ABA therapy in-home and our centers.

Message from Dr. Macatee

Hearts and flowers fill the air as we enter the month of Valentine bliss. Our Kaleidoscope family loves this time of year as celebrations that focus on positivity envelop our programming. Nothing changes this year, albeit many of us might be celebrating friendships virtually. Making us smile, however, is the fact that our Kaleidoscope ABA centers continue to flourish while offering us the impetus to practice social skills.

The ability to act as a positive role model is our Kaleidoscope vision this month. We see this on a daily basis with our center support staff as they tirelessly embolden children to be their best selves. In fact, we couldn't be any prouder of their determination and commitment this year despite the challenges that we all faced. In addition, our internal K-ABA staff develops concrete goals and objectives that encourage children to understand integrity, as well as identify what personal aspirations they have when it comes to role models. Matching personal interests with effective role modeling can bring positive change. I truly believe that it's never too late to do the next right thing, especially when you have the opportunity to make an impact in one's life and actions.

Please take some time to enjoy our last full month of, what we hope to be the last, cold weather and beauty of winter. Bring some hearts into that and we have a delicious peppermint of red and winter white. Why not add a little evergreen, a cool blue sky with an orange sunrise to end with a rainbow of colorful beginnings? Kaleidoscope is ready to ride the sled with you onto the hills of life. This is the time; we are excited for the future.

Warmly,

TaraColleen Macatee, MFT, Psy.D.
Executive Director



What I Have Learned From Individuals on the Spectrum

Brenda Smith Myles has been a long-time presenter for Autism Awareness Centre Inc. for the past 17 years. "To learn about autism, I listened and asked questions when I could. It is that simple."

What have individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder taught me?

Individuals with autism are not broken.

People with autism have a neurology that responds in specific ways to the environment, or in other words, their nervous system functions differently. They have unique sensory experiences, a variety of learning styles, and challenges in self-regulation. These are all related to the autism neurology. In many outdated therapies and mindsets, the goal was to "fix" autism. In reality, there is nothing to be repaired. Individuals with autism simply see the world from a different, often inspiring, point of view. We can help children by giving them the best tools to help them with their challenges and trying to see the world from their point of view.

Individuals with autism are empathetic.

Autistic people have empathy. In fact, many of the autistic people I know are very empathetic. I would describe some of my autistic friends as being overly empathetic. A lack of empathy often comes from a lack of understanding. We all want to understand each other. I have a friend with autism who broke her arm but did not experience much pain from the injury. She was surprised to hear that when I had previously suffered a broken arm, I was in severe pain. It was important for each of us to understand that although we had broken arms in common, our experiences were different. This is where empathy is derived - from understanding another person's experience. As it related to autism, it can be difficult for neurotypical individuals to understand the

Continued...

autistic experience and vice versa. I have learned that individuals with autism do have empathy. In fact, they often understand the experiences of others far better than a neurotypical individual understands the autistic experience.

Nothing is really obvious.

In many of my lectures, presentations and books, I have spent some time talking about the importance of ensuring that individuals on the spectrum understand the “hidden curriculum”. These are the unwritten rules and expectations that are often unclear to people with autism. I have finally realized that the items covered by the hidden curriculum are often poorly worded, misleading, and sometimes amusing. For example, the following is wording on an actual sign found in a bathroom: “Toilet out of order, please use floor below.” The sign really means to use the restroom located on the next floor or story down. But is that what the sign really says? I appreciate my friend, Judy Endow, for bringing this to my attention. Is it up to people with autism to understand hidden meanings, or is it up to those without autism to be more obvious?

Individuals with autism are accommodating.

We constantly talk about accommodations that we make for people on the spectrum, and we are proud of this fact. For example, we posted a visual schedule and we lowered the television volume. Have you ever stopped, however, to think about how accommodating individuals with autism are? From the time we get out of bed in the morning to the time we go back to bed at night, individuals with autism are adjusting to the neurotypical world. Among other things, they have to deal with the following:

- how we present information (verbally vs visually)
- how much loudness and light are needed in the classroom
- how we use nonliteral words to explain things
- numerous unanticipated changes

People with autism make life-challenging accommodations all the time without complaint. I am in awe of the kindness shown.

Individuals with autism have limitless potential.

Most innovation has occurred because of the efforts of people who think differently, or of people who have inspired others to think differently. It is up to all of us to provide our children with the support needed to reach their full potential. Think of all that autistic people could accomplish to make this world a better place.

So what have individuals with autism taught me? They have taught me to be a better human being.

For more information: <http://bit.ly/aboutbrendasmithmyles>



Animal Pancakes

Ingredients for 4 pancakes

- **6 cups pancake mix, prepared**
 - **Strawberries, blueberries, banana, and chocolate chips for decoration**
1. Prepare pancake mix per box instructions.
 2. Heat a nonstick pan or pancake griddle on medium heat. For large pancakes, pour 1 cup (235 ml) of batter onto the pan. For small pancakes, pour a little less than ¼ cup (60 ml) of batter onto the pan. For medium pancakes, pour ½ cup (80 ml) of batter onto the pan.
 3. Allow to cook until bubbles form and begin to pop all around the pancake. The pancake will also lose its shiny sheen and begin to look more matte. Flip and cook on the other side for 2-3 minutes, or until the bottom is lightly browned.
 4. For the lion pancake above, you'll need 1 large pancake, 1 small pancake, sliced strawberries for the mane and nose, blueberries for the eyes, and chocolate chips for the mouth.
 6. For the owl pancake, you'll need 1 large pancake, sliced bananas for the eyes and feathers, blueberries for the eyes, and sliced strawberries for the beak and wings.
 7. For the pig pancake, you'll need 1 large pancake, 1 small pancake, chocolate chips for the snout, blueberries for the eyes, and sliced strawberries for the ears.
 8. Make your favorite animal pancakes and top with syrup, or another favorite pancake topping.
 9. Enjoy!



More Details: <http://bit.ly/funpancakes>



Kaleidoscope

ABA Therapy Services

Established 15 years ago, Kaleidoscope has a successful history of providing services to children and adults. Kaleidoscope ABA provides evidenced based ABA therapy treatment developed and overseen by Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs). We offer center-based and home-based ABA therapy services.

Delivered through an Exclusive Partnership with:

Cleveland Clinic Children's Center for Autism



Delaware

Autism Treatment Centers

Foulkstone Plaza · 1405 Foulk Road
Wilmington, DE 19803

In-Home & Community Therapy

New Castle · Sussex · Kent

Phone: 877-ABA-0399

www.KFSABA.org



www.facebook.com/kfsaba

Delaware Family Friendly Activities

Wednesday – Sunday 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

The Brandywine Zoo is open with FREE ADMISSION for February!

<http://bit.ly/visittthedezoo>

Fall & Winter: Tuesday–Friday, 2:30–4:30 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 12:30–4:30 pm

Winterthur Touch-it Exhibit room

<http://bit.ly/wintherthurkids>

Available anytime

The Lost Princess of Oz-Podcasts

<https://dechildrenstheatre.org/>

Available anytime

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library FREE BOOKS Ages 0-5

<https://lib.de.us/imagination>



Making Strides in Delaware!

We are accepting admissions for in-home and in-center! Call us today at 877-222-0399.

Delaware Employee Spotlight



Dr. Tara Colleen Macatee is our Executive Director. She is technically an employee in EVERY office but we wanted to take a moment and share some information with you about her. She has over 15 years' experience working in residential facilities, group homes and outpatient clinics with people of varying abilities. Dr. Macatee has worked with all age groups and specializes in the area of Autism and Intellectual Disabilities. She is also an adjunct professor at local colleges and universities. Dr. Macatee has a Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Counseling and a Doctoral Degree in Clinical Psychology with a concentration in Assessment.

Fun Fact: Tara Colleen loves to garden and rented a 25 x 25 community garden plot that yielded all the tomatoes the family needed for the summer. Twenty-five plants in all!