

Joshua Center Newsletter

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A Bowl-a-thon to Remember!

Register your family today and have a great day with all of the Joshua Center friends. Follow this link http://www.joshuacenter.com/bowl_nano.htm Your support for the Joshua Center not only helps your family, but hundreds of others dealing with neurological disorders. Talking with other parents at this event gives you hope. Thanks everyone for all your support. These kids are the greatest!

Joshua Center University

The Joshua Center University is already a great success. The information is for parents, teachers, school counselors, family – anyone who wants to learn more about the disorders and how to help these kids. You can access the courses by following this link. <http://www.joshuacenter.com/training.htm>

2010 Camp Dates – 2nd Grade Day Camp too

Camp dates for 2009 are June 13th – 17th. You can register at <http://www.joshuacenter.com/camp.htm>. If you would like to arrange payments call Sarah at 816-763-7605.

Social Skills Outreach

We will soon be starting social skills classes in the Blue Springs area for kids in grades K-5. If interested register your child and indicate you are interested in Blue Springs. As soon as we are able to identify other areas and churches we will start classes in other areas. If you are interested in other areas, have teaching background and would like to help please contact Becky at becky@joshuacener.com. We will pay instructors, provide training and supplies. We are also interested in volunteer support to assist with the classes. High school seniors and up may contact Becky.

Conferences in Kansas City

Follow this link <http://www.joshuacenter.com/conference.htm> to register for the conference for teachers, parents and mental health professionals featuring Mike Sumler and Becky Ottinger. If you are new to the Joshua Center this is a great way to get the best information. It is also a wonderful opportunity to educate family.

Mike Sumler

The kids are returning to school, most reluctantly. This can be a very difficult transition. Mike Sumler is here to help you and your child get through this often difficult time. Consistency is the secret to the success. Don't wait until you and your child are in a crisis. Making an appointment now before the struggles start up again

will give your child the confidence to get through. It takes a village and that's why we are here.

Autism and Self-awareness

Scientists have produced evidence that self-awareness is a big problem for people with autism.

Sophisticated scans showed the brains of people with autism are less active when engaged in self-reflective thought. The findings provide a neurological insight into why people with autism tend to struggle in social situations. The study, by the University of Cambridge, appears in the journal *Brain*. "**Navigating social interactions with others requires keeping track of the relationship between oneself and others.**" (Michael Lombardo University of Cambridge) Autism has long been considered a condition of extreme egocentrism. But research has shown the problem is people with the condition have trouble thinking about and making sense of themselves.

The researchers used functional magnetic resonance scans to measure brain activity in 66 male volunteers, half of whom had been diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder. The volunteers were asked to make judgments either about their own thoughts, opinions, preferences, or physical characteristics, or about someone else's, in this case the Queen. By scanning the volunteers' brains as they responded to these questions, the researchers were able to visualize differences in brain activity between those with and without autism. They were particularly interested in part of the brain called the ventromedial pre-frontal cortex (vmPFC) - known to be active when people think about themselves. The researchers found this area of the brain was more active when typical volunteers were asked questions about themselves compared with when they were thinking about the Queen. However, in autism this brain region responded equally, irrespective of whether they were thinking about themselves or the Queen.

Researcher Michael Lombardo said the study showed that the autistic brain struggled to process information about the self. He said: "Navigating social interactions with others requires keeping track of the relationship between oneself and others. In some social situations it is important to notice that 'I am similar to you', while in other situations it might be important to notice that 'I am different to you'. The atypical way the autistic brain treats self-relevant information as equivalent to information about others could derail a child's social development, particularly in understanding how they relate to the social world around them."

Dr. Gina Gómez de la Cuesta, of the National Autistic Society, described the study as "interesting". "We know many people with autism do want to interact with others and make friends but have difficulty recognizing or understanding other people's thoughts and feelings. This research has shown that people with autism may also have difficulty understanding their own thoughts and feelings and the brain mechanisms underlying this."

Story from BBC NEWS:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/health/8407857.stm>

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