

RITEVIEW

Winter 2021



Kristin Uhler, Ph.D.
Kelley Family/Schlessman
Family Scottish Rite Masons
Chair in Childhood Language
Disorders

I like to reflect on what I am grateful for and what I have learned with each New Year. In 2020, the lessons I learned were unexpected, and dare I say, unprecedented. It has been almost one year since we had to pivot our services from being primarily in-person to primarily telepractice to minimize gaps in service provision. We have all faced numerous challenges this past year and have learned so much and at a neck-breaking pace. We went from being unaware of how COVID-19 was spread to having vaccines. While we still have a long way to go, as we begin to assess what the "new normal" will look like with caution, I am amazed by our team's human spirit and resiliency, and each of you I have the good fortune to work with. I am humbled as I reflect on the remarkable services provided daily by the talented and skilled speech-language pathologists, learning therapists, and early interventionists in all RiteCare programs during a global pandemic. I am incredibly grateful for each of you and our partnership with the Scottish Rite Foundation's Board of Trustees and Bryant Harris' dedication to serving families and children in Colorado, as well as the twenty Masons around the State who serve on the Foundation's Appraisal/Assessment Committees.

I hope this issue of the RiteView leaves you with the same joy as it has me and a sense of heartfelt gratification as you read about the joyous celebrations and journeys shared within these pages. During the challenges of the past year, I think it is imperative to share the "wins" to balance out the trying times. I am appreciative of all the professional and personal stories shared.

I look forward to continuing to work and grow these programs together with you as we all strive to improve the services we provide for the children and families throughout the State. As always, thanks for your dedication and work in our mission of serving children and their families.

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RiteView 2021

Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado Update



A look back. Last year was a year of many changes. The Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado's largest change was perhaps the changing of the guard with Illustrious Brother Vern Ingraham retiring in June. Vern was a tireless advocate for the Scottish Rite Foundation. He was nominated for the position by the Sovereign Grand Inspector General Dwight A. Hamilton in 2000. Vern had served the United States Government, first with the United States Airforce and then with the General Accounting Offices. Vern was a CPA and specialized in oil & gas royalties on Federal and Indian Land. Vern retired from Federal Service in 1998, so the Foundation was indeed lucky that Vern took on the new task, in 2000, of building the Scottish Rite Foundation to the amazing state it was in at the time of his retirement.

At the beginning of Vern's tenure with the Scottish Rite Foundation in 2000 the foundation had delivered over 14 million dollars in assistance to children at 4 locations in Colorado. By 2021, Vern had helped the foundation provide more than 43 million dollars to 14 different locations. During that time, the foundation added some facilities to its support network and lost a few facilities as populations and need shifted. The number of children served from 1953 to 2000 was almost 14,000 and as of this year over 22,000 children have received services. Services have expanded as the needs of Colorado's children have been identified and the Board of Trustees determined that they fit into the vision of the foundation to see "that all Colorado children with language disorders will have the opportunity to receive treatment and care." Vern's invaluable shepherding of the programs leaves a massive legacy to the state of Colorado.

A look forward. This year we look forward to recovery from the impact of a pandemic in the world. Children have been unable to attend regularly at school and this has caused them to lean on the RiteCare and community partners who work with the Scottish Rite Foundation. I have been inspired and amazed by the creativity of care providers. From telepractice to plexiglass dividers, creative scheduling and delivery of Treasure Chest materials, these providers have been tireless in ensuring that children still get the support they need. Some facilities saw huge increases in services and others saw significant decreases. I believe, as the country begins to recover, some of those levels will stabilize. What concerns me, however, is that isolation may have diminished the exposure to service offerings that new parents would have had previously in open social settings. There may be families in our communities who do not know about RiteCare and the support the Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado could provide to them. With this in mind, I have an ask. As you return to life outside our COVID bubbles, look for opportunities to speak with friends and neighbors and let them know about the opportunities for assistance in speech language services provided by the Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado. You never know how many lives you might change for the better with just a brief conversation.



The Piñon Project - Treasure Chest Program

The Treasure Chest Program at The Pinon Project Family Resource Center has made many adaptations over the past year to continue to serve families and their children during the COVID-19 pandemic. With the closing of many early education sites where Treasure Chests were usually distributed, Pinon Staff explored ways to reach out to families on social media and through other community programs to make sure children were still receiving services. Geof Byerly, Fatherhood Services Coordinator at The Pinon Project has continued delivering his program in a virtual format and has found a way to supplement his usual in-person services with The Treasure Chest Program. He reports:



As coordinator of the Fatherhood Program here at the Pinon Project Family Resource Center, I get to encourage dads to let their inner child out while at play with their children. It brought me great joy to hear one of the fathers that I have been working with ask for another Treasure Chest for his 4 year old son. Especially with COVID-19, this dad was especially grateful for activities to engage his son safely at home. As interest in the first set of materials began to wane, he knew he had only to ask for a new box to rekindle the child's interest. My suspicion is that it was dad that needed the fresh Treasure Chest to play with, not his son! The Fatherhood Program at Pinon is fortunate to be able to collaborate with the Treasure Chest Program in support of effective parenting and early language development.

Submitted by Maggie Tevault, Treasure Chest Program Coordinator





Children's Speech & Reading Center

Children's Speech and Reading Center (CSRC) finished strong at the end of 2020 with continued quality services for clients and families. CSRC transitioned to full time telepractice in only two days and went live on March 18th. Then beginning in July, CSRC transitioned to a hybrid model of services with both in-person as well as online services with ~25% in-person in clinic and ~75% telepractice. One parent whose child receives funding through the Scottish Rite Foundation wrote the following testimonial about the telepractice experience.

Tilly has just entered third grade and is being raised by a single Mom.

"I wanted to share the support that Children's Reading and Speech services have provided both my daughter and myself during the COVID-19 pandemic and school shut downs since March 2020.

The scholarship awarded to Tilly has allowed us to continue reading services since the March school closures, Tilly has continued meeting with her reading therapist at CSRC once a week since March 2020. This has allowed Tilly to continue to improve her reading skills and not regress due to lack of services. CSRC has helped her build confidence in reading and has helped her be ready for her 3rd grade year. The support offered by CSRC staff virtually has allowed us as a family to stay healthy and safe during the pandemic and see continued growth and learning for Tilly during these difficult times and the scholarship has eased my financial concerns as a single Mom.



We are forever grateful for the CSRC staff and services they provide and the genuine support they offer not only Tilly but to myself and our family." Julie

CSRC is planning to fully reopen the clinic for in-person therapy in the late spring. However, teletherapy will also be provided as requested. We are running our preliteracy through on-line currently and anticipate expanding our preliteracy groups to other locations to reach more client's needs once again. The clinic is currently in the process of searching for additional reading specialists to help support and run these preliteracy programs.

Submitted by: Andrea Orrison, RiteCare Program Director CSRC, Ft. Collins



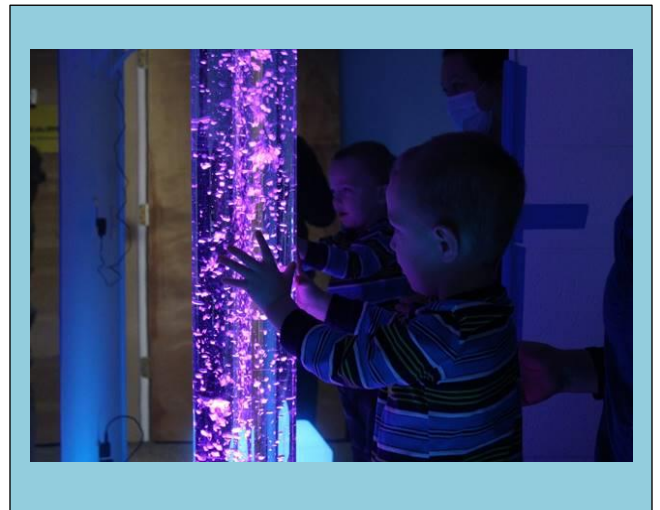
Montrose Memorial Hospital Fun new learning experience!

Hello from Montrose and Happy New Year! Here's hoping that 2021 is the beginning of the "old normal".

Our clinic is abiding by all the safety precautions required by our hospital. Some of these are that the clients and therapists are wearing masks during therapy, we are limiting the number of family members that can accompany the clients for their appointment, and everyone gets their temperature taken prior to entering the building. Our techs are diligent with cleaning rooms and materials between appointments. The most difficult change has been the elimination of small group sessions. Currently all appointments are individual, with only one child and therapist in a room during the session. We are conducting a few telehealth therapy sessions, but the majority of our therapy is face-to-face. We hope that in 2021 we can begin to work with small groups again. We are also looking forward to resuming our family get-togethers with our appraisal committee members. Our first one is tentatively scheduled for a July afternoon and ice cream.

The Mountain View Pediatric Rehab program at Montrose Memorial Hospital has been fortunate to have received generous grants from the Bonnie Langston Hughes Trust and San Juan Healthcare Foundation for program development. These grants, totaling \$16,000, have been used to equip a Sensory Room in our clinic. Although all children seem to enjoy the bubble tube and lights, it is especially calming for our children who are on the autism spectrum, those who have hyperactivity, and those who struggle with anxiety. What a learning experience it is for a child to discover that they can make the lights change color just by the push of a button. We are so grateful for this special room.

Submitted by: Patti Anderson, RiteCare Program Director, Montrose



In the Spotlight at Children's Hospital Colorado

Jaime Chadek, M.A., CCC- SLP

interviewed by Lisa Powers



Lisa: Tell me a little about yourself.

Jaime: I've been at CHCO for 4 years and specialize in treating kids on the autism spectrum, though I also pride myself on being a generalist. It wasn't until my mid-30s that I found my ultimate career match - becoming an SLP. Helping all children to find their voices and share their most

beautiful personalities with those they love and love them back is one of my greatest joys.

Lisa: If my child was to have you as a therapist, what could I expect?

Jaime: A family-focused approach. This means prioritizing goals that are meaningful to the child and his/her family as they live their everyday lives together with guidance from the developmental research in our field. A promise to make the therapeutic environment as comfortable and empowering as possible for the families I work with. A commitment to ensuring my presence in all moments, a high level of energy, and relentless creativity to motivate kids to achieve their goals AND have a lot of FUN in therapy...together.

Lisa: What is the funniest thing that has happened during your therapy sessions?

Jaime: The funniest? Oh boy. Something funny happens every day because, well, kids are just the best to be around. One of the most recent funnies was on Halloween, a holiday that I love celebrating at the hospital. I never shy away from an outrageous costume and a decorative therapy room. Last Halloween (2020), our clinic chose an "outer space" theme, and I was an alien. I created an alien spaceship light beam out of streamers in the corner of my therapy room, and in most sessions, pretended to "beam" myself up to my UFO. One of my kids was particularly nervous, though curious of the "beam," despite being an avid Star Wars fan. The child stared wide-eyed when I stood inside the streamers, and upon my 3-2-1 countdown, very quickly grabbed me by the hand, yelling "NOOOOOOOOO! Don't take her!"

Lisa: What is your most memorable therapy moment?

Jaime: After a year of intervention, a mom proudly sent me a video of her child finally imitating her actions in the song Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes. At the end, the child looked at his mother with a huge smile and initiated a big hug on her as if to say, "That was the best!" I immediately teared up. That kind of shared enjoyment is an ultimate human goal, and this child fully experienced it with his mom in that moment. Amazing!

Lisa: How has the Scottish Rite Foundation (SRF) impacted the care you provide?

Jaime: I'm a huge proponent of empowering parents to teach their kids how to communicate and connect. I'm currently certified in Hanen More Than Words and Hanen Talkability, which are parent training programs. These groups are only able to run with the support of Scottish Rite, as many insurances do not cover parent-focused intervention

Lisa: If you could have dinner with some of the SRF Masons, what restaurant would you want to take them to?

Jaime: Anywhere that has woodfired pizza. Love it!

Lisa: And what would you want to say to the SRF Masons?

Jaime: Not a Hanen training goes by that a parent isn't grateful for the knowledge and strategies they learn to best communicate with their child and to feel more socially connected with their child. Without Scottish Rite support, it would be much more difficult to create those beautiful connections. I'm thankful to be a part of these interactions and even more thankful for their support of them.

Submitted by: Lisa Powers, Associate Clinical Manager, Children's Hospital Colorado

St. Mary's Hospital, Grand Junction Embracing Change

Flexibility, adaptability, creativity, sensitivity, resilience, and appreciativeness are the newest vocabulary words that describe the therapists, the clients and their families, who have been attending the St. Mary's Life Center RiteCare speech and language therapy program, during the past 11 months.

The pandemic has definitely made us think creatively to design "COVID safe" therapy practices. We have implemented changes from the minute we greet our client to the time we send them home with their caregivers.

The Greetings/The Goodbyes

Before COVID we previously met the child and family member(s) in the lobby, the child, or the child and the family walked to the treatment room, therapy activities ensued, and the families left the building together, with their home activities.

After COVID --only one family member is allowed to accompany the child into the therapy room and no siblings are allowed, limiting the parents participation in the actual therapy session. If the parent cannot attend, the therapist or therapy aide often greets the child in the parking lot, the child is COVID screened, engages in therapy and the child is returned to the parent, in the parking lot with a home program and the therapist reviews the plan at curbside, with the caregivers.

Telepractice

Before COVID did not exist at St. Mary's Life Center

After COVID Telepractice is actively used every day for both group and individual therapy sessions. Some children are seen only through telehealth, other families are primarily scheduled for in-clinic therapy sessions but when they can't get to the clinic due to a family member being ill, the family is under quarantine, the car has broken down, the roads are bad due to inclement weather or there is a new baby in the house, we have switched in clinic sessions to telehealth for a short intervals or even just one session and then switched back to in-clinic treatment. This has provided increased continuity of care.



Groups

Before COVID Group therapy sessions were abundant. We provided 3 to 5 group therapy sessions per day, every day of the week. Group therapy was offered for children 2 years to 16 years of age, the groups available included emphasis on a variety of diagnosis, including speech sound development, receptive and expressive language, attention deficit / executive function and social skill/pragmatics.

After COVID The first few weeks after reopening of our program, no group therapy was offered. We gradually added groups using telepractice and we currently have a mix of in-clinic and telepractice groups therapy sessions. We have a total of 7 in person group therapy sessions with a maximum of 3 children in a group, using plexiglass partitions between each child and the therapist, the majority of the groups with just 2 children. We also have 3 groups that are designed to have 1 child in-the-clinic with the therapist and the other children in the group participate using the telehealth connection.

It has been a challenging year. However, we have learned to view this experience as an opportunity to expand our delivery models and are looking forward to 2021. Our hope is to return to the best practices we knew before COVID 19, as well as, continue to add to our repertoire of skills and treatment paradigms, to provide quality speech and language therapy to the children in our community.

Submitted by Amy Neilsen, RiteCare Program Director, Grand Junction

Program Updates - University of Northern Colorado

The UNC SLP Program successfully closed out another fall semester and our second-year students have all been placed for their school and medical externships beginning this spring. Our first-year students are gearing up to take over providing all of the clinical services for our community and are excited to begin another semester of working with families through the Greeley Treasure Chest Program. During their first semester in the program, the students participate in either the Greeley Treasure Chest Program or Project L.I.F.E. (Literacy for Immigrant Families Everyday) which supports immigrant and migrant preschoolers and their families. One of the classes they take their first semester is the Language Disorders in Early Childhood and Preschool course Dr. Kim Murza teaches. They complete three journal reflections about their community engaged learning experiences during the semester which overwhelmingly support the importance of these programs in their clinical education. Snippets from these journals are provided here to illustrate the impact the Scottish Rite Foundation continues to have on our graduate students:

- *“Project Treasure Chest has taught me that it is not scary to engage with parents because they want what you want, which is increased engagement with the child.”*
- *“Even though I am a student, and will continue to learn from others, I feel like I am making a difference and that is all I want to be able to do.”*
- *“I am learning that, while I am a work in progress, I do have what it takes to become an excellent clinician, and I do have knowledge worth sharing. I’m also learning that leading therapy is like exercising a muscle – I become a little stronger, and it, therefore, becomes a little easier over time.”*
- *“At the beginning of the semester, I dreaded the sessions and was very nervous beforehand, because I felt like what I was saying wasn’t worth their time. As a first-semester graduate student, what could I possibly know that was worth sharing? Now that we are at the end of the semester, I don’t want to pass my parent on to another clinician! I feel like I have bonded with this family, and it has been a privilege to spend time in their lives. I feel like even though I don’t always have the advice they are seeking, it is okay to not know. I am comfortable admitting I don’t have all the answers, but I know how to research the issues and provide evidence-based suggestions the next time we meet. For these reasons, the Treasure Chest community engagement project exceeded my expectations.”*

Two of these fabulous first-year students received recognition this fall for their Daniel’s Fund UNC Ethics Video Competition submissions. Caroline Schaff is taking over the role of graduate assistant for the Treasure Chest Program and won first place for the College of Natural and Health Sciences in the competition and her video was also named the “Overall Most Creative Entry” for the entire university! Whitney Weaver, another amazing first-year student, won third place for the college. Both Caroline and Whitney supported a family this past fall in the Greeley Treasure Chest Program and are looking forward to continuing to develop their clinical skills this semester. You can watch their winning videos here: [Caroline Schaff’s video](#) [Whitney Weaver’s video](#)

Submitted by Kim Murza, RiteCare Program Coordinator, UNC



Memorial Regional Health Rehabilitation Center Feeling Grateful!

This Winter we are feeling grateful to continue as partners with the Scottish Rite Foundation at Memorial Regional Health. Three children have been blessed with services through the Foundation, and countless others have benefitted from the partnership and trainings the Foundation has provided us with Children's Hospital Colorado (CHCO) and the Western Slope therapists. Notably, we have been able to connect with therapists at CHC and on the Western Slope to network, learn and grow together, especially in the area of alternative augmentative communication (AAC). Non-verbal children are being gifted the opportunity to find their voices thanks to training received and connections made through the Scottish Rite Foundation. We are excited to continue to grow in this next quarter. –

Aiden was diagnosed with speech delay, for which he needed speech therapy. We decided on therapy at Memorial Regional Health with Colleen, but were disappointed to find our insurance would not cover speech therapy for him. Thankfully, the wonderful women at Memorial Regional Health were able to find the scholarship through the Scottish Rite Foundation. This has helped pay for Aiden's therapy and helped him to make the progress he has made so far. When Aiden first started speech therapy, he had a very limited vocabulary and was only able to speak 2 or 3 word sentences. Now, his vocabulary has expanded significantly, as well as he is able to speak sentences more like the children his own age. Colleen also helped to get Aiden the OT treatment he needs. We cannot speak highly enough of the staff at Memorial Regional Health with all they have done for Aiden and we cannot express how thankful we are to be a part of the Scottish Rite Foundation which helps Aiden to get the speech therapy treatment he needs. - Alesha



Submitted by: Colleen Boyle, Speech Language Pathologist, Memorial Regional Health, Craig

Children's Colorado Pueblo

Successful Transition from in-person to Telepractice in Pueblo

How has Scottish Rite helped your family in providing therapy for your son?

Scottish Rite has made it possible for my son to continue speech therapy when my insurance stopped covering his visits because we had met our maximum number of visits. Although insurance ran out, Xander was not quite ready to be done with speech therapy.

How is therapy going via on-line therapy (Telepractice)? Did your son see Amy in – person before transitioning to telepractice?

When we started speech therapy, we would meet Mrs. Amy in her office for his sessions. Due to COVID-19, we now participate in telepractice speech therapy. Although we miss seeing Mrs. Amy, the telepractice sessions have been great! Mrs. Amy had used different strategies to bring the excitement to speech therapy sessions.



What are some surprises you have experienced that were unexpected?

Some surprises that we have experienced that were unexpected were getting packages in the mail of materials, so they can create crafts and do activities in the telepractice sessions. Xander loves getting mail and is always excited to see what Mrs. Amy is going to have him do for his next session.

What advice would you give to other families on how to make telepractice successful for their child?

In order for telepractice to be successful, the environment needs to be ready for each session. We make sure that we are logged on early in case there's any technical issues. I make sure the room is silent so that Mrs. Amy can hear how Xander says words. My littlest child is either with my husband upstairs while we are downstairs or she is quietly watching a movie on her Kindle Fire.

Are there specific advantages to telehealth over in-person?

The pros of telepractice are that we do not need to travel (weather, running late), the level of creativity exceeds expectations, there is still story reading, activities, games, and fun. My son loves that he can stay in his pajamas. The in-person sessions were fun in that Xander was able to make cookies and play games, but I truly believe that Mrs. Amy has gone above and beyond to make Xander's speech sessions one of a kind.

How has Amy's professionalism and experience as an SLP helped with this process?

Mrs. Amy has always been professional and her experience is the reason that my son is speaking better every day. She encourages him and is so patient with him, even if he gets frustrated. She makes it fun and has developed a relationship with Xander where he responds very well to corrections, changes and challenges. We have gone to many places for speech therapy and Mrs. Amy has exceeded my expectations as a speech therapist! She is one of the best in her field!

Cheerfully,
Jamie (mom to Xander)

Submitted by: Stacey Bernal, RiteCare Program Director, Pueblo

First Steps Camp – Virtual Program Children’s Hospital Colorado

This past fall, after 10+ years of offering an in-person First Steps Camp at Easterseals Rocky Mountain Village, the program pivoted to a new format. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the program was modified, but fortunately, successful outcomes remained.

No more campfires and trips down the zipline. Instead, families and clinicians met weekly for 6 weeks via secure video conference platform, Microsoft Teams. Prior to the camp program, families received a package filled with goodies: the program binder, materials for trainings, and a copy of the book, The Birthday Queen by Audrey Wood. Presentations still focused on training families on how to support their child with a new speech generating device and were able to connect with other families who have similar concerns and experiences. Despite the virtual format, the families did connect and cheered each other on as they shared their successes each week. Families had the opportunity to brainstorm communication roadblocks with Children’s speech therapists and psychologist.

Overall, five families learned how to communicate and develop the communication of their child. Results of pre and post surveys showed families gained the same educational benefit regardless of the format. Because of this program’s success, the Children’s Hospital Colorado, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Team plans to hold another 6 week program in Spring 2021.



**Pictured: top left: Kathy, top right: Lori , parents of AAC users
Bottom left: Caroline Woeber, bottom right: Katie Brellenthin, Speech-Language Pathologists**

Submitted by: Caroline Woeber, Speech Language Pathologist, Children’s Hospital Colorado

