

Monthly WMLC Perspectives Highlights - March 2014



WMLC Social Skills Groups

Written by: Kate Doman, Director of Social Skills Programming

West Metro Learning Connections' curricula teach about the “hidden social agenda,” but do you know the “hidden” potential of participation in WMLC's social skills groups? Read on to learn about the benefits included with enrollment at WMLC:

1. At an **Intake Conference** parents will meet with our Intake Specialist to discuss and share information to precisely place their child in a social skills class based on age, strengths and needs.
2. Parents and caregivers may attend a **Parent Orientation Meeting** to learn what social skills classes are like for their child and how they can provide continuity at home as well as an opportunity to learn about accessing all of WMLC's other supports.
3. At WMLC we create a **Client Summary Sheet** which includes personal goals for staff to know about a child while at WMLC in addition to goals being worked on by their group. We do this based on reviewing enrollment forms, IEP's, school and medical evaluations and any other documents provided by the family.
4. With consent, WMLC's Intake Specialist will schedule a **School Visit** at the child's school, to address areas of need when participating in a social skills group.
5. Upon request, WMLC's Director of Social Skills Programming will attend a client's annual **IEP Meeting**.
6. Prior to the first day of class you will be provided with a beginning of term **Welcome Packet** which includes a **Social Agenda** to pre-teach and reduce anxiety.
7. Social Skills Programming for middle and high school clients incorporate **Therapeutic Recreation Outings** carefully planned by our Director of Therapeutic Recreation. Preschool and Elementary level classes include **Guided Play** and **Choice Time**. These meticulously planned activities provide clients the opportunity to generalize social skills across settings.
8. Quintessential, **Highly Skilled Staff** provide **Direct Instruction** for social

- understanding in classes at all levels.
9. We achieve an exceptional **Client to Staff Ratio** at 3:1.
 10. We know the importance of **Continuing Education** for staff and deliver on-going staff training.
 11. As a part of the West Metro Way, teaching staff prepare client-specific **Feedback Sheets** given to parents after each class. At WMLC this includes a lesson summary, lesson objectives, and **Skills to Practice** at home. Feedback sheets also provide comments reflecting each child's daily participation. Teachers are available after class to discuss daily feedback.
 12. Parents and caregivers can attend and gain knowledge from our **Strategy Central** trainings. These are offered each term and are tailored to current ASD-related topics.
 13. Upon completion of each term, teachers will prepare **Progress Reviews** for each participant.
 14. We look forward to sitting down with parents for **Conferences** at the completion of each term where we go through the Progress Review.
 15. As follow-up, we always provide **Recommendations** for the upcoming WMLC term.



SOCIAL SKILLS THERAPY
HELPING KIDS FIT IN & SHINE

Social Skills Therapy

Spring Term Course Offerings

Save your spot now... There is still time to [register](#)! We are offering a wide selection of courses starting at preschool age all the way through young adulthood. We hope to see you this Spring!

Spring Term begins on Monday, March 10, 2014 and runs through Saturday, May 17, 2014.

Click [here](#) to view the Spring Registration



Metro Friendship Foundation Gala

[Metro Friendship Foundation](#) (MFF) is a non-profit organization that provides scholarships to qualifying individuals on the Autism Spectrum who are seeking social skills

Form

Click [here](#) to view the Spring Course Catalog

Click [here](#) to view the Spring Term Calendar

Contact Mary Wyatt for information regarding registration at mwyatt@wmlc.biz



Edina Center Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

The ribbon cutting ceremony at WMLC Edina was a success, and a lot of fun! Thank you to the Edina Chamber of Commerce, and to our colleagues from the chamber that came to welcome WMLC into the community. We look forward to continuing our mission and to the partnerships we can build in the future. To all of our friends that have not visited WMLC Edina, we invite you to schedule a tour and see the facilities.

development.

Life is not black and white and neither are the lives of kids with Autism. We have the power to rewrite their future... A Truman Capote inspired masquerade ball.

Imagine yourself walking into the Plaza Hotel in New York City, November 28, 1966, and "dancing holes in your soles" with the "grooviest" celebrities of the decade. Join us as we re-live one of the 60's greatest social spectacles while **empowering kids with Autism to lead fulfilling and productive lives.**

Dress:

Gentlemen: Black Tie

Ladies: Black or White Dress

Masks are optional...but encouraged!

Click [here](#) to order your tickets today!

To find more specific information regarding the gala click [here](#).

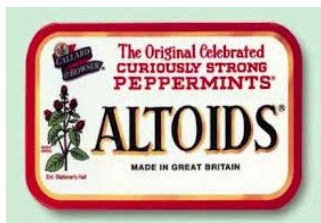
Do you know someone who you think should be nominated to receive the MFF award of the year? Click [here](#) to fill out an application.

Not able to attend the Gala but you are still interested in helping individuals on the Autism Spectrum? Click [here](#) for a Silent Auction Donation form.



Sensory Strategy

Last month the topic was hand fidgets, this month our focus is on mouth fidgets. WMLC uses mouth fidgets in both our [Lotus Specialized Learning Center Program](#) and in our [social skills groups](#). Mouth fidgets can be helpful for individuals of all ages. They are used to help individuals focus and can be used as an appropriate way to alleviate stress. Below I have provided a few examples of mouth fidgets that we have found to be beneficial for our clients.



Monthly WMLC Sleepover

Drop-off: [Saturday, March 15th](#)
at 5:00pm – Pickup:
Sunday, March 16th at 10:00am

Join us for a sleepover at **WMLC Excelsior!** This is a great opportunity to enjoy some free time to hang out with friends. At about 6:30, we will eat dinner together as a group. After dinner, we will have more free time for board games, video games, or a movie before lights out. In the morning, staff will prepare breakfast and we will have even more time to hang out with friends after we pack up our things! (Ages 8+)

Outing Goals: Cooperative play skills and sportsmanlike conduct, verbal support to peers, reciprocal conversations relevant to activities, independence and responsibility.

Sleepover Cost: \$160



SOCIAL SKILLS THERAPY
HELPING KIDS FIT IN & SHINE
Bold Connections

Join us on the first Saturday of every month from 7:00 to 9:00 for our Bold Connections Group at WMLC Edina! This event is open to ages 16 and up.

Items to Bring: Sleeping Bag, Pillow, Toothbrush

Optional Items to Bring: Games (electronic games are okay)

E-mail Mary Wyatt at mwyatt@wmlc.biz for more information.



April Friday Open Social

Join us on Friday, April 4th from 5:00 to 9:00 for our Friday Open Social at WMLC Excelsior! This event is open to children ages 8 and up.

Friday Open Socials provide social opportunities to build and strengthen new and old friendships. Participants have a great time playing games and doing activities with peers in a structured environment. Social interactions and communication among peers is facilitated by our highly trained staff while playing games. This is a great opportunity to hang out with friends. Minimum enrollment is three participants. All are welcome, but advance registration is required.

Contact Mary Wyatt at 952-474-0227 or by e-mail at mwyatt@wmlc.biz for more

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Contact Mary Wyatt at 952-474-0227 or by e-mail at mwyatt@wmlc.biz for more information



"Like" Us on Facebook

If you are interested in keeping up-to-date with all of the "goings on" at WMLC you can follow us on Facebook. You can find interesting stories, information about upcoming events and more. Click [here](#) to follow us!



App of the Month

ConversationBuilder™ (Pat. Pend.) is designed to help elementary aged children learn how to have multi-exchange conversations with their peers in a variety of social settings.

The auditory pattern of conversation is presented in a visual format to help students recognize and master the flow of conversation.

Students will learn when it is appropriate to introduce themselves, ask questions, make observations and change the subject of the conversation.

Click [here](#) for more information.



FAMILY SPEECH & THERAPY SERVICES

Family Speech & Therapy Services

Family Speech & Therapy Services provides [speech & language therapy](#) and [occupational therapy](#). They help children and adults with deficits in communication, self-help, gross motor, fine motor, sensory, or academic skills reach their fullest potential. They have

three separate locations, one of their locations is within WMLC Edina.

To find out more about Family Speech & Therapy Services click [here](#).

Check out their blog full of helpful information and ideas [here](#).



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Better Business Bureau



BBB
Rating: **A+**

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