



# the Achiever

## A VIRTUAL RAY OF LIGHT

Most of the Achievement Centers for Children's programs and services rely on face-to-face interaction and physical contact, so when Ohio's stay-at-home order was announced in March, our teachers, therapists, social workers and program staff started putting together packets of materials and reached out to clients via phone and email. Our IT team and program staff looked at telehealth options (e.g. Zoom) and quickly set us up to provide services remotely.

In response to the pandemic, our staff's dedication, determination and creativity shone through. We have had some real successes with telehealth . . .

- **Autism School**—Educational packets and learning materials were provided to students, along with devices for those without access to computers. Our teachers found creative ways to provide virtual learning and those services will continue through the summer.
- **Help Me Grow Home Visiting**—Using retention funds through the Ohio Department of Health, some parents were given phone cards, so they could keep in touch with us. Though they're not able to visit homes, our Help Me Grow staff is regularly connecting with clients. Hundreds of diaper packages were also purchased and delivered.
- **Early Childhood Mental Health**—Parents enjoyed seeing how well their child interacted during telehealth sessions. Our staff modeled ways to express difficult emotions, led fun physical exercises and worked with the children in a variety of ways.
- **Behavioral Health**—We reached out via telehealth to clients to help them manage emotions and stress. Telehealth allowed us to respond to client needs faster and more frequently, sometimes connecting outside of typical office hours. Children have enjoyed connecting to staff virtually.
- **Accent Social Work Services**—Our social workers provided practical assistance to families by connecting them to food banks, a diaper bank and even helping one parent find free legal advice so they could stay in their home through these trying times.
- **Social Emotional Learning Program (SEL)**—We provided materials and phone-based services to our childcare/preschool partners, offering remote services and helping them look ahead to a new school environment.
- **Technical Assistance Program (TAP)**—Our staff offered services to a pandemic childcare center. Parents and child care providers were offered at-home activities and virtual events, and we offered professional child care providers remote development training to keep them compliant.
- **Outpatient Therapy** (Speech, Occupational and Physical Therapies)—Telehealth helped us teach some parents who may have been observers during therapy sessions how to provide home-based activities for their child's therapy. A mother who had struggled to transfer her daughter from a wheelchair learned how to work with her. Now they're both proud that she can independently move in and out of her chair.
- **River Rock Adult Day Services**—Our "River Rockers" got to make their own lunch, using pizza making kits and live Zoom instruction from the friendly staff at Strongsville's Domino's Pizza. Their days are now filled with engaging, interactive activities.

Many of the families we serve have expressed appreciation for our flexibility and responsiveness. While nothing can replace one-on-one visits, our staff agrees that, with remote services now in place, we have a new tool to serve our clients well into the future.



## There's a Hitch in Our Get-Along...

Hi, Nick the horse here . . . I'm no "neigh-sayer," but, speaking for the "unemployed" horses of Camp Cheerful, we're a little concerned. We have enough horse sense to know that the cost of vet visits, shoes, bedding and food for the eleven of us can be pretty high. We're thrilled with the financial community support we get and will always be thankful.



So, why the long face? Well, our rider friends aren't with us, learning to balance while in the saddle, working core muscles or developing motor skills. Of course, having no programs going on at the barn means there's no revenue coming in. Our therapeutic horsemanship program has had a significant loss of revenue so far this year. To count that high would make my hoof pretty tired.

We're being cared for by Cory, Hannah, Marissa and others who watch out for us and visit us each day. If you'd like to care for us too, your charitable gifts will make all the difference in the world and make a horse-sized difference in some very special peoples' lives. You can donate by going to [Achievement Centers.org/give/horses](https://www.achievementcenters.org/give/horses).



## A Message from Our President & CEO

The Achievement Centers for Children is facing the financial and programmatic risks, concerns and challenges all nonprofits must address. Our mission and services remain critically important to the children and adults with disabilities and their families we serve, those who will need our services in the future, and our community as a whole.

As you'll read in this newsletter, our committed staff have been nimble, creative and entrepreneurial in providing many of our services remotely. We are committed to finding new ways to provide services because children and adults with disabilities are counting on us . . . their families need our expertise and support now more than ever.

We know those we serve . . .

- can easily regress and lose weeks of progress without our critical services.
- are often particularly sensitive to the current heightened anxiety brought on by the pandemic.
- are parents and caregivers who need breaks for decompression and the supportive ear of a compassionate professional.
- often don't function well with changes to routine and lack of structure.
- are often families that were already on edge and stretched with financial and other challenges.
- need connections to other social services and access to those connections has been disrupted.

We **want** to respond to our clients and the ongoing community need dictates that we must. We are providing care and connection even though we are unable to receive reimbursement for many of the virtual services we are offering. Our agency has, and will be, experiencing significant revenue loss through contracts, fees and reimbursements. We have also experienced increased costs connected to telehealth and other remote services.

We are grateful for the interest, caring and charitable gifts from our long standing donors. We are delighted when a new individual joins our family of donors because we know the important work we do is directly connected to the generosity of our supporters. Thank you for the varied ways you have shown your support. We ask you to continue to stand with those we serve in these extraordinary times and as we move forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Farwell".

Sally Farwell, M.Ed.

President & CEO

*“Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass. It's about learning how to dance in the rain.”*

—VIVIAN GREENE

### ACHIEVEMENT CENTERS FOR CHILDREN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michael D. Adkins  
Jennifer Allanson, APR  
Dave Barry  
Jeffrey Bechtel  
Cipriano Beredo  
Jim Boland  
Amy Brady  
Frank W. Buck  
Devon Campbell

Denise Carkhuff  
Geoffrey D. Carter  
David Dunstan  
Mary Kim Elkins  
Kevin Foos  
Courtney Foster  
Richard Grossberg, MD  
Nicole T. Hilbert  
Lawrence M. Hirsh  
Gary Hsich, MD

David B. Humphrey  
Mozelle Jackson  
James Kacic  
Jeannette Knudsen  
Tracy Lindberg  
Amy Merlino, MD  
David Pastir  
Neal Restivo  
Steve Revnew

Karen Sorace-Thomas  
Tiffani Tucker  
Raymond Tusick  
Jennifer L. Vergilii  
William (Bill) P. Watkins  
Darin Yug

DIRECTORS EMERITI  
Thomas McKee



## IT'S PLAY TIME

**N**ow that you're spending more time at home than ever, our therapists have put together a few projects for you to do with your little Achiever! Please send photos of their work to Brian at: [brian.diehl@achievementctr.org](mailto:brian.diehl@achievementctr.org). Don't have a little one at home? Please share this with family or friends!

**Nature Art**—Head outside and have them gather leaves, flowers, pine cones, sticks, etc. You can either have them place their findings in a plastic bottle for display or give them school glue and paper to make their own composition. Once the glue has dried, they can use paint to add a splash of color!

**Cloud Dough**—Homemade Play-Doh is easy to make and just as much fun to play with. For a Cloud-dough recipe, you can search the internet; or write to Brian's email listed above and we'll send one to you! Once it's made, give your kids a theme, such as: sports. Start with something simple, like encouraging them to

sculpt a football. This project helps children with ASD and other disabilities develop focus and concentration.

**Sandpaper Art**—Crush colored chalks and create separate bowls of color. Put a bit of the powder on a piece of sandpaper and let your child spread the chalk around with a finger or sponge—this is a good sensory project.

When working with your child,

- Try to not give instructions that are too specific. Let them decide where colors or objects are placed.
- Don't be critical of their art or try to analyze what they have made, just let them enjoy themselves.
- If your child is verbal, try saying, "oh, tell me about your project."
- Watch your child and note how they approach the activity. This may give you an understanding of how to stimulate their mind with other activities.
- Be patient. Give them the tools and they will surprise you!

**THANK YOU to our generous sponsors for the Adapted Sports Program**

**PARTNERS**



The David and Jacqueline Clark Foundation  
 Don and Chrissy Wostmann Charitable Fund  
 Vana Family Foundation  
 Padua Franciscan High School

**GOLD SPONSORS**

## A Sad Time for Happy Campers

**W**e were sorry to announce that Cheerful Day Camp, Sensational ESY Camp and Overnight Camp had to be cancelled at our Camp Cheerful for the 2020 summer season. Because of continued health concerns posed by COVID-19, we explored many alternative ways to offer activities and ultimately decided we could not safely provide any on-site camps at Camp Cheerful this summer.

Our research in making this difficult decision included guidance from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention related to reducing risk in a camp setting; guidance from the American Camp Association (ACA), a national organization that accredits our camps; guidance from Governor DeWine related to Day Camps and information from The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD).

We will miss seeing our camp friends this summer and we will be keeping in touch until we can be together again! Be sure to check [achievementcenters.org](http://achievementcenters.org) for ongoing updates on virtual camp programming.



# the Achiever

Achievement Centers for Children  
4255 Northfield Road  
Highland Hills, OH 44128



NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
CLEVELAND, OH  
PERMIT NO. 1162

OUR MISSION is to empower children and adults with disabilities and their families to achieve their greatest potential. We are a non-profit organization providing support, services and programs for children and adults with disabilities and special needs and their families.

Programs, provided remotely and on-site, include education and autism school; physical, occupational and speech therapy; Intensive Therapy Clinic; family support services; recreation, camp, sports and adult day program.

### LOCATIONS

Highland Hills  
Westlake  
Camp Cheerful in Strongsville  
Child care centers, schools, homes

AchievementCenters.org  
216-292-9700



## BLUE CHIP/BLUE TEE GOLF TOURNAMENT

Monday, August 3 [achievementcenters.org/golf](http://achievementcenters.org/golf)

*This year's golf outing will be slightly modified to adhere to social distancing guidelines*

**THIS YEAR,** Cheers to Camp Cheerful and Sparkle Shimmer and Shine will be reimagined as a new event to celebrate our agency's 80th Anniversary!



Sign up for our e-newsletter to get the news as things develop.  
[www.achievementcenters.org/about/newsletter](http://www.achievementcenters.org/about/newsletter)

THANKS TO OUR  
"Most Excellent" sponsors of this year's virtual A Most Excellent Race

### OLYMPIC SPONSORS



### GOLD SPONSORS

