

NMTSA Supporters

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Thank you very much to everyone who contributed to the **May 2010 yard sale**. Your donations allow NMTSA to raise almost \$850! Thank you to those who volunteered with transport of items and who helped the day of the event: Jane Dalen, Jen Hempel, Denise Hutchinson, Mark Hutchinson, Charlotte Oliver, Suzanne Oliver, and Quartney Smith. Our volunteers racked up over 141 hours! Special thanks go out to Sherill and Bruce Crow for sponsoring the sale – thank you all for your hard work!

NMTSA was recently awarded two generous grants through the **Phoenix Suns Charities**. These grants will further our community education and outreach for both our clinical services and our educational program. Stay tuned for more on these programs in the near future! Thank you Phoenix Suns Charities!

Speaking of making new connections... if you are interested in **volunteering** we would love to hear from you. We want to connect your talents, skills, and knowledge with either ongoing projects or simply helping out for an hour every other week. Any time that you can volunteer gives us extra time to serve the families and individuals that we work with. Volunteer projects vary from cleaning and organizing to copying or building projects. You may call 602-840-6410, email schavez@nmtsa.org, or register online at www.nmtsa.org/volunteer. We would love to get you connected to our team!



Thank you to the following staff for their contributions in this edition of *Functional Cadence*: Bethany Jones, Sarah Studebaker.

Functional Cadence

The Rhythm of NMTSA



Celebrating **29** Years of Serving the Phoenix Community!

Upcoming Programs

September 11

NMTSA: Philosophy and Practice
(formerly 'NMT Parent Training')

October 30

Competency-Based Communication Training Level 1

Check out our website at www.NMTSA.org for information about upcoming events and fundraising opportunities



NMTSA is on Facebook! visit facebook.com/nmtsa and 'like' our page!

Contact Us

Phone: 602-840-6410
Fax: 602-840-6431
e-mail: info@nmtsa.org

BrainWorks: Helping You Make the Connections

by Sarah Studebaker, MME, MT-BC, NMT Fellow

Brain connectivity refers to the network of neurons that connect groups of nerves together. *Local* connections refer to the connections within one part of the brain (imagine all the vision neurons talking to each other). *Long-range* connections refer to the neurons that connect various parts of the brain together (imagine the memory neurons reminding the vision neurons what they are looking at).

Brain connectivity issues have been implicated as a possible factor that contributes to many developmental disabilities. Some parts of the brain may not have enough connectivity. For example, have you ever typed a web address into your computer browser and nothing happened? You typed the right address. The website is there. You just don't have the connection. That's kind of what low connectivity is like. Other parts of the brain may have too much connectivity. Picture yourself talking on the telephone. Now picture yourself talking on the phone, and there is static on the line, and a fire truck is driving by, and someone walks into the room to talk to you. The connection you want is there. But there is a whole lot of other stuff connected too that is interfering. That's a little bit like what high connectivity might be like.

Now, let's take these principles and apply them to individuals with developmental disabilities. Consider a person engaging in a repetitive motor behavior. Could it be that they have a motor pathway that is over-connected? Or other brain pathways that would help them get 'unstuck' from that pattern are under-connected? Or consider an individual who can only articulate a 'ba' sound. Could it be that they really know and understand a vast amount of language, but there just aren't enough connections to make their mouth say what their brain knows?

Here at NMTSA we assume competence in every person. They are smart. They are in there. They just might not have the brain connections developed yet to functionally express those things fully. But the brain is moldable and changeable. And NMT is a brain-based service that uses rhythm and music to change the brain. One of our tag lines here at NMTSA is 'facilitating relationships.' That includes helping the parts of someone's brain relate to each other better!

Interested in learning more about how rhythm and the brain connect but finding the time to read and dissect an article is just too overwhelming? We've done the work for you! Our own Sarah Studebaker has broken down the article The Connection Between Rhythmicity and the Brain complete with key points that are easy to read and understand. You can find this article and summary in the PEC.

Staff Tidbits

Happy anniversary to the following NMTSA staff: Brendan Anderson (4 years), Carolyn Estrada, (11 years) and Jen Hempel (8 years). Thank you for all of your hard work!

Download an electronic copy of this newsletter, or sign up to receive e-alerts and this newsletter every quarter automatically! Do it all at:

www.NMTSA.org

Billing Private Insurance for Music Therapy? Yes You Can!

Neurologic Music Therapists throughout the country have had good success in receiving reimbursement through private insurance plans. Our own Suzanne Oliver, Executive Director of NMTSA, actually wrote the Medical Coding Manual for the Academy of Neurologic Music Therapists in 2005. This manual identifies the procedure/s for submitting to insurance carriers and matches each of the NMT interventions with specific CPT Codes. NMTs around the country have had many successes with utilizing these CPT Codes and gaining reimbursement from a wide variety of insurance carriers. With the recent economic downturn, NMTSA has had greater opportunity to utilize the NMT Medical Coding Manual to assist its families in accessing this type of third party reimbursement. Our families are now seeing successes in reimbursement through their individual carriers. To date, NMTSA has received reimbursement from Aetna, United HealthCare, and Blue Cross Blue Shield. We would like to encourage all of our families to attempt to submit claims to their carriers whether they are paying privately or have been receiving funding through another source.

Insurance reimbursement is an important piece of NMTSA's long-term funding puzzle. NMTSA and each of its therapists hold National Provider Identification numbers (NPI), through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), music therapy has had its own recognized ICD-9 Code for many years, there are currently at least 10 CPT Codes that have been successfully used by NMTs over the last 7 years to bill for services, and our national board certification credential (MT-BC) meets or exceeds state licensure requirements (public protection mechanism). The outdated thoughts of nonrecognition of music therapy as a therapy and lack of insurance reimbursement for services rendered are just that - outdated thoughts. Insurance reimbursement can occur, and is occurring, when medical necessity is identified and demonstrated. All of the pieces are in place for coverage. Please talk with your therapist to see if you are a candidate for insurance reimbursement. Talk about your options today!

From the Executive Director

On behalf of the NMTSA Board of Directors and staff, I would like to thank everyone for your continued support of NMTSA's mission and vision. Without our families, Donors, and funders we would be extremely limited in what we could provide to the community. While the last six months have been difficult, they have also shown us what true community is. Each of you have made sacrifices, reassessed your priorities, and creatively tapped into community resources to support our vision and the persons we serve. We are so grateful.

So many great things are happening at NMTSA and we hope you take the time to read about them, to check them out on the internet, and to talk to staff and family. From our new Director of Development which we were able to retain through a generous donation, to new grant awards, to new fundraising programs, to new research that continues to support NMTSA's philosophy, things are very active around NMTSA. We offer a unique service to the community and have appreciated the many ways you have reminded us of this! We are so excited that you are a part of our family. Stay Connected as there is much to come in the future.



You can bring in your clipped Boxtops for Education right to the box in the NMTSA waiting room! Each coupon earns ACT School 10 cents. There are more opportunities to earn online when you sign up to support ACT School at: boxtops4education.com.



Check out the seasons changing on our Giving Tree in the clinic's waiting room! The items on the giving tree are those which we frequently run out of or simply haven't fit into our budget. When you take a flower or a leaf and bring us a treasure, you can be sure it is something we will use and appreciate right away.



Do you have assorted items around your house that you've thought about selling on Ebay or Craigslist but haven't had the time? Think about donating those items to NMTSA! This is a great way to help us raise money while getting rid of your profitable clutter. If you have an item you're interested in donating, please contact Thea at tsmith@nmtsa.org.



JuicePlus is a natural whole food supplement that provides a healthy and easy way to get necessary fruits and vegetables in your diet in order to support the immune system, promote cardiovascular wellness, and deliver key antioxidants to the body. When signing up for JuicePlus, mention NMTSA and a minimum of 15% of your purchase price will be donated back to NMTSA. For more information, contact Nikki Westby at 602-573-3643 or at www.iphealth.net/nikki.

Why Do I Need a Prescription for Neurologic Music Therapy Services?

It is important that all of our consumers obtain and provide us a copy of a prescription for Neurologic Music Therapy, regardless of the method of funding for the service.

- DDD is now asking for a prescription in order to reauthorize services. A delay in obtaining the prescription means a delay in service.
- If/when you want to bill for services via insurance, you will be ready. Having a prescription for service is a requirement set by insurance companies.
- A prescription helps support medical necessity of the services regardless of the funding source.

Effective July 1, NMTSA will require a prescription for all services funded through a third-party reimbursement source i.e. DDD, private insurance, Medicare, AHCCCS, etc. Please talk with your therapist if you are unsure of the procedure to request a prescription from your primary physician.

New Staff Bring New Possibilities

NMTSA warmly welcomes Rachel Salemi as our neurologic music therapy intern for the next six months. Rachel grew up in Chandler, AZ and attended the University of Arizona where she received a bachelor's degree in choral music education. After completing her internship requirements, Rachel will receive a master's degree in music therapy from Colorado State University.

Rachel first learned about NMTSA through her professors at CSU. According to Rachel, she kept hearing her professors talking about "great things happening in Arizona." This was NMTSA!

During her internship, Rachel hopes to gain and improve her therapeutic skills, learn from both neurologic music therapists and the individuals served, and to increase her knowledge of the philosophy and research associated with NMTSA.

Rachel and her husband recently bought a house in Gilbert and plan on moving there soon. Just like many of the others working at NMTSA, Rachel's favorite part of a meal is dessert. She will be a great addition to the team during her internship. Welcome!



NMTSA would also like to introduce the newest member of our staff, Thea Smith, Director of Development. Thea has already been working hard using her gifts and expertise to help us find and secure new funding for our organization. As she gets to know our company, we'd like for you to get to know her as well.

Thea was born and raised in southern California, where she resided until she moved to Colorado in 1989. After working in Denver for 13 years, she moved to Arizona for a job to facilitate the grand opening of the Glendale Arena. During the move, Thea decided to completely change careers and left the entertainment/sports/venue management business to work in the non-profit sector.

Thea has over 20 years experience in special event management, marketing, media, public relations, and relationship building. She also became a certified grand writer in 2007. Prior to working for NMTSA, Thea served as the Director of Development for Gompers Habilitation Center, and the Community Development Officer for HALO Animal Rescue.

When asked what drew her to NMTSA, Thea responded, "The population we serve! Having spent four years at Gompers Habilitation Center, I learned rather quickly that the children and adults we served were nothing short of spectacular! It didn't take long for me to stop seeing our clients' and students' disabilities but rather their abilities. Once I made that transition, it was so easy to represent these beautiful, capable and extraordinarily intelligent and funny individuals. I missed serving people with disabilities and was hoping to find the perfect opportunity to bring together one of my passions and my professional expertise where I could do that again. I found NMTSA and knew immediately that I had found a "home" and I sincerely have never felt 'I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be' like I do here."

Although Thea and her husband, Ken, have no human children of their own, they have numerous "four-legged and furry" children. Their peaceful family includes two dogs, eight house rabbits, and two birds. Thea says that all of their animals suffered tremendous neglect and abuse prior to their adoption into the Smith family. Since then, they have blossomed into "happy, loving, and life-affirming souls."

NMTSA is very excited to add Thea to our team. Welcome!