



BEACON BLAST

Beacon Day School
24 Centerpointe Dr.
La Palma, CA 90623
(714) 288-4200

www.beacondayschool.com

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONISTS ARE FOUNDATIONAL!

June 2, 2014

It is Behavior Interventionist Appreciation Week here at Beacon Day School, and we want to sincerely offer our dozens of essential, valued behavior interventionists some positive reinforcement! There are over five dozen BIs who work closely with the Beacon multidisciplinary team to assist students to eliminate or replace undesirable behaviors with positive actions. Under the administrative direction of the BCBA, special education teacher, and lead behavioral interventionist, each BI supports academic instruction and communicates with school personnel concerning the needs of our students. Beacon's BIs are the cornerstone of the classrooms, and we extend our gratitude for their work and dedication. Here are some comments from appreciative Beacon parents:

"Thank you to all the teachers and behavior specialists who work with my son. He was a tough cookie when he started Beacon in 2005. But with constant commitment and a caring attitude, you have given [him] the confidence and skills to be a gentle and caring young man. We love you all...."

"We would like to express our sincere appreciation for all the BIs who work with [our son]. We are so grateful for all the effort they put in keeping [him] safe, happy and productive. We know how difficult it can be, and we want them to know how grateful we are for the time they spend with [him]. They have all been so patient and kind, caring and understanding."

"I have no words to express my gratitude to you and your staff. You guys are out-of-this-world, caring professionals and [my son] and I are very lucky. This is why I will be very sad when he graduates, as the experience to have him spend these past three years under your watchful eyes has been an amazing privilege."

"I believe BIs at BDS are well-equipped and trained to work with students. They are teachers' right hands, and they make me feel my kid is in good hands, and this gives me peace of mind, and this is very important."

"I want to say 'thank you' for helping my son have a better and great life improvement. You have all been a blessing in our lives. My son enjoys being in Beacon Day School. Day by day, I see my son improve more and more, and this makes me have tears of joy for him. Beacon Day School and all staff members have also made my life change and improve along with my son."



DR. LANG SHINES IN CHICAGO!

Beacon founder Dr. Mary Joann Lang just got back from the annual AutismOne Conference, where she delivered two lectures, sat on a vocational opportunities panel, and participated in an adult residential workshop. The AutismOne Conference offers over 100 speakers on a diversity of topics, and the *Beacon Blast* is so glad that Dr. Lang keeps up-to-date on therapies and opportunities for individuals with ASD and networks with other experts in fields important to Beacon students. Here is a taste of Dr. Lang's trip:

Executive Function and the Frontal Lobe: In this well-attended lecture, Dr. Lang informed attendees on how to understand executive function in the brain, with particular regard to intervention strategies.

New Employment and Vocational Opportunities for Adults with ASD: According to Dr. Lang, "This panel, which was led by Shannon King Nash, Esq., CPA, was very exciting because it discussed the spectrum of autism and employment opportunities and organizations that have programs, as well as the wonderful potential for the future." Dr. Lang was encouraged that people are now discussing employment for ASD individuals all across the spectrum of ability levels.

Telehealth Technology for Autism Spectrum Disorder: Ron Oberleitner, MBA, and Dr. Lang presented on this timely topic. Said Dr. Lang, "Working with Ron Oberleitner was fun and productive as we addressed integrating education and technology to facilitate academic, behavioral, and social progress. Beacon is very interested in using telehealth technology to communicate more effectively among the transdisciplinary team that is working with students. This is the type of collaborative potential I hope to convey on this topic."

Adult Residential Panel — Moving Mountains: Dr. Lang attended this special workshop, which was led by Cathy Purple Cherry, AIA, LEED AP, of Purple Cherry Architects and Purposeful Architecture. Dr. Lang shared, "This adult residential workshop furthered my understanding of establishing residential programs, which I can use to help Beacon families in the future."

"Thank you" to Dr. Lang for bringing this information back to us!

IN THE NEWS

A rash of murders on a weekend at the end of May was committed in Santa Barbara, CA, by a young adult man with Asperger's syndrome. Of course, murders are committed by members of the population who are not on the autism spectrum. However, along with the diagnosis of autism, there are comorbid conditions. Most individuals with autism or Asperger's do not kill others; so, while we do not need to be fearful of ASD persons, we should be supportive of them and their families. Where we suspect that depression, anxiety, or social isolation are occurring, we can be kindly and productively caring in pointing those on the spectrum and their families to their qualified, overseeing physician who can advise and offer direction on the biomedical and psychological needs of the whole person. Options such as counseling, good nutrition, pet therapy, and more are available. As a community, we want to support individuals with autism and their families toward maintaining robust physical and mental health, which are often related. Beacon offers social skills therapy and a positive, caring environment. Please contact Dr. Lang at (714) 288-4200 at any time if you would like to discuss any topics from a nursing and/or neuropsychological perspective.

Beacon offers its condolences to the families in Santa Barbara and hopes that we will all work together in increasing awareness of resources available to individuals with ASD and their families to enhance their quality of life.