



Connections

Fall 2019 Newsletter

A message from Paul & James

The year has flown by and Fall is upon us. We hope you cherish everything that comes with its arrival including the stunning scenery and sunsets, time spent with friends and family, comfy sweaters and hot drinks, and two of our favorite holidays – Halloween and Fall. Halloween is special for many people and seeing the joy on our students' face as they dress up and 'trick or treat' is often the most memorable events of the year for our team. Thanksgiving is a more reflective time where we can contemplate our blessings and good fortune. At Connections, we have almost too many blessings to count; being able to work with you and your children is definitely one of them.

Fall is typically busiest time of the year at Connections and this year is no exception! We have expanded our school contracts to work in Lake Washington, opened a new center in Lynnwood, and have trained many new team members ready for the beginning of the school year. Our team has also developed a peer-mentoring program to help new staff navigate the numerous tasks that must be completed to ensure your children receive high-quality services.

This Fall, we are looking forward to our Behavior Health Center of Excellence recertification, and feel prepared as our staff continuously strives to improve the services we offer to your families. One initiative that has come to fruition is the development of 5 guiding principles for the company as a moral compass that reflects our values.

- Staying scientific, innovative, and relevant
- Growing leaders
- Collaboration over competition
- Seeking first to understand
- Promoting trust through honesty and transparency

We hope that these guiding principles and our other initiatives allow us to continue to improve the services we provide all our clients so we retain our title as the number one ABA agency for client satisfaction.

Whether experiencing the scary fun of Halloween or the contemplation of Thanksgiving we hope that this Fall brings you all fond memories, great accomplishments, and much joy!

-Paul & James



"Love seeing my little one run out the door laughing every time I pick her up!"

-From a Kirkland Center Family



Company Updates

- Our Guiding Principles were developed at the directors retreat and have been guiding our practice! Check them out:
 1. **Collaboration over competition** - Our first responsibility is to support our colleagues, if you see a colleague needs help, help them, if you need help speak up. Be compassionate, serve clients, staff, and self, it is not fair to ask of others what you are not willing to do yourself, look for the win-win solution, and our goal is high-quality services for the client.
 2. **Seek first to understand** - We strive to be aware of other perspectives, we listen with the intent to understand, NOT wait to speak, and we treat others how THEY want to be treated
 3. **Stay scientific, relevant, and innovative** - We strive to stay in the forefront of our field in clinical practice, we are solution oriented, we are lifelong learners, and we use ABA/OBM effectively.
 4. **We grow leaders** - We challenge others to find their answer, give students, staff, and one another opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge, and we are NOT building compliance, we are building leaders
 5. **Promote trust through honesty & transparency** - We celebrate mistakes and understand that mistakes are an essential part of learning, we are transparent & communicative, we trust that everyone is good and doing their best, we always assume a positive intent, we are honest with each other, and we are direct and do not gossip.
- The Lynnwood Center is now open! Join us at our open house!

Questions? Email Hope.P@connections-behavior.com

Stay Connected and follow us!



Instagram: @connectionsbehavioraba



Facebook: Facebook.com/ConnectionsBehavior



In-Home Update

A message from Shane, the Director of In-Home Services:

This summer, we had a large number of home clients attend one of the Connections' summer programs. It was wonderful to see our home clients in a new setting and rewarding to see all of the progress they have made. For the first time, we offered continued services at home in conjunction with services through the summer program for our home families. This was a great opportunity for us to work on generalizing skills taught in the summer program to home and ensure that parents still received support in the home setting. We have recently been trying to hire more part time employees so that we can serve more home families.

In September, we welcomed Virginie Mendoza to our team as a part time evening employee! We hope to hire more wonderful evening employees like Virginie. Many families have community goals for their children and ask about providing support in the community. We are able to address community skills but it is our policy that there must be community-specific goals within your child's treatment plan. If you have any questions, please reach out to your behavior specialist and/or Shane!



If you're interested in learning more about Connections In-Home Services, contact Shane by emailing: Shane.B@connections-behavior.com





Kent Center Update



Kent is so excited to continue all the amazing work with our kiddos! The training center has been delivering a bevy of wonderful BTs for us! We recently started stations, and that has been going really well! We continue to show our Connections spirit with our fun shirt Friday's!

Questions or Comments? Email Elizabeth.M@connections-behavior.com





Lynnwood Center Update



Meet The Lynnwood Team:

- Clinical Director:
 - Jaimee Oberlin
- Behavior Specialist:
 - Stormi DeSilva
- RBT Team:
 - Katie H.
 - Gabby G.
 - Sara S.
 - Karen-Ann C.
 - Lydia E.

We are so excited to have our new Lynnwood center up and running! Our kiddos have done such an amazing job transitioning to a new place, we've added a few new friends to our group, and we are excited to be getting even more new classmates to round out our mornings! It also doesn't hurt that the center is right next to a delicious bakery either (check out that BT reinforcement)! All of our staff have worked so hard this past month to get everything ready to go for our kiddos and we had an amazing soft open house the Sunday before we opened. It was great to see the families who were transitioning in and the kids be able to check out their new space. We are looking forward to the upcoming full access Open House on October 26th where we can share the space with all of our Connections friends! We know you will love it as much as we do!

Questions or Comments? Email Jaimee.O@connections-behavior.com





Kirkland Center Update



Kirkland Welcomes:

- An, Phillip, Kori, and Will! Welcome to the team; we're happy to have you!

Kirkland Farewells:

- Karen Anne, Gabby, Lydia, Katie, Sara S., Stormi, and Jaimee all moved to open the Lynnwood Center! Good luck!
- Hailee left to pursue her masters degree in Colorado!

A message from Clinical Director, Annie Tran

Welcome to a brand new school year! We are happy to have new students and staff join the Kirkland family and we look forward to a great year full of learning. We are also excited to welcome the Training Classroom, led by the Director of Training Programs, David Cole. Having a training classroom helps Connections grows as a company and helps us offer more services to families in need. In the spirit of growth and service delivery, we recently opened up a new center in Lynnwood, and some of our students and staff have transitioned to the new center. As we begin a new school year, we invite families to review our Connections Policy. Because our center day is on a schedule it is important for students to arrive and get picked up on time. Our policy is that if students arrive or get picked up more than 15 minutes late, it will be recorded and considered a "late arrival/pick up." If your child has more than three late arrivals/pickups in a month, we will request a meeting with you to develop a plan to better support you with on-time arrivals/pickups. Parents and caregivers who have questions or concerns are encouraged to contact the Kirkland BCBAs at any time. Working together, we will provide the students with the consistency and tools needed to be successful.



Celebrations!



N put on his shirt and pants correctly!
independently with no prompting!
-In-Home Family

We have been commuting to and from Kirkland from North Lynnwood for 3-years and we are beyond excited to lessen our travel to the Lynnwood Center! It is incredible to still have the same team members and M has transitioned great! We no longer need to leave at 3pm to pick him up at 4pm every day 😊 -Lynnwood Center Family

M would wear diaper at night but it will be dry but wouldn't want to sleep without it. One day Elise told me to put him underwear and then diaper on top and it worked the next day M didn't want to wear diaper any more. He said he was big boy like daddy and brother that sleep in underwear.
-Kent Center Family

A is finally saying "yes" when asked questions
-Kirkland Center Family

We're a family of six and love to travel around the world. As anyone who has an autistic child would know, that travelling is never easy. But loaded with all the skills that Connections BCBA and BTs have taught our son, we have successfully travelled around the globe the last few years. With minimal to no behavior issues. Our son has had the time of his life enjoying being with his family and seeing new wonderful places and things. We hope to continue to travel with him and open his eyes to the big, beautiful world out there. Thanks Connections!!
-In-Home Family





Tips From The Parent Pros

Timers for the win!

We've had good luck using timers on our phones to transition between activities. She even likes to press the start and stop buttons!

Parent Advisory Board

Hi! My name is Amanda and I am a member of Connections' Parent Advisory Board. The board consists of parents like yourself whose children are receiving services through Connections. The board was created to foster a community of parents who could act as representatives of the diverse clientele that Connections serves.

My daughter, M, is Connections' first client, so as you can imagine, I have had a lot of experience navigating the maze of special needs parenting, and the unique situation of having a child with Autism. Every parent on the advisory board understands the grief of having a child newly diagnosed with Autism, and the challenges of finding reputable treatment. The board's mission is offer support, comfort, understanding, and assistance to every new family at Connections. We also work with Connections as parent advocates to inform and advise the leadership team on strategies to improve client care.

The Parent Advisory Board is always looking for more members to join our team. If you are interested in joining you may contact me at ama_jane@hotmail.com or Hope Pellenbarg at Hope.P@connections-behavior.com

Next Meeting:
Tuesday, October 22nd @ 7pm





Resource Highlights



Dr. Preetam Bandla, MD is a great sleep doctor for kiddos having a challenging time with sleep

Bel Red Pediatric Dentistry

Great with kiddos on the spectrum.

belredpediatricdentistry.com



Sensory Processing Workshop: Motor Coordination & Sensory Challenges

Have you noticed your child tripping and falling more than their friends? Do they appear clumsy or uncoordinated? Gain an understanding of how the sensory system influences motor learning. Learn how to keep their body safe and advance their motor skills.

Kinding Physical Therapist Hannah Patchen will be presenting along with Alex Neukirch, Kinding OT. There will be ample time for Q&A. **No childcare is available.**

Wednesday, October 16th 6:30-8:30pm @ Kinding Bellevue 16120 NE 8th Street, Bellevue

<https://kinding.org/portfolio-items/speaker-series/>





Upcoming Events

What?	When?	Where?	The Details
Autism Speaks Walk	Sunday September 29 th	Seattle Center Mural Amphitheatre 305 Harrison Street Seattle, WA 98109	9am: Registration 10am: Opening Ceremonies 10:20am: Walk 12:00pm: Event Ends More info: Autismspeaks.org
Sensory Friendly Evening @Museum of Pop Culture	Thursday October 10 th 6:00-8:00pm	The Museum of Pop Culture 325 5th Ave N Seattle, WA 98109	Free access after the museum is closed to the public Advanced notice of what to expect during your visit Lowered sound and lighting in galleries and Sky Church Art activity and low-sensory break spaces Noise-cancelling headphones available Culture Kitchen will be closed, however you are welcome to bring snacks with you. While there is no eating in the galleries, we will have a designated area in the Lounge where you can eat.
Autism Early Open at Pacific Science Center	Tuesday October 19 th	Pacific Science Center 200 Second Ave North Seattle, WA 98109	Exploration for All: Autism Early Open at Pacific Science Center. On the third Saturday of each month, all families affected by autism spectrum disorder are invited to explore Pacific Science Center during a special free morning visit from 8-10 a.m. – before it is open to the public (entry through our North Entrance only). Experience the exhibits without heavy crowds with have softened general lighting and decreased noise level and visual stimulation on interactive exhibits wherever possible. Additional accessibility resources can be found below.
Festival of Trees	Nov 23- Dec 4 th 1-4pm	Seattle Children's Autism Center 4909 25 th Ave NE Seattle, WA	Seattle Festival of Trees is a 41-year tradition that features more than 20 uniquely decorated themed trees displayed throughout the lobby of the beautiful Seattle Children's Autism Center.





Important Dates

October

- Tuesday 10/22: Parent Advisory Board Meeting @ 7pm
- Saturday 10/26: Harvest Party @ the Lynnwood Center

November

- Thursday 10/28 and 10/29: **Connections is closed** for Thanksgiving

December

- Monday 12/23- Wednesday January 1st: **Connections is closed** for Winter Break

Coffee Dates

October		
Kent	Kirkland	
Monday, October 7 th : What is ABA? *With Kaitlan Collie	Thursday, October 3 rd : What is ABA? *With Nicole Sanchez	
Monday, October 21 st : Open Discussion *With Kaitlan Collie	Thursday, October 17 th : Open Discussion *With Nicole Sanchez	
November		
Kent	Kirkland	Lynnwood
Monday, November 4 th : All About Assessment	Thursday, November 7 th : All About Assessment	Tuesday, November 5 th All About Assessment
Monday, November 18 th : Open Discussion	Thursday, November 21 st : Open Discussion	Tuesday, November 19 th Open Discussion
December		
Kent	Kirkland	Lynnwood
Monday, December 2 nd : What's the Function	Thursday, December 5 th : What's the Function	Tuesday, December 3 rd : What's the Function
Monday, December 16 th : Open Discussion	Thursday, December 19 th Open Discussion	Tuesday, December 17 th Open Discussion

