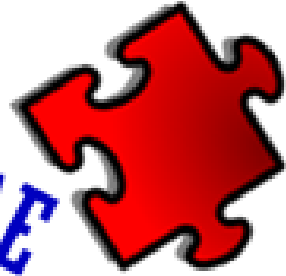


PATHS TO INDEPENDENCE



NEWSLETTER

PTI Begins Fall Programs

Welcome to PTI's first monthly newsletter. I will try to keep you informed about all of PTI's activities and upcoming events. Our after-school program is in full swing with horseback riding, bicycle riding, jazzercise, and homework help. I am hoping to add swimming, music, and art classes later this fall. My goal in the after-school program: wearing your child out!

Welcome back summer staff members: Kodye Lewis and Jessica Farris. We have also added three new staff members: Kim Breedlove, Katelyn Abrams, and Jody Gibson. Everyone is finishing up their childcare training with DHS and will participate in autism-specific training on September 19th with Rethink Autism. I am so grateful for the energy and dedication of each



staff member. PTI could not operate without them.

Thank you also to Tiffany Vargas for leading our first ever adult class. We had an integrated class of both adults with autism

and adults without. Tiffany did an amazing job of including everyone in the food preparation. I can't wait to see what we get to make next week!

-Clair Bartley

Tiffany Vargas leads cooking classes at Tri County Tech

Paths to Independence, in partnership with Tri County Technology Center, is pleased to offer "Cooking Gluten and Casein Free." Tiffany Vargas, former manager of Chili's, will demonstrate simple snacks and meals that are appropriate for people who need to avoid gluten and casein. Tiffany is the mother of an 8 year old son with autism who has benefited greatly from avoiding gluten and casein. She is an excellent resource for those who need to clean out their cabinets and alter their recipes to fit a gluten-free diet. Tiffany will offer substitutions for anyone who wants to learn to prepare simple menus but doesn't need to follow a restricted diet. This class will be offered Thursday nights in September and October from 6:30-8:30. The cost for all 8 classes is \$249, but classes can be enrolled in individually for \$39 a class. Enrollment is available through Tri County Tech, online at www.tctc.org or by calling 918-333-2422. Our classes through Tri County Tech Center will be for high school and adult students. Classes will be structured to allow those with autism to participate fully. Extra staff will be available for anyone needing individual assistance.

Volume 1, Issue 1
September 14, 2012

Upcoming Events

- Cooking Gluten and Casein free continues at TCTC on Thursday nights from 6:30-8:30. Enroll for one or more classes on the TCTC website.
- PTI begins implementation of Rethink Autism, an ABA program.
- Fall fundraiser to be held tentatively on November 3rd. Join us for a delicious progressive dinner. Tickets are \$75/person

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Bike Riding is a Hit!

Students in PTI's after school program have had a blast riding bicycles around the neighborhood. Some students are learning to ride with training wheels while others (Ben!) are making the leap and letting their extra set of wheels go. Kieffer and Eric have been tagging along as walkers, but it's about time to get them some wheels too. If anyone has outgrown bicycles or helmets sitting in their garage, we would love to put them to good use. Please contact Clair Bartley at 918-914-9920 to donate.



Horseback Riding with Bob



Bob Burnett is once again providing Therapeutic horseback riding for students at Paths to Independence. This fall we are riding at Bob's house near Ramona. Bob took us on a trail ride and helped the students feed the wildlife. It was an exciting ride for everyone since they were out of the arena and on the prairie. Bob's tireless dedication has helped each child

grow in their ability to ride independently. We were thrilled to see Jacob, Spencer, Ben, and Kieffer independently lead their horses through Bob's arena-based obstacle courses.

No hour of life is wasted that is spent in the saddle.

~Winston Churchill



Jazzercise!

Jazzercise began Wednesday, September 12. Vanessa Hancock led the kids through 45 minutes of movement and music. We played the freeze dance game and learned many new stretches. Vanessa will return every Wednesday at 4:00 to help us get fit!





Accreditation Update

Paths to Independence is currently in the accreditation process with AdvancED Oklahoma. Committee members Jean Jensen, Debbie Loafman, Carmen Casner, Kim Thompson, and Krista Marteny met September 3rd to complete a self-assessment. On September 13th, the original committee along with Laura Robertson met with Daniel Craig to review our self-assessment and discuss further accreditation requirements. Daniel will recommend us for candidacy, allowing us to finish the accreditation process by June 2013. Accreditation is important to our school because it allows us to be recognized by the Oklahoma State Department of Education. Recognition gives parents of our students the option to apply for a state scholarship to attend PTI. It also allows us to issue high school diplomas for our graduates.



Fundraising Committee Forms

Paths to Independence's fundraising committee met for the first time on Tuesday, September 11th. We brainstormed ideas of events that could help fund PTI's scholarships. Jean Jensen, Clair Bartley, Kim Thompson, Carmen Casner, Kodye Lewis, and Nancy Persaud have started planning a Fall progressive dinner and a Spring Artism show. If you would like to be involved in either event, please contact one of the committee members. Also, we are looking for artists who would be willing to come in and work with our students during our after-school program between 3 p.m. and 6 p. m. If you, or someone you know, has an artistic side and would like to help, please contact Clair Bartley at 918-914-9920.

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

~ Anne Frank



All About. . . Kodye Lewis

Kodye is a student at Rogers State University in Bartlesville majoring in Community Counseling. Kodye lives with the Jensens and claims Kieffer (right) as her brother. Daring and fun-loving, Kodye is unafraid to try anything with Principal Bartley. As a member of the PTI staff, Kodye has been a blessing to the program. She is persistent and dedicated to helping each child reach his or her potential.



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Like us on
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Two roads diverged in a wood, and I . . . I took the
one less traveled by and that has made all the
difference. -Robert Frost

We're on the Web!

www.pathstoIndependence.org

Paths to Independence is a nonprofit agency dedicated to serving the needs of families affected by autism. PTI was started in November 2011 and opened its doors for the first time in June 2012 with an 8 week summer program. PTI currently offers a full day school program, a part-day school program, structured after school care, and adult classes. In addition, PTI serves as a meeting place for the Bartlesville's Autism Parent Support Group. For more information, contact Clair Bartley at 918-914-9920 or Jean Jensen at 918-914-3125.



WISH LIST

The following are items needed
by PTI:

- **Digital camera**
- **Bicycles for ages 8-14
with and without training
wheels**
- **Bicycle helmets**
- **Handi wipes**
- **Clorox wipes**



Donations

Thank you to the following donors
for August and September:

Carmen and Steve Casner

Donna Thompson

Donations help PTI provide salaries for staff, activities for the students, and scholarships. Please consider donating to PTI. At this time, donations will be accepted through the Bartlesville Community Foundation. Make checks payable to BCF-PTI or go to their website at bartlesvillefoundation.com to donate through PayPal or to use a credit card.