



CENTER FOR NEW BEGINNINGS

WINTER NEWSLETTER
December 2008

Spotlight on a Child: Bishop Simpson

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,” Bishop said when Pastor John McLain discussed testimonies with the children of Friendship Baptist Church in Sylvania, Georgia, and asked if anyone could say John 3:16. For most 8 year olds, this may seem a small feat, but for Bishop this is a great accomplishment and everyone in the congregation knew it.

Bishop was diagnosed as Pervasive Developmentally Delayed (PDD) and possibly autistic at age 3. Later diagnoses included Asperger’s Syndrome, sensory integration dysfunction, language-processing impairment, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

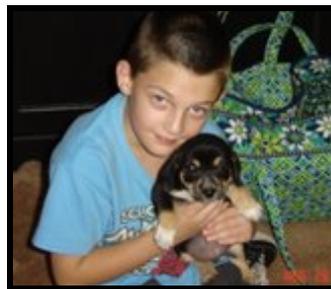
“I got to wait for my brain to tell me!” Bishop says as he prepares to jump off the diving board. Tears well in my eyes when I witness what I believe to be “great accomplishments”, such as memorizing the books of the Bible, hitting a baseball with a bat, swimming under the water, being able to play a boom whacker while singing, memorizing his lines

for the Christmas play, or simply reading a book independently. I still remember the first art project he did by himself. It was upside down and backwards, but it portrayed an actual rainbow and I couldn’t have been prouder.

Bishop is a very inquisitive child who wants to know EVERYTHING. He wants to know how things work and why. In a single day, he probably asks 500 questions and can remember 90% of your answers and recall the information days or months later. Bishop also has a wonderful imagination and can entertain himself for hours with just two little pieces of paper.

Bishop has been blessed with some of the best teachers, therapists, doctors, and role models in this area. These individuals are not only caring and understanding, but have gone above and beyond the call of duty to ensure Bishop is not only successful, but feels successful. The bright smile across his face the moment he feels he has achieved ANYTHING is priceless. Bishop would not be where he is today socially, emotionally, or educationally without these wonderful people. In their own way they have helped make him

the confident child he is today.



While there are still Asperger’s Syndrome traits present, (such as lack of empathy, little ability to form relationships, solo or parallel play with one-sided conversations, repetitive speech, lack of social skills, ill coordination, odd postures, and inability to break routines), Bishop has made progress in leaps and bounds, to my great delight. I look forward to all his future successes.

I like to think that God put people like Bishop, with his very simplistic view of the world around him, in our world to show us that things don’t have to be as complicated as we make them. I think that with continued love and support of the ones close to him, Bishop will continue to make dramatic progress. I believe that one day he will not be a child with autism, but just Bishop.

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UPCOMING EVENTS:
Parent/Teacher Training
ABC’s of Discipline
TBA January/February

Fundraiser Dinner Theatre
(Early Spring)



"Fear not, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For



From the Director:

It's hard to believe we are wrapping up yet another year at CFNB! Next month, January, will be the fourth year since we officially began. This has been an amazing year in many ways. Certainly one of these ways has been the support shown by this community for the Center. Probably the hardest thing I have to do as director is grant writing and fundraising. Seeking monies, or even worrying about finances is not something I do naturally. What I love to do is work with children. I have often wondered, "How did I get myself in this position?" Yet I realize it's a necessary part of the role of a director in any organization. One of the things I have learned when seeking potential grantors is that they are looking for organizations that have the support of the community they serve. Well, this has been the year of COMMUNITY SUPPORT for CFNB and words could never express how grateful we are to all of you who reached out! Not only has our monthly/quarterly donors support increased, but throughout this year I have been amazed by the individuals and businesses that have COME TO US to set up fundraisers for the Center. These efforts from the community have no doubt kept us "alive" financially for another year! In fact, on my "to do" list this Christmas break, I plan to get a couple of grants sent out. I know that the work done by the community this year will greatly influence how our

application is viewed!

This year we have also enlarged many of our programs. We now offer two school day groups; an early morning program for preschool children and a mid-day for school aged older children who are being home-schooled. In addition to carrying our afternoon social skills groups, our counselor, Faith, is currently going into one of the local schools helping them to establish a social group to have during school hours. She is working hard this year to provide more in-home and school-based services for her kids to help them be more successful. We also have a social worker, Clyte Portis LCSW with A Brighter Day Counseling, who is coming down from Augusta one day a week. She has really helped us to serve more children and have more individual counseling sessions. What a great addition she has been. The kids and families love her! Our shadowing program in the community is growing as well, helping kids who may have difficulties being successful in a typical community setting find success and grow along side their peers.

Of course, one the biggest opportunities we had this year was to travel to New York for a special training on working with communication and behavioral issues. We have seen much fruit from this blessing! Several of

our children have made some GREAT gains as a result of this opportunity for the Center! Our after school tutoring and metronome programs are going well. We are grateful for our wonderful teachers who are helping with these programs.

Last month, we were able to have a training for churches interested in starting or building on to their Special Needs Ministries. This was very exciting for us and something we hope to do more of in the future. The need is great for more churches to reach out in the area of ministering to families dealing with disabilities. At the first of 2009, we are planning another training on effective methods of discipline. We have had requests for this type of training and hope to have a good turn out. Please look for flyers or call for more information.

God has grown us in many ways this past year. His provisions have continued to be timely and sufficient. Serving others in His name is our joy at CFNB. We are looking forward to yet another year of service for Him and to all He sends our way.

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.
2 Corinthians 9:8

Friend of Children Award

On November 14, 2008, Sarah Ashe was presented with the Friend of Children Award from the Georgia Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics. They sought to acknowledge her outstanding work and commitment to helping children through her work at the Center for New Beginnings. Sarah was accompanied by her husband Glen and her family members as she ac-

cepted the award in Atlanta, GA.

This award is typically given to physicians or professionals serving in larger metropolitan areas. This is quite an honor for Mrs. Ashe to receive. We are very proud that others outside of our community are recognizing the contribution Mrs. Ashe is making to those with special needs in our area!



Sarah, Glen, her parents Ben and Evelyn Blausner after receiving 2008 Friend of Children Award



FAITH'S CORNER—What is Asperger's Syndrome?

Autism has been gaining more media attention in the last few years. Now 1 out of 150 children are being diagnosed on the Autism Spectrum. This includes those children with Asperger's Syndrome. But what is that? Asperger's Syndrome (AS) is a developmental disorder that affects a child's ability to socialize and communicate effectively with others. Children with AS typically exhibit social awkwardness and an all-absorbing interest in specific topics (Mayo Clinic). It is considered to be the mild end of the Autism Spectrum.

People with Asperger's have always been in our midst we just failed to recognize them. Growing up these may have been the kids in your class who were a bit eccentric and had deep interests in such things as bugs, trains, baseball stats, science fiction, or music. They always seemed to come off a little unusual to you. Word choice may sound more like the "little professor" while at the same time they were missing some of the "common sense" information around them. It is not uncommon for those with AS to be less athletic than many of their peers due to awkwardness of movement. However, the ability to con-

centrate on particular subject areas allows someone with Asperger's to make great strides in understanding that subject. Many of our great scientists, mathematicians, and writers displayed symptoms of Asperger's.

Our goal is not to change the person with Asperger's as they have so much to offer, but to help them build social and communication skills that will improve their quality of life.

Our goal is not to change those with Asperger's but to improve their quality of life.

The Center provides social skills training in group settings to help AS kids learn what others pick up intuitively such as the meaning of emotional expressions, perspective taking, tone of voice, body language, and attention skills. This group setting also allows them to build friendships. Individual help is available for those who need help with anxiety problems, reducing tantrums, anger control, and coping skills. We also provide education for parents, families, teachers, shadows, and coaches to create the structure that AS kids thrive in.

Symptoms of Asperger's Syndrome

- Engaging in one-sided, long-winded conversations, without noticing if the listener is listening or trying to change the subject
- Displaying unusual nonverbal communication, such as lack of eye contact, few facial expressions, or awkward body postures and gestures
- Showing an intense obsession with one or two specific, narrow subjects, such as baseball statistics, train schedules, weather or snakes
- Appearing not to understand, empathize with or be sensitive to others' feelings
- Having a hard time "reading" other people or understanding humor
- Speaking in a voice that is monotonous, rigid or unusually fast
- Moving clumsily, with poor coordination
- Having an odd posture or a rigid gait

From the Mayo Clinic Website

To Learn More:

Books:

Facing Autism
ADHD-Autism Connection
The Out-of-Sync Child
Kids in the Syndrome Mix

Websites:

<http://sites.google.com/site/autismhome/Home>
www.autismspeak.org
www.carboneclinic.net

www.mayoclinic.com

www.aspergersyndrome.org

www.autismresearchinstitute.com

www.futurehorizons-autism.com



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CFNB is a Christian non-profit center serving children and adolescents with special needs (behavioral, educational, emotional, intellectual, physical), as well as their families and caregivers in the rural counties south of Augusta.

It is our mission to offer healing and hope to families in need through the provision of resources, services, and support to meet the challenges they are facing.

What we do:

Community Services:

- Shadowing and consultative services for inclusive community programs, such as, daycare/preschool, church, and recreational programs.
- Trainings and consultative services within the community churches, daycare, Head Start, private and public school programs.

Children Services:

- Intensive in-home behavioral/educational services for children with autism and related disorders
- Academic tutoring
- Special Needs Day Groups
- Counselors for individual, social group, and family sessions.

- Metronome Sessions to build attention and motor skills
- Speech, Occupational & Physical Therapy
- Piano

Family Services:

- Lending Library and Resource Center
- Parent Support Group (2nd Tuesday each month)



Special THANKS for Fall giving:

Capital City Bank
First Baptist Church
Planters EMC
Women of GA Power
AND our faithful individual, monthly, quarterly and yearly donors!

ALL OF US AT CFNB
WISH ALL OF YOU A
BLESSED CHRISTMAS
AND NEW YEAR!

"Thank God for Son—a
gift too wonderful for
words!"

2 Corinthians 9:15 NLT