



Child Provider Specialists

Inaugural Newsletter

ASSISTING WITH ONE
SMALL MIRACLE EACH
DAY!

Spring 2007

Our Locations:

**Miami Children's Hospital
Dan Marino Center**
2900 S. Commerce Parkway
Weston, FL 33331

Sheridan Professional Center
1101 Sheridan Street
Suite #303
Cooper City, FL 33026

**North Miami Beach/
Aventura**
1031 Ives Dairy Road
Suite #228
North Miami Beach, FL 33179

South/Kendall Miami
St. Timothy Parish School
5400 SW 102 Avenue
Miami, FL 33165

**For more information call:
954-577-3396**

Or

Visit our Website:

**Childproviderspecial-
ists.com**

- Useful Information
- Important Resources
- Helpful Links

Child Provider Specialists At A Glance

Advances in the sophistication of interventions available to children experiencing learning challenges, language delays, ADHD, Autism, or more severe handicapping conditions are more readily available than ever before.

In order to help children who are demonstrating developmental challenges, parents often bounce between speech language therapists, occupational therapists, audiologists, educational therapists, specialized school programs, generic and specialized tutorial programs, counselors, psychologists, behaviorists, nutritionists, and a host of other alternative solutions. Navigating these services can be a daunting task.

At Child Provider Specialists (CPS), we have one core product: comprehensive assessment. As a follow up to our assessments, we offer prescriptive remediation services. Clearly understanding a child's needs prior to embarking on a plan of remediation and orchestrating the appropriate services is our specialty. Once a child's needs are understood, pulling together the appropriate team of support personnel and allocating time and resources in the most efficient way is the final goal of the evaluation process. Our diagnostic specialists (8 Full Time Clinicians) are committed to one, and only one, specialty within the realm of psychology – accurate diagnosis and remediation planning.

With an accurate diagnostic picture, parents can follow up with specifically tailored treatment options through other professionals within our practice and through our associations with other centers in the community.

An additional advantage provided within our team approach is the level of familiarity with public school policies and procedures for Exceptional Student Education support. Most of our clinicians spent the early part of their careers working in public schools. This experience gives them an intricate knowledge of ESE procedures and eligibility requirements.

Beyond our comfort in navigating the Public Schools, we have developed personal relationships with most private schools. This relationship allows us a significant advantage when pairing the appropriate school environment to each child's unique learning needs.

Over the past 10 years, our founders, Michael Rizzo, Ph.D. and Sheri Silverman, Psy.D., and associates have assisted over 6000 families in correctly diagnosing the needs of their children and coordinating the appropriate plan of remediation. Each plan is unique to the needs of each individual child.

Expanding to Serve South Florida Children More Effectively

As an organization we have taken concerted efforts to place our offices in optimal locations to create a team approach to the treatment process. This model has allowed us to create easy, efficient dialogue with remediation specialists. At our two main locations, Miami Children's Hospital, Dan Marino Center in Weston and Children's Hearing Associates in Cooper City, we have access to audiologists, occupational therapists, speech language therapists,

behaviorists, neurologists, developmental pediatricians, geneticists, and specialists in a number of other areas. We have also established satellite sites in the South Miami/Kendall and the North Miami Beach/Aventura Communities. Services are offered in English, Spanish, Italian, and Hebrew.

ADHD Clinic

There is no such thing as a lazy child:

All Children Can Be Motivated

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is often over-diagnosed and misunderstood. Many underlying factors contribute to what appears to be off-task behavior. For some patients a comprehensive neuropsychological evaluation may not be practical or necessary. The "ADHD Clinic" provides patients with a less time consuming, less costly option that can serve as a reasonable screening to "red flag" areas of clinical concern. Other issues often mask themselves as, or contribute to, ADHD features. Patients screened through the ADHD Clinic will be administered approximately 45 minutes of psychometric testing. These screenings are conducted by our intern and practicum students. This assessment option in no way replaces a comprehensive evaluation. The outcome of these measures are quickly scored and reviewed with parents or forwarded to your pediatrician or neurologist. Having this information, parents and/or physicians will be empowered to make appropriate decisions regarding diagnosis, treatment options and/or the need for more comprehensive testing. Generally speaking, screening measures can, with some degree of confidence, identify those children who demonstrate:

- Relatively pure ADHD features
- Extremely high or low cognitive ability that could be compromising appropriate attention
- Learning disabilities, which often present as difficulty focusing on academic demands
- Emotional difficulties (anxiety, depression, etc.), which can contribute to attending difficulties
- Significant developmental and adaptive skills delays, which also contribute to a student being inattentive and off task

ADOS/ADI

The diagnosis of Autism is a complex process. Parents as well as most professionals are often concerned and confused about the lack of specificity in the diagnostic process. In recent years, researchers have developed two state of the art measures in the assessment of Autism: The Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) and the Autism Diagnostic Interview (ADI). Senior clinicians from the Speech Language Department at the Dan Marino Center, along with Dr. Sheri Silverman, our senior neuropsychologist, have

undergone extensive training and are certified in the administration and interpretation of these measures. Along with the support of graduate students from Nova Southeastern and Barry Universities, this assessment option is now available. Being on the cutting edge of diagnosis and treatment in this area remains one of our primary missions. We pride ourselves in being one of the few centers in Florida to provide this diagnostic option.

Cooperative Learning Camp

Many of our clients require aggressive academic and cognitive remedial support. Providing this support at a level that will generate significant change during the school year is difficult. Research indicates that to truly improve the skill efficiency of students with moderate to severe learning disabilities requires hundreds of hours of individual prescriptive support. It is no coincidence that the programs that are very time intensive, such as the Linda Mood Bell Programs, Fast Forward Programs, etc. are the most beneficial. When appropriate, these options are often recommended for our clients.

During the school year, students must keep up with the day to day demands of school and have little time to engage in comprehensive remedial support programs when trying to manage their current course load. For

those students who need a highly prescriptive remedial program, we have developed a specialized Summer Remediation Program in conjunction with Levy Learning Centers. Through this unique relationship, our diagnostic specialists provide a detailed inventory of skill areas in need of remediation. A prescriptive plan based on the needs of each individual client is developed and specialized tutors work both individually and in small groups to address those areas in need of remediation. This program, like the model for all successful programs, is time intensive. Students sign up for ½ day sessions that run for two week blocks over the entire summer. No two students receive the same program. Each student has unique needs and the prescriptive interventions must match exactly the areas in need of improvement.

Early Identification/Screening Programs

Selected private schools in the South Florida area have worked with our staff to create screening measures specifically designed to screen applicants prior to admission for potential learning problems or attentional difficulties that justify concern. Over the years, CPS has provided a host of screening options to assist schools in making critical decisions as to the appropriateness of individual students meeting the demands of their particular curriculum. These screening options can be customized with respect to cost, and the comprehensiveness of the particular screening batteries. Dr. Silverman or Dr. Rizzo, our senior diagnosticians, are available to consult with school administrators interested in developing such a protocol as a part of their admission process.

***School should be
a pleasant
journey, not a
struggle to
survive***

Social Skills Support Groups

There are a wide variety of socially challenged children and a wide variety of reasons for social skills difficulties. However, the bottom line is that kids want to be accepted by their peers. Through combining social skills training and group support, we show children the way to earn peer acceptance, initiate friendships, and act/ behave so others want to engage their company. These socialization skills are critical for success in adulthood. We have several programs currently available to assist children in need of social skills development and peer support.

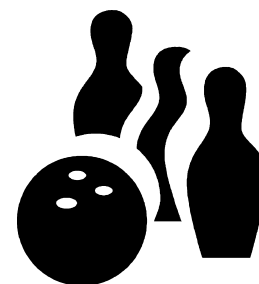
Our Bowling Club is a fun way to provide a therapeutic social skills environment for children ages 7-13. Children facing social challenges such as Asperger's, mild Autism, and social phobias meet weekly with mental health providers in a 1:2 therapist to child ratio or better. Older teens are also encouraged to join and serve as peer mentors to the younger children while they themselves develop skills to manage social situations. The children learn to interact more thoughtfully with their peers, cheering, consoling, and initiating socially-appropriate conversation. Through bowling, frustration tolerance for social interactions is increased and social skills are enhanced.

New on the horizon is our Outdoor Group for social skills. With a field trip to various local parks, children can experience new situations that might normally be anxiety-provoking and learn a new set of coping strategies to enjoy a variety of life's experiences.

Specialized College Admission Counseling

The college admissions process is a nerve racking experience for most. It can be particularly difficult to find admission into the school that best fits the needs of students with learning difficulties. Our College Admissions Specialist, Janet Ronkin, M.S., believes college planning should begin during the 8th grade and continue through graduate school. Mrs. Ronkin is an expert in how the process works: course selection, when and how to take the SAT and ACT, how to prepare for tests, and all other variables associated with entrance into increasingly competitive schools. Her hands-on approach makes for less anxiety for students and families. She is also an expert on the educational support available at most of the major college and university campuses, as well as scholarships and opportunities for summer programs.

The sooner a student understands the entire process, the more experience he or she has with the various tests, and the more preparation he or she seeks, the more successful he or she will be. College admission counseling includes: evaluation of which tests to take and when; how best to prepare for the tests; and to which universities to apply. It will include hands on assistance in the preparation of an activity list, essays, and the applications themselves.



Bowling Club

Mondays, 4:15 to 5:30
Davie Lanes

CPS offers fun and effective social skills training for children ages 7 to 13 with emotional or learning challenges that impact their social functioning. Sessions are led by trained professionals with the help of teen mentors interested in developing social confidence and leadership skills.

CHILD PROVIDER SPECIALISTS

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COLLEGE ADMISSIONS
COUNSELING

SANDRA CIRULNICK
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Fostering Children's Peer Relationships

Nothing is more important for quality of life than love and friendship. Parents wishing to help foster their children's relationships with peers and others are faced with a simple, but difficult task. This task is to provide a loving, safe environment that invites and cultivates a balanced life.

Balance requires harmony between and among four factors: working, playing, giving, and receiving. As with much of life, the important thing is the process involved in achieving a goal. Ultimately, facing mistakes graciously is a critical part of all learning experiences.

It is both fortunate and unfortunate that our children learn from what we model every day. Faced with this challenge, it is important to remember that our job as parents is to give kids the best we have to offer while helping them to learn as gently as possible from the errors we make as people. Even though we make mistakes, our kids are not doomed because we are not balanced or perfect resources.

Kids learn from our consistent response to others. How we handle loving interactions, conflict, glaring errors, acts of kindness, embarrassing situations, tempers, perceived enemies, or disappointments are Friendship Education.

Friendship education is far-ranging. It includes how we treat people In Real Life (IRL in computer language) and in the Virtual Realm. IRL people include ourselves, our family members, our friends, and people ranging from daily acquaintances to strangers we encounter on the road and in other public places. Virtual Friendship Education includes our reactions to people on TV, in movies, reading materials, and print media. Are we encouraging to the baseball pitcher with a full count and bases loaded? Are we generous about the star that is heavy or goofs? Any mistake, ours, theirs, or a virtual person's, if properly named, addressed, and learned from is a great day in the life of a child. One day at a time, each everyday moment, and "a kiss to make it better" are great teachers. Modeling balance and kindness are the keys to good peer friendships for our kids.

Welcoming Our Newest Team Members!

In order to enhance the range and scope of the services available through CPS, we have recruited additional members to join our team of professionals. We would like to take the time to acknowledge these special individuals and introduce them and their specialties.

Margarita Gurri, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist

Dr. Margarita Gurri is a licensed psychologist with a Ph.D. in clinical psychology. In practice for over 20 years, she is known for her work as a therapist, parent educator, and supervisor. She loves working with children, families, and couples facing everyday challenges. Special areas of expertise include fostering healthy families, friendships, sexuality, habits, temper and grief management, coping skills, and dealing with selective mutism. She is a sought-after keynote speaker and has been a featured guest on numerous radio programs including NPR. Dr. Gurri's contributions have been recognized by the *Governor's Crime Prevention Award* and the *Outstanding American Award*.

Albert Kriger, M.D., Board Certified Developmental - Behavioral Pediatrics

Dr. Alberto Kriger is a board certified pediatrician who has been in practice in South Broward for over 18 years. Dr. Kriger has earned impressive academic and professional credentials including an M.D. from Columbia University in New York and fellowship training at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Kriger is available for consultations in our Cooper City office regarding any developmental or behavioral issues including: Developmental Delay, Elimination Disorders, (Enuresis, Encopresis), ADHD, Learning Disorders, Disruptive Behavior Disorders, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Sleep Disorders, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, and others.

Janet Ronkin, M.S. – Specialized College Admissions Counseling

Janet Ronkin has over 20 years of experience in college counseling. She has successfully sent thousands of successful students off to college and graduate school. Mrs. Ronkin graduated from Hofstra University with a B.S. in Education and from New York University with a M.S. in Educational Psychology.