



Attendance

Each parent is asked to notify the Program Director any time your child will be absent from the program. Please review The Bell Center Family Contract located in the left pocket of this folder. If a child is absent for four consecutive sessions without proper notification, his or her place will be filled by a child on the waiting list.

Financial Assistance

A limited amount of financial assistance is available for qualifying families. If you are interested in applying for assistance, please see Jeannie Colquett or Janet Wilson to request a financial aid application.

Weather Policy

The Executive Director of The Bell Center has authority to close the programs in the event of inclement weather. If the decision is made to close The Bell Center, local media outlets including WBRC Fox 6 will be notified. Families should refer to the news for this information.

During severe weather indicated by a tornado siren, Bell Center Staff will direct families and children to the building's safe places.

Illness Policy

A child should not be brought to school if a contagious illness and/or fever is present or has been present within the past 24 hours. In the event that your child will be absent from the program, please will notify the Program Director at 870-0081 as soon as possible. Due to the fragile health of some of the children at The Bell Center, parents are asked not to bring their child to the center if the child, siblings or parents are sick

Latex-free and Nut-free Environment

Many children who receive services at The Bell Center have significant allergies which, when triggered, can lead to extreme allergic reactions. Latex and nuts are the two most significant allergens that can potentially harm our children.

Before bringing any food or other items into the building, please check with a member of that staff so we can be certain that nothing contains latex or nut products.

Confidentiality

Families have varying opinions on the need for confidentiality regarding their child's special need or diagnosis. The Bell Center encourages families to be sensitive and

understanding of all families enrolled in the program, The Bell Center staff and the program as a whole.

Blogging and personal websites such as MySpace and Facebook have become very popular ways for people to communicate with family and friends. However, our staff and some families have expressed concern over the confidentiality issues these websites can call into question. Therefore, if you do blog or maintain a personal page, we ask respectfully that you not include any information or pictures of any Bell Center children (other than your own) or any Bell Center staff.

Equipment

The Bell Center has numerous pieces of equipment that is available for families to borrow. When a therapist recommends a piece of equipment, families are required to sign an Equipment Agreement Form and provide a deposit for the equipment before taking it home. Arrangements for borrowing equipment are made through a child's professional team.

Therapy Notes and Charts

At The Bell Center, all children are evaluated and followed by physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, special education teachers, and a nutritionist; these therapists set initial goals for each child that are updated on an as needed basis. Children receive services at The Bell Center in a variety of programs; infants attend fifty minute sessions two times per week working one-on-one with a therapist or teacher. Older children work with volunteers in toddler classes that are led by therapists and a teacher; these classes meet either two or four times each week for one hour and fifty minutes.

Charts stating individual goals are created for each child so that children can work on all goals during each session. Parents receive a copy of these goals to work on at home, and an additional copy is given for parents to share with any other service providers.

Bell Center therapists typically has 10 minutes between therapy sessions so they can wash mats and toys used during the session and/or complete therapy notes.

Suggestions and Concerns

The Bell Center is a family focused program, and we want to meet the needs of you and your family. If you have a suggestion or a concern, we want to know. Please discuss your thoughts with Betty Bell or Andi Gillen. We will make every effort to address any issues brought to our attention and welcome your input.

Programs

Bright Beginnings

Infants come to The Bell Center twice a week for an hour at a time and receive services in a one-on-one format with members of the professional staff. Because it is critical for parents to become active partners in their children's learning, parents and other family members are encouraged to stay during the session to receive training so that they are able to continue essential therapies at home.

A separate, high risk infant therapy room is available to infants whose premature birth and/or medical conditions put them at increased risk to illness. While parents are encouraged to sit in on the session for training purposes, other family members are requested to stay in a nearby waiting area to reduce needless exposure to the medically fragile child.

Little Leaps

Children with special needs grow and flourish in group settings, learning from their peers, just as their typical counterparts do. For that reason, as an infant grows toward toddler-hood, the child is transitioned into the group format he or she will likely experience in later preschool and elementary school years. In Little Leaps, small groups of five to six children meet for one hour twice a week and receive early intervention services in a one-on-one setting with members of the professional staff and with volunteers.

All About Me

Toddlers in All About Me groups come to The Bell Center either twice or four times a week. Each toddler is assigned a specific volunteer who provides one-on-one direction as the toddler works on his or her individual goals. Led by a professional team which includes a special education teacher, a speech therapist and an occupational therapist, All About Me groups have circle time with stories and songs, snack time to concentrate on feeding and language skills, group art projects and time for work on individual gross and fine motor skills. In addition to the professional team, a physical therapist and classroom aide are assigned to the group, and a nutritionist is available on a consultative basis. The four-day All About Me groups also have a weekly creative movement class led by Children's Dance Foundation. And every All About Me group participates in animal assisted therapy with Hand in Paw.

My Friends

The My Friends program is for children with sensory, social and communication challenges. The small My Friends group has a one-to-one ratio of peer model children to children with challenges. Under the direction of The Bell Center staff, the children will work together on overcoming these sensory, social and communication challenges. The children come for two hours four times a week.

Explore Every Day

Toddlers in Explore Every Day participate in center-based activities that are designed to promote independence in a structured therapeutic environment. A team of therapists lead children and their typically developing “friends” through preschool routines and activities. Activities are modified accordingly to provide opportunities for children to work on individual therapeutic goals while becoming more independent in a preschool environment. The children come for two hours two times a week.

Early Eaters

Early Eaters program objectives are to 1) identify the feeding problem; 2) incorporate appropriate intervention to be included in the child’s Bell Center program; 3) collaborate with parent in appropriate interventions at home; 4) communicate with other agencies or practitioners providing services to the child’s feeding problems; and 5) document outcomes.

Learn to Learn

Offered during the summer months, Learn to Learn gives parents the opportunity to attend small groups with their children which are led by a team of Bell Center professionals. The parents help set the tone of the sessions by prioritizing the goals they want to work with their child to achieve. The parents then attend the sessions with their children and provide the hands-on assistance for their children under the direction of the teacher. Parents learn how to help their children learn through this unique program.

Tuition Schedule

Tuition & Fees	
Effective January 1, 2009	
<u>Class Name</u>	<u>New Price</u>
Bright Beginnings	\$ 100.00
Little Leaps	\$ 100.00
All About Me (2-day)	\$ 125.00
Explore Every Day	\$ 125.00
All About Me (4-day)	\$ 200.00
My Friends (4-day)	\$ 200.00
Early Eaters	\$ 250.00
<u>Fees</u>	
Registration fee	\$ 50.00
Supply fee	\$ 75.00
Evaluation fee	\$ 100.00

Payment Instructions:

Payments for tuition and fees may be made by cash, check or credit card.

- **Cash** payments should be given directly to the Administrative Assistant.
- **Checks** can be mailed in, placed in the black tuition box or given to the Administrative Assistant. Please include your child's first and last name and a description of what the payment covers in the memo line of the check to ensure proper posting to your account
- **Credit card** payments can be made by filling out the credit card information box on the back of your monthly statement and returning to the Administrative Assistant.

Application for Financial Assistance

Note: Any financial assistance granted will be applied against regular monthly tuition. Fees for registration, evaluations, supplies, or feeding clinic are not included. A payment plan for these fees may be established by contacting Janet Wilson at 879-3417.

Child's Name: _____

General Family Information:

Father's Name:			
Address:			
Home Phone:	Cell Phone:	Work Phone:	
Mother's Name:			
Address:			
Home Phone:	Cell Phone:	Work Phone:	
Other Adults in the Household:			

Children in the Family:

Name	Age	School Attends

Does the child attending The Bell Center have insurance coverage? Yes No

Record of Employment and Income:

Father's Employer:			
Position:		Monthly Take Home Pay:	\$
Mother's Employer:			
Position:		Monthly Take Home Pay:	\$
Other sources of income (child support, alimony, military, etc):			
1 st Source		Amount Received:	\$
2 nd Source		Amount Received:	\$
Please indicate your average monthly expenses:		\$	
Please provide any further information which would be helpful in evaluating your need for financial assistance:			

Parent Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

The Bell Center Staff Listing

Executive Director	Jeannie Colquett
Program Director	Betty Bell
Assistant Program Director	Andi Gillen
Early Childhood Special Education Teachers	Amy Fisher Mary Meadows Livingston Valerie Blanchard
Physical Therapists	Mary Beth Moses Holley Steele Heather Warwick
Speech Pathologists	Lydia Arndt Jane Lamb Trish Ponseti
Occupational Therapists	Anna Ruth McCalley Mary Laura Day
Early Eaters Occupational Therapist	Jan Rowe
Nutritionist	Harriett Cloud
Hand-in-Paw Coordinator/ Literature Development	Judi Morris
Classroom Assistants	Blair Kirkland Patricia Weaver
Child Assistants	Laura Stacy
Fund Development Coordinator	Maureen Farr
Administrative Assistant	Benga Harrison
Bookkeeper	Janet Wilson

2008-2009 Team Listing

Team A

Mary Meadows Livingston (Early Childhood Special Education Teacher)
Lydia Arndt (Speech and Language Pathologist)
Mary Laura Day (Occupational Therapist)
Heather Warwick (Physical Therapist)

Team B

Amy Fisher (Early Childhood Special Education Teacher)
Jane Lamb (Speech and Language Pathologist)
Anna Ruth McCalley (Occupational Therapist)
Mary Beth Moses (Physical Therapist)

Team C

Valerie Blanchard (Early Childhood Special Education Teacher)
Trish Ponseti (Speech and Language Pathologist)
Holley Steele (Physical Therapist)

Nutritionist: Harriet Cloud

The Bell Center Board of Directors

The Bell Center for Early Intervention Programs is governed by a board of directors made up of community leaders and Service Guild members. This board understands and supports the mission and purpose of The Bell Center, participates and assists in providing effective planning for The Bell Center and ensures adequate resources through pro-active involvement in fund raising and investment activities. The board meets every other month. Members of the board are as follows:

Jill Deer, <i>president</i>	Tom Luckie
Les Alexander	Valerie McLean
Bruce Barze	Charlie Miller
Nelson Bean	Matt Moor
Tom Brinkley	Yolanda Sullivan
Mary Beth Dean	Mike Thompson
Suzanne Gurosky	Larry Thornton
Donald Howell	Melanie Toranto
Amy Jackson	Terri Yates
Bob Kyle	

Dr. Kathleen G. Nelson serves as medical advisor to the board.

The Service Guild of Birmingham, Inc.

The Service Guild of Birmingham is a local women's volunteer organization which was founded in 1958. The Service Guild focused its attention on providing early intervention services and began the Early Intervention Program which has grown to become The Bell Center in just 20 years. Members of The Service Guild provide support to The Bell Center in two very important ways. They raise funds to support the work of The Bell Center and Service Guild members assist in the toddler classes each day by working one-on-one with children to meet gross motor, fine motor, speech and cognitive goals. This year's Service Guild leadership includes:

Melanie Toranto	President
Terri Yates	President – Elect
Lee Perry	Vice President – Annual Giving
Julie Cundiff	Vice President – All About Me
Caroline Crenshaw	Vice President – Building/Arrangements
Christy McLean*	Vice President – Membership
Anne Marie Everly	Secretary
Adriane Morris	Treasurer
Jenny Nunnelle	Parliamentarian

Ways you can Help!

Guild Gala 2009

The Guild Gala is one of The Service Guild's major fundraisers that supports the day-to-day expenses of The Bell Center. This year's event, Guild Gala 2009, will be held on Saturday March 7, 2009. Gourmet dinners will be held throughout the city, followed by dancing and live and silent auctions at The Country Club of Birmingham.

Parents and family members are encouraged to become involved with Guild Gala. We would love for you to ask your family, friends and/or company to buy tickets or a table. So that our past donor and guest lists are not duplicated, we would appreciate your passing any of these names along to us.

Mercedes Marathon

Each February, thousands of runners and walkers take to the streets of Birmingham for the Mercedes Marathon and Half Marathon which benefits The Bell Center and one other local children's charity.

The Bell Center benefits from this event not only in increased community awareness but also in dollars raised by Partners in Training, a group of runners and walkers who participate in the Mercedes Marathon in honor of a child at The Bell Center. In return for the social opportunities and expert training that the runners/walkers receive, they agree to raise at least \$1,310 (which is \$100 for every mile of the half marathon) which goes directly to The Bell Center.

Since Partners in Training began, more than \$700,000 has been donated to The Bell Center, a significant portion of the daily operating costs of The Bell Center.

Registration in Partners in Training is \$100 and covers the cost of the participant's entry fees in several races leading up to and including the marathon or half marathon, a running shirt and invitation to fun social events along the way. For more information about Partners in Training, contact Jeannie Colquett or Maureen Farr at 879-3417 or email mfarr@thebellcenter.org or jcolquett@thebellcenter.org.

Hats And Horns

For several years, The Bell Center has been the recipient of funds raised by the Hats and Horns Societe, a group of young professionals whose annual New Year's Eve party has become a Birmingham tradition.

This year's party will be at B&A Warehouse beginning at 8 p.m. Early-bird tickets are \$100 per person; at the door, tickets are \$125. There will be food, live music, adult beverages and a silent auction, and everyone is encouraged to wear a creative hat. For more information on the event, go to www.hatsandhorns.com or call Jeannie Colquett at 879-3417.

Bell Center Ambassadors

The Bell Center Ambassadors are our junior board whose mission is to create awareness of The Bell Center and to help with annual fundraising events. Their signature event, The Bell Center Block Party, is held in June and features a cook-out and music for Bell Center families and friends.

United Way Designation

There is an easy way for you, your family and friends to help support our important mission. Each year many of us are asked at our workplaces to make a contribution to the United Way. Did you know that you can designate that your United Way donations come to The Bell Center for Early Intervention Programs?

The Service Guild and The Bell Center are not United Way agencies, and we do not have any agreement or obligation to the United Way. However, you may still make a donation to The Bell Center through the United Way Pledge Campaign by writing the following information down on your United Way pledge card:

Designated to: The Bell Center for Early Intervention Programs
Tax ID #: 63-1244330

The United Way will send your donation to The Bell Center for Early Intervention Programs for an administrative cost of 14.9%. Please remember us if you or your spouse's employer participates in the United Way Pledge Campaign. Your donation will be used to further the goals of The Bell Center. This is an easy way for you to make a big difference for the children!

Bell Center Christmas Party and Graduation

We would love for families to help with the Christmas party and graduation. Sign up sheets will be available during the parent meeting to do so.

Bell Center For Early Intervention Programs Calendar 2008-2009 School Year

Wednesday, August 13	Staff First Day
Thursday, August 14	Staff Planning Day
Friday, August 15	Staff Planning Day
August 19- August 21	Evaluations/ Team Planning
Thursday, August 21	Classroom "Sneak a Peek" for All About Me, Explore Every Day, My Friends
Friday, August 22	Teams available to meet with Little Leaps and Bright Beginnings families/Team Planning
Tuesday, August 26	Little Leaps, My Friends, Explore Every Day and Bright Beginnings, First Day
Tuesday, September 2	Volunteer Orientation, 9:30 – 11:30, All Programs Closed
Wednesday, September 3	All About Me, First Day; Service Guild Session I begins
September 3-9	All About Me classes begin 30 minutes late
Tuesday September 16	First Time Parent Meeting, 6:00pm
Tuesday, September 23	Returning Parent Meeting, 6:00pm
Thursday, September 25	Bell Center Closed, Staffing Day
Tuesday, October 14	Bell Center Closes at 12:00pm, no afternoon programs
Friday, October 31	Bell Center Closed, Staffing Day
Tuesday, November 11	Bell Center Closed, Veterans Day
Tuesday, November 18	Service Guild Session II begins
November 18-21	All About Me classes begin 30 minutes late
November 24-28	Bell Center Closed, Thanksgiving Holiday
Wednesday, December 3	Bell Center Programs Closed, Family Conferences
Friday, December 12	Bell Center Holiday Party, 10:00 – 12:00, All Programs Closed
December 16-December 19	Bright Beginnings, My Friends, Explore Every Day and Little Leaps Programs only All About Me Program, Closed
December 23 – Jan 5	Bell Center Closed
Tuesday, January 6	Bell Center programs resume
Thursday, January 22	Placement Recommendation Letters for 2009-2010 distributed to Families
Monday, February 2	Bell Center Staffing Day
Thursday, February 12	All Bell Center Programs Closed, Bell Center Children's Race, 12:00
Sunday, February 15	Mercedes Marathon
February 24	Service Guild Session III begins
February 24-27	All About Me classes begin 30 minutes late
Friday, February 27	Summer Information Available for Families
Monday, March 2	Bell Center Staffing Day
Saturday, March 7	Guild Gala
March 16-20	Spring Break, Bell Center Closed
Monday, April 6	Family Conferences
Tuesday, April 21	Informational Parent Meeting Summer Programs, 6:00pm
Monday, May 4	Bell Center Staffing Day
Friday, May 15	Last Day, All About Me Program
Sunday, May 17	Bell Center Graduation
Thursday, May 21	Last Day, Little Leaps, Bright Beginnings Explore Every Day and My Friends
Friday, May 22	Staffing Day, Bell Center Closed
June 9 – August 6 th	Summer Session (Tuesday ,Wednesday, Thursdays only)

Resources

Down Syndrome

www.down-syndrome.info
www.nads.org
www.nas.com/downsyn
www.ndss.org

Cerebral Palsy

www.about-cerebral-palsy.org
www.cerebralpalsy.org
www.childrensdisabilities.info
www.cpconnection.com
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/cerebralpalsy.html
www.ucpbham.com

Spina Bifida

www.asbah.org/whatissb.html
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/spinabifida.html
www.sbaa.org

Autism

www.autcom.org
www.autism-alabama.org
www.autism-society.org
www.childrensdisabilities.info
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/autism.html
www.mitchells-place.com

Prematurity

www.keepkidshealthy.com/newborn/premature_babies.html
www.marchofdimes.com/prematurity/5196_5799.asp
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/prematurebabies.html

Miscellaneous

Lakeshore Foundation	www.lakeshore.org
Very Special Arts of Alabama	www.vsartsalabama.org
Special Equestrians	www.specialequestrians@prodigy.net
State Department of Children's Affairs	www.kids.state.al.us
National Multiple Sclerosis Society	www.nationalmssociety.org
Muscular Dystrophy Association	www.mdusa.org
Alabama's Early Intervention Services	www.rehab.state.al.us
The Children's Hospital of Alabama	www.chsys.org
The Exceptional Foundation	www.exceptionalfoundation.org

Activities

Sparks Clinic
UCP/Hand in Hand

Camp Briarwood
Todd's Club
Ace Cheerleading
Hoover Rec- swimming
Children's Dance Foundation
Hand in Paw