

Therapy Dog Is Devoted To Children At Cedarcrest



Cody's visits delight children at the Cedarcrest Center in Keene, NH.

Keene, NH -- Cedarcrest Center is celebrating the start of a beautiful relationship!

After just a few visits, Cody, a six-year-old Australian Labradoodle, and his owner have become favorite visitors at this residential center and school for children with disabilities.

"The children really respond to him," says Melissa Atkins, Recreation Coordinator at Cedarcrest. "His temperament is wonderful and his fur is really soft and fluffy. Cody is a great match for us."

Cody is certified by the Alliance of Therapy Dogs. ATD does not require formal

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Flexibility Helps Families Get The Most From Swim & Sing

Parents say one of the best things about H.A.L.O.'s long-running Sunday Swim and Sing respite program is its flexibility.

Twice a month the enrolled participants receive invitations to the three-hour sessions. Their families reserve only the dates that work for their schedules. Usually 8 to 10 individuals participate in each program on any given Sunday.

Jewish Family & Children's Service, which operates H.A.L.O.'s programs, keeps session size small so that staff members have a deep understanding of the personality, communication style, and accommodations participants might require.

"Sometimes parents are nervous about leaving their child in a new place; many have concerns about the pool at first," says Angela Waring MS, Respite and Recreation Program Manager for JF&CS.

"In that case we invite family members to



Individualized attention is central to H.A.L.O.'s Swim And Sing programs.

attend a few sessions until everyone is comfortable with the activities, then we encourage the families to take advantage of the three-hour respite for themselves.

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Therapy Dog Delights Cedarcrest Residents



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training. Instead it has its own unique testing process to assess handling skills; it also utilizes on-site observations to confirm the dog's gentle nature and that the team has a good working relationship. Annual proof of vaccinations is also required.

Christine specifically chose the breed, and Cody, to fulfill her dream of becoming a therapy dog visitor in retirement.

"Cody has proven to be exactly what I had hoped for as a therapy dog, with his devotion and sweet disposition. He is very docile in the settings we visit, schools and assisted living facilities," Christine stated.

A good temperament is essential to a therapy dog's success. According to the ATD website a dog "must be okay with people touching, petting, hugging, and handling them in potentially clumsy or accidentally harsh ways."

"Cedarcrest is a delightful place for us," Christine enthuses. Cody particularly likes it there with the big gathering room with toys and the activity of a number of children and making new and different connections on each visit.

Founder's Message

H.A.L.O. Aims To Nurture The Person Inside

*D*ear Friends,

As parents, Gayle and I understand the helplessness families feel when an accident, illness or birth defect changes the course of their child's life.

We live with the sad fact that our daughter Sarah, 30, was robbed of most physical and cognitive abilities by a devastating illness at age three. Even with the latest technological advances, the damage remains irreversible.

Sarah receives excellent medical care at the nursing home where she has lived for the past 27 years. Our family sees her often and we provide every comfort available to enhance her quality of life.

One of the stories we highlight in this newsletter points out that "good care is about more than the body, it's about nourishing the person inside, too."

That's why we created the Help A Little One Foundation. We want the kids in nursing homes, and those who live with their families, to ENJOY life, not merely exist.

That's why we share stories of pet therapy, hayrides, and our Swim and Sing program. It's important for children to have experiences that make their lives richer and more meaningful.

It's also important to recognize that families who maintain 24/7 care at home need our help. Learn more about our Family Circle, Sib Shops, H.A.L.O. CAN legal support, and Sunday Swim and Sing programs at www.HALO.org.

Thank you as always for your continued support and for remembering children like our Sarah.

Sincerely,

"The children's delight and excitement is often palpable and seems to fill the room! We leave looking forward to our next visit and are grateful for the opportunity to visit the children and staff at Cedarcrest."

The benefits of animal visiting programs have long been recognized in hospitals and nursing homes.

Research and clinical studies have demonstrated that interaction with

trained therapy pets can provide a sense of comfort, relieve stress and even lower blood pressure.

Cedarcrest Center for Children with Disabilities offers comprehensive medical, special education and therapy services for children who are medically and developmentally complex, including high-tech support for children who are ventilator-dependent.

Visit www.cedarcrest4kids.org for more information.

Families Are Deeply Grateful For Improved Quality Of Life

Caring for a child with a complex medical condition can strain the family budget.

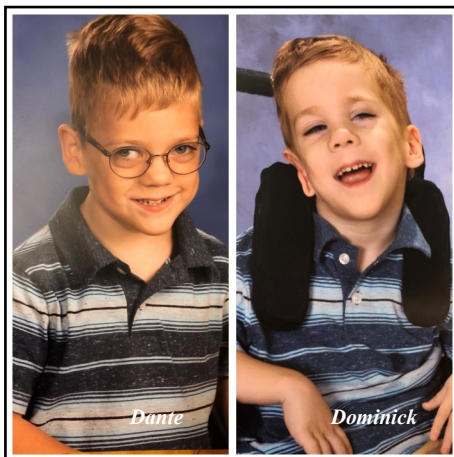
It is heartbreaking when that strain means no wheelchair lift for the van, no adaptive trike for exercise, no special chair so the little one can be part of family dinners.

The Help A Little One Foundation is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for children with neurological disease by providing tangible items and supporting programs to increase physical comfort, facilitate social interaction, and build acceptance in the community.

Grateful families send their thanks:



"Audrey has severe microcephaly and global delay due to her diagnosis of cerebellar hypoplasia. . . . We have been paying for music therapy out of pocket to enhance the limited speech therapy she gets at school . . . she gained so much from doing it the past year. We really appreciate this gift."



"We recently received the (Freedom Concepts adaptive trike) for Dominick and can't say thank you enough! This will be a great asset to all of our therapies and let him ride a bike like any 3-year-old. His twin, Dante, has hydrocephalus and it is helping him also. Thank you so much."

"I cannot say thank you enough. . . [for the oxygen concentrator]. Hailey requires complete assistance for all activities of daily living as she is non-communicative and immobile." (Social worker)



"Emily's mother and I just want to say thank you very much for huge contribution that you made to my little princess. (12 cases of diapers)."



"I wanted to take a moment to express my sincere thanks for your organization's generous donation of a mattress to Cyrus and his family! This relieved a significant burden for the family and helped to ensure this child has a comfortable and clean place to sleep." (Case manager)



"We received the bike right before Alex's 7th birthday and it was the best birthday present ever! We can't thank you enough for giving our son this opportunity to enjoy simple things in life, like riding a bike, in spite of his abilities or medical conditions . . . This bike truly enriched his childhood experience and life overall."

Swim and Sing Programs Provide Individual Attention and Family Respite

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The intimate group size makes this flexibility possible."

The program tries to take a global view of the family, too.

"This summer, when we realized there would be a fall opening in the Stoughton program, we knew right away that one of our Newton families would appreciate the shorter commute

to Stoughton," Angela explained. "This awareness would be less likely in a more anonymous larger program."

For more information area, contact awaring@jfcshoston.org.

'Good Care Is About More Than The Body'



With H.A.L.O.'s support the fall hayride has become a tradition at New England Pediatric Care, a skilled nursing home for medically complex children. NEPC also hosts a Fall Festival for the entire community.



Billerica, MA: What could be more exhilarating than a ride in a horse-drawn wagon on a peak foliage day?

The kids at New England Pediatric Care once again experienced this outdoor adventure this year -- wheelchairs, vents and all -- courtesy of the H.A.L.O. Foundation.

Starting at 9 a.m. on a school day, each classroom took a turn on the hayride. Residents whose mobility devices did not fit on the special wagon lift were transferred to an ambulance gurney donated by Pride Star EMS, whose volunteers enjoyed the ride alongside them.

"It's very special for our residents to experience life on a different level," said Laura Kirk, Therapeutic Recreation Supervisor at NEPC. "Having fun things to do is life-giving. We send our thanks and gratitude to H.A.L.O."

A nurse rode on every trip around the grounds, and the wagon was outfitted with all the necessary medical equipment, Laura explained. Alternative activities were provided for those who could not take part due to allergies or other issues.

Outdoor adventures have been very successful at NEPC, so this year the facility reinvented its low-key fall festival, moving it

to the weekend so the entire community could be involved.

Parents, siblings, staff families and community members enjoyed pony rides, a catered meal and activities accompanied by a local DJ's soundtrack.

"The animals were especially fabulous with our population," Laura reported. "It was very sensory, taking the animals out of their pens, and passing them around. The smiles on the kids' faces reminded us that good care is about more than the body, it's about nourishing the person inside, too."

For more information about NEPC please visit www.nepc.org.

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**A Foundation
for Children
with Neurological
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