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promoting diversity, empathy, respect and friendship

# Tiny Tim Tales

## WRITE NOW!

Sarah Waible, OTR  
Occupational Therapist

The demands for handwriting in the classroom do not always match children's developmental skill level. Studies have estimated that between 10 to 30 percent of elementary school children struggle with handwriting (Karlsdottir & Stephansson, 2002, as cited in Feder & Majnemer, 2007). Penmanship is taught in school, but with less emphasis than in years past.

The approach to handwriting varies from teacher to teacher and year to year. This inconsistency is confusing and makes it difficult for students to learn good handwriting habits. Yet, even in the age of technology, handwriting demands increase with age and children are expected to produce legible, written work on standardized assessments and homework assignments.

The consequences of poor handwriting can be detrimental to a student in many ways. Most often, the struggling student will avoid writing, and will then experience arrested development that may lead to difficulty taking notes in class and completing assignments on time. When given a timed math test, the student may be unable to perform adequately due to an inability to write numbers quickly for math problems. Most of all, students who struggle with handwriting also struggle with poor self-esteem.

Many studies document the importance and value of children learning handwriting skills. Christensen (2005) demonstrated how children enrolled in an eight-week handwriting intervention program outperformed their peers in all measures of writing, achieving a 46 percent improvement in the quality of written text beyond the control group (as cited in Medwell & Wray, 2007). These studies, along with others (Berninger, Vaughn, Abbott, Abbott, Rogan, Brooks, Reed, & Graham, 1997; Graham, Harris, & Fink, 2000b; Graham & Harris, 2005; Jones & Christensen, 1999) offer strong evidence that structured handwriting instruction leads to improved writing performance, academic success, and overall student self-esteem.

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ISSUE NO. 2  
SPRING  
2010

## OUR MISSION:

The Tiny Tim Center provides comprehensive early childhood education and therapeutic services to assist each child in reaching his or her highest potential.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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# Helping children reach their highest potential!

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Many handwriting problems can be avoided or solved by good teaching strategies with good materials. Whether your child is in Kindergarten or 5<sup>th</sup> grade, now is the time to address these issues!

The Tiny Tim Center offers a unique, individualized handwriting enrichment program called Write Now! An occupational therapist will work individually with your child to teach correct handwriting skills and to remediate poor habits. Music, movement, and multi-sensory lessons will be incorporated to help your child learn and retain new skills.

## Is your child ready for increasing handwriting demands as they age?

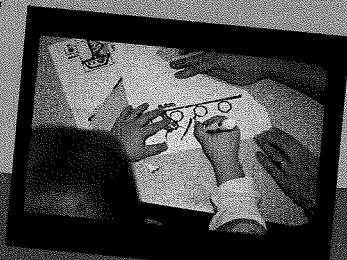
Take the time to ask yourself the following questions about your child...

1. Is your child under 5 years old and interested in writing lowercase letters?
2. Is your child using odd letter formation habits?
3. Does your school-aged child dread written homework assignments?
4. Do you notice reversed/backward letters in their writing?
5. Are they struggling to learn to write because they are left-handed?
6. Do they have trouble when asked to draw an age appropriate picture?

If you answered yes to any one of the above questions, your child would benefit from individualized handwriting enrichment. Please call Shari Karmen, OTR (Coordinator of Therapeutic Services) at 303-776-1373 ext. 301 for more information and to register your child.

Here's what parents are saying about Write Now!

- "I learned strategies to use at home so that I can help my child improve their handwriting."
- "The OT did a great job!"
- "My child responds very well to her (OT). She knows her stuff and has given our family valuable information and help for future use."



## Summer Enrichment Programs Register NOW!

Please stop by The Center to pick up a registration form and get more details! Registration deadline is May 28, 2010.

### Dance, Pose, Fingers and Toes – Level I June 16 – July 21, Wed.'s from 10:30-12:00 \$175

An adult & child group that combines music, movement, yoga, and pre-writing fine motor activities. In this group we will:

- Dance with props such as scarves, ribbons, and wooden sticks to songs that promote body awareness, motor planning, rhythm, and positional concepts like 'up', 'down', 'front', and 'back'
- Practice and learn yoga poses, breathing techniques, and movements using children's books, yoga cards, and games
- Build and draw shapes, capital letters, and first names using a multi-sensory approach to promote early handwriting skills.

### Dance, Pose, Fingers and Toes – Level II June 16 – July 21, Wed.'s from 2:45-2:15 \$175

A group that combines music, movement, yoga, and pre-writing fine motor activities. Prerequisite skills needed to enroll: independently hop on one foot 3-5 times, beginning to write letters and their name.

### Jungle Adventures

June 8-June 29, Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30  
\$120

Caregiver and toddler will explore movement, language, and play with a jungle theme. We'll move like elephants, roar like lions, and create jungle animals with play-doh. We'll get dirty and have fun finger painting. We'll learn new songs and rhymes. We'll send home handouts every session with fun ideas to do at home.

### Science & Sensory

July 20-30 (Tuesday, Thursday & Friday)  
from 9:00-11:30  
\$290

Come get dirty with us while we learn about science and the world around us. We'll have plenty of outdoor fun exploring lady bugs, making mud pies, creating rivers with water in sand, and so much more!

### Jungle Adventures II

June 10-July 1, Thursdays, 9:30-10:30  
\$120

Have your toddler join teachers and friends on a jungle safari. Your toddler will enter the jungle and explore movement, language, and play. We'll have fun moving our bodies like snakes, roaring like cheetahs, and creating jungle animals with different materials. We will explore textures and feelings with finger painting. We'll learn new songs and rhymes and send home handout for fun home activities with every session.

### Crafty Corner

June 14-17 from 9:00-11:30  
\$200

The beginning of the summer will find us getting messy and making friends. We will be trimming our own hats, making our own musical instruments, and decorating picture frames. We will keep imagination flowing with a variety of fun materials, activities, and play. Creativity is the name of the game!

- Attend to an activity for 10-15 minutes
- Move from activity to activity with little help from adults
- Use markers and glue and snip with scissors

### Catch, Bounce, Toss

June 7-10 from 9:00-11:30  
\$200

Have fun with friends in a non-competitive way to learn fun sports. Cheer friends on as you practice kicking the ball in soccer and running bases after a big hit in baseball. This will give an introduction to team sports.

- Attend an activity for 10-15 minutes
- Move from activity to activity with little help from adults



## OPEN HOUSE

4/29/10

5-7 pm

Are you or someone you know interested in seeing what goes on day-to-day at The Tiny Tim Center? Join us for an open house to explore our classrooms and see what we do in the "BIG" room! Speak directly with our teachers and meet the incredible assistants that work in the classrooms. (We are now accepting enrollment for the 2010-2011 school year!) In addition, learn what an OT, PT and SLP do while they work with your children—it promises to be a FUN evening!



### A message from the board president

As my term as Board President of Tiny Tim draws to a close, I wish to share that it has been a real pleasure and an honor to serve this unique agency and community during my tenure.

At The Center, we have been faced with the predicaments a shaky economy challenges us with.

Nonetheless, the remarkable spirit of service and dedication that one can breathe at The Center is unwavering. The commitment of our outstanding staff to the children and families we serve is our greatest asset and gift, and the cornerstone of the quality programs we continue to offer.

Every day, we hear amazing stories from all of you – parents, therapists and teachers – on our kids' achievements and accomplishments as they reach important milestones in their development. I rejoice with you in each and every one of these success stories.

I would like to emphasize that all of this would not be possible if it weren't for the incredible support our wonderful parents, community members, and corporate and foundation donors continue to show us even as we walk together through these difficult economic times. On behalf of the Board and staff, thank you for all you do to keep Tiny Tim thriving and growing.

Your continued support is what allows us to carry our vision far into the future where we wish to see each and every child we serve become the best they can be. I look forward to continue serving Tiny Tim as a community member in the years to come.

*Beth Shipp*, Board President



To find out more ways on how you can help The Tiny Tim Center please contact  
Liz Smokowski 303-776-7417  
or visit our website at [www.tinytimcenter.org](http://www.tinytimcenter.org)



## Save the Date!

# Special events

### Boulder County Family Week

May 1—May 7

A fun-filled week to reflect on the value of children



### Celebrate Mother's Day with the Pre-school program on Thursday, May 6th!



### Preschool Graduation May 26, 2010

# Special thank you's

- To our donors and supporters who are helping us change lives
- To the parents who organized wonderful meals during our Parent/Teacher conferences
- To the volunteers that helped with the annual auction this year— you were WONDERFUL! The event netted over \$86,000!

## Leaving a Legacy!



People give to make a difference in the lives of others and a charitable gift to The Tiny Tim Center can touch families and their children who are in need.

By making bequests and other "planned gifts," you can continue to help us make an important difference in our community, long into the future. All gifts, large and small, are important. For more information, please contact Liz Smokowski at 303-776-7417.

*We are grateful to those who are helping us to continue our services through their estate plans, and would welcome the opportunity to thank you personally!*

If you are  
receiving multiple

copies of our newsletter or have a  
name/address change, please email

Carey at [cpayne@tinytimcenter.org](mailto:cpayne@tinytimcenter.org)



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