

A newsletter for friends, families and supporters of The Learning Tree



The Learning Tree

growing together



A Night with the Barons

Birmingham kids and staff enjoyed a night of baseball with the Barons, on May 22. The Birmingham Barons held "Autism Awareness Night". This sensory friendly game offered a calmer and quieter atmosphere, and featured resources for families of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Branching Out

Congratulations to Logan and Jordan, from our Jacksonville campus, who graduated in 2022! We are thankful to have nurtured you and we are excited for all the places you will go!



Established in 1983, The Learning Tree, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to children and adolescents with significant educational, medical, and behavioral challenges; helping them develop and maintain a quality of life expected by non-disabled members of their family and community. The Learning Tree, Inc. and its programs admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin. The Learning Tree is governed by a volunteer board of directors, representative of the primary service areas in the State of Alabama.

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Alan Taunton

This newsletter is published by The Learning Tree, Resource Development Department compiled and distributed by coordinating offices located in these Alabama cities: Anniston, Jacksonville, Tallassee, Birmingham, Huntsville, Mobile, and Montgomery.

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Growing Independence Behavioral Services - Program Director

Heather Fulford

A Message From the Executive Director, Dr. Marc Williams



Growing Together

Week to week, as I see and talk to people running our programs, I am amazed at the incredible work that is being done. In the north, Karen Radar is busy with our new preschool program, an exciting partnership with Huntsville City Schools, and welcoming their new Program Director, Haley Harrington. In Jacksonville, we opened a new hiring and training location on Jacksonville Square earlier this year.

Many thanks to Regional Director, Jamie Logan, and her team for supporting a smooth transition for offices there. I also want to thank Resource Development Coordinator, Erica Brown for her work with the extensive building arrangements needed in setting up the offices and looking for new spaces. In a more recent development in that same area, we now have a new location opening soon in Anniston for the Residential School in the region.

Moving farther south, Heather Fulford is now supervising the GIBS clinics across the state, with a new clinic at Troy University opening soon. And the excitement in Mobile is that we have “broken ground” on a new multipurpose building. The former warehouse will provide for office spaces, modern employee training areas, a large activity room for our students, and a fully equipped commercial kitchen. We appreciate the work of Ben Cummings of the Cummings Architecture Corp and Persons Services Corporation in this project. Many thanks to Operations Director, Ben Rogers, for his leadership in this project.

And last, but not least, Payton Thomas and Maddie Wise Robin joined our Resource Development team earlier this year. Payton will be working with the Tallassee/Montgomery and Birmingham areas and Maddie will be working in the Mobile area.

In less than year from now we will reach our 40th year anniversary serving children across the state. We have a lot to celebrate. It is my hope that you will plan to celebrate with us as the year unfolds in 2023.

The Learning Tree
growing
together

Celebrating Growth



"The Learning Tree is excited to announce that we have officially "broken ground" on our new multi-purpose building in Mobile. We are transforming an old warehouse into a state of the art multi-purpose building that will contain office spaces that promote a team atmosphere, modern training spaces for our employees, a large activity room for our students, and a fully-equipped commercial kitchen. We are pleased to partner with Ben Cummings, with Cummings Architecture Corp., our architect and project manager and Persons Services Construction Group as the construction contractor." – Ben Rogers, TLT Director of Operations



The new Jacksonville Square hiring and training facility is an exciting addition to The Learning Tree. This facility is located at 28 Public Square West in Jacksonville and offers visibility and convenience for applicants and new hires.



Students and staff in the Jacksonville region will soon be moving to a more centralized location at 301 EA Darden Drive in Anniston. This school location will open this summer.



The Birmingham regional office moved to this new location at 120 Yeager Pkwy in Pelham in early 2022 following a flood at the previous building. The previous location was repaired and is being used for residential programs and offices.

Growing Independence Behavioral Services

The Learning Tree is serving approximately 40 preschool and school age clients across our clinics in Anniston, Birmingham, Mobile and Montgomery, with plans to serve up to 50 clients by the end of 2022. We are in the process of developing a 5th clinic at the Troy University Montgomery Campus.

To inquire about Growing Independence Behavioral Services, contact Program Director, Heather Fulford, hfulford@learning-tree.org or (334) 425-6418.



Partnerships & Affiliations



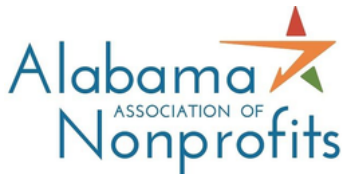
THE CHAMBER
GADSDEN • ETOWAH COUNTY • BUSINESS • COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



**Autism Society
of Alabama**



Lake Martin Area
United Way



THE CARING FOUNDATION

**Mobile
Chamber**



Disability as an Ability Toward Success: Moms on the Move, also known as D.A.T.S.M.O.M., a national 501(c)(3) organization, is proud to announce one of the first recipients of the Conner Dantzler Autism Scholarship Fund. Jaxson Jordan, age 5, of Montgomery, AL earned a \$1,000 progress-based scholarship. Ashley Bell, Jaxson's mother, says "When Jaxson was first diagnosed at age 2, he was non-verbal and severely delayed in all areas. He is now talking in complete three to four sentences. He wasn't able to hold a crayon and can now write his name," Bell said. D.A.T.S.M.O.M. Founder/Chief Executive Officer, Tametria Conner Dantzler and her family created the scholarship fund in honor of her 8-year-old son Conner who is on the spectrum. "This endowed scholarship is our family's gift to create a service legacy for Conner," said Dantzler. Pictured Left to Right:

Shari Owens, Office Manager GIBS Montgomery Tametria Conner Dantzler, Founder, M.A. D.A.T.S. M.O.M. Non Profit Jaxson Jordan- Recipient of Progression Based Scholarship Ashley Bell, Mom, Robyn Henderson MS. CCC/SLP Speech Therapist for Easter Seals, J'Kara Jordan-Cofield, RBT GIBS Montgomery



The Learning Tree was awarded \$20,000 from the Healthcare Workers Compensation Fund. Over the last year we have been developing improvements in our fleet management and driver training. With these funds we will begin the next steps in the overhaul, which will include:

the installation and implementation of Samsara's comprehensive fleet management tools. These tools include: Dual-Facing Dash Cameras, "Gateways" that will connect to the vehicle's computer to report live GPS location and speed, fuel consumption, and other vehicle analytics, panic buttons that are able to be used in emergency situations, and their fleet and driver management software for oversight of our fleet. We are very excited about this progress which will directly impact the safety of individuals in our care, our staff, and our vehicles. We are extremely thankful to our Healthcare Worker's Compensation Fund partners who recognized the steps we have been taking to improve the safety of our staff and individuals in our care. Pictured: Maddie Robin (Resource Development Coordinator), Grayson Knight-Schemer (TLT Samsara Project Manager)

Find Us on Social Media



thelearningtree_al Our staff represented The Learning Tree at a recent JSU Basketball game! They shared information about our programs and employment. We couldn't be prouder of this group from the Jacksonville Campus! #tltrocks 🙌 #autism #hiring #etowahchamberofcommerce #etowahcounty #JSU #jacksonvillestategamecocksareon 🔥🔥🔥🔥 #jacksonvillestategamecocks #calhouncountyalabama #calhouncountychamberofcommerce #calhouncountychamberal

The Learning Tree, Inc. is in Pelham, Alabama.
May 5 · 🌍

Birmingham regional kids and staff just couldn't pass up a beautiful day to get outside. First shift took on shift shift in a friendly volleyball game!

"Some old-fashioned things like fresh air and sunshine are hard to beat." - Laura Ingalls Wilder

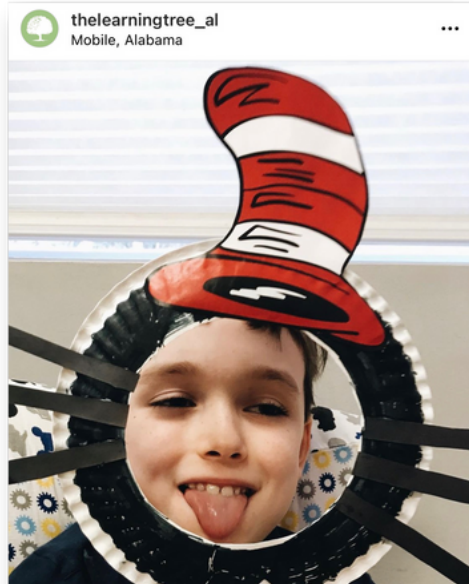
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thelearningtree_al
28 Public Square west Jacksonville Al 36265



thelearningtree_al The new Employment Center is now open on the Square in Jacksonville. Stop by, say hello, and grab a snack!



thelearningtree_al We had a bunch of cool Cat in the Hats today at our Mobile GIBS Clinic location today to celebrate Dr. Seuss Week! 🐱 Can you spot all of our staff?!



thelearningtree_al Mardi Gras fully is upon us! Our Mobile residents are gearing up to "let the good times roll" with plenty of parades and moon pies!

They have been busy cultivating pollinators at The Little Tree Preschool in Anniston. The kids grew caterpillars and watched them go through the stages of development. The fun part, they helped let them go to be free and pollinate the flowers. It was so much fun!!!



The Learning Tree, Inc. is 🐞 feeling fantastic in Atlanta, Georgia.
Mar 16 · 🌍

A few of our Residents and staff took a little field trip to Atlanta this past weekend and visited the World of Coke, saw some cool fish at the Georgia Aquarium, and even some incredible critters at the Atlanta Zoo!



thelearningtree_al
Birmingham, Alabama



thelearningtree_al Here's to a good week! One of our Birmingham team's favorite thing to do with our residents is share a meal together! 🍽️

Community Support

Events sponsored by Vincent Kilborn/Treadwell Foundation & Kilborn's Kids



Mobile & Tallassee Campuses, along with Scott's Residential, competed in a friendly game of basketball at the University of Mobile. The half time performance featured a dance from Learning Tree kids, choreographed by Dance Without Limits Foundation. As this event grows we hope to include other regional campuses and providers.



The Mobile Residential Kids took a field trip to the Gulf Coast Zoo where they had the opportunity to learn about different animal species and enjoy some time outdoors.

Snapshots



Valentine's Day in (left to right) Mobile, Anniston & Birmingham

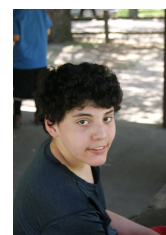
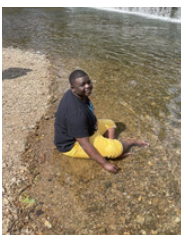
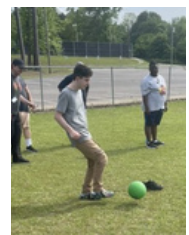
St. Patrick's Day in Mobile



Volunteering in Mobile

Easter in Jacksonville

So much fun in Huntsville



Always active in Birmingham

Field tripping in Tallassee and Montgomery

Autism Awareness Month



The New Flyer Team in Anniston hosted their annual "Light It Up Blue" event to increase the understanding, awareness and acceptance of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Funds raised were used to support Learning Tree goals and initiatives.



The Learning Tree launched our first "Coffee for a Cause" fundraiser for Autism Awareness Month. It would not have been possible without our partnering coffee shops: East 59 Café & Caveat Coffee in Birmingham, AL | Southern Girl Coffee Shop in Oxford, AL | Restoration 49 in Tallahassee, AL | Prevail Coffee in Montgomery, AL | Foam Coffee in Gulf Shores, AL | Kind Café in Fairhope, AL | Nova Espresso, Nova Market, and Rooted & Grounded Café in Mobile, AL



Mobile Residential Kids & Staff participated in an autism awareness walk through downtown Mobile wearing tie-dyed t-shirts. This was in partnership with MOBPacers.

Autism Shines Gala

"A NIGHT ON THE DIAMOND"

AUGUST 13TH, 2022
REGIONS FIELD
1401 1ST AVE S, BIRMINGHAM

TLT Online Apparel Shop

The Learning Tree development team has launched an online apparel shop as an added way for employees, friends and supporters of our organization to have access to TLT merchandise. We would love for a conversation to stir all over Alabama about "What is The Learning Tree?". All proceeds directly benefit The Learning Tree and our programs. Visit learning-tree.org.



State Wide Employee and Supervisor of the Year



Employee of the Year (left): Shantell Gillam (Service Coordinator), Recipient, Jasmine Goss (Training Coordinator), Mobile Regional Campus. Supervisor of the Year (right): Ramona Heil-Norris (Regional Director), Recipient, Melvin Williams (Lead Over Night Supervisor at time of Award, now Coordinator of Residential Services), Carmen Rodgers (Operations Administrator), Tallassee Regional Campus.

Family Support Services

According to the National Institute of Health, parents and caregivers of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder frequently experience higher levels of stress and poorer physical health when compared to parents and caregivers of typically developing individuals. They are at an elevated risk of developing caregiver syndrome and experiencing depression, stress, and anxiety. Siblings of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder are more likely to be withdrawn and have poor social skills. Research has shown that the challenges that individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder face can negatively impact parent and family functioning. Family therapy, while it may not automatically solve family conflicts or make unpleasant situations go away, it can help family members understand one another better and provide them the skills to cope with challenging situations.

The Learning Tree offers family support services across the state of Alabama to families with individuals with severe developmental disabilities, including Autism Spectrum Disorder. Individual support sessions, which are open to the community, are available with Dr. Jim Jeffers by phone, email, or video conferencing. Parent groups sessions are also available.

Potential benefits for parents are:

- To gain insights into the developmental stages of their child.
- Benefit from a professional that will listen in an accepting manner.
- Joys and frustrations can be shared without judgement.
- When in crisis, strategies can be suggested on how to keep the family together.
- Learn family coping skills.
- Practical helpful hints for working with their child and siblings.

Dr. Jim T. Jeffers, Ed.D., Ordained Chaplain, and Retired Educator, facilitates the parent sessions. He is available for individual sessions by appointment, Monday through Friday, 10:00AM to 6:00PM, at 334-799-0186 or jjeffers44@gmail.com.



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September 1, 2021 to May 23, 2022.



The Learning Tree

Resource Development Office
101 South Dubois Street
Tallahassee, AL 36078

Providing Services Across Alabama!

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Birmingham Mobile
Jacksonville Tallahassee

OUTPATIENT CLINICS

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