

## Testimonials

### **Family #1 – The Saterbaks**

*Parent – Ann Saterbak*

*Child – Miriam, age 3 1/2*

When Miriam Saterbak was born with Down syndrome, her parents began attending Houston-area Down syndrome association meetings. They networked with other parents to find the best therapeutic treatment available for their daughter. The recommendations of other parents lead the Saterbaks to take Miriam to the Pediatric Therapy Center (PTC) approximately three years ago, at 4 months of age.

“Early intervention is crucial,” says Miriam’s mother, Ann Saterbak. “We chose to be very aggressive in our approach, and the results with the therapists at PTC have been extraordinary.”

Miriam has developmental challenges ranging from gross motor skills to eating. Although most children with Down syndrome don’t walk until they are 2 years of age or older, physical therapists at PTC helped Miriam begin walking six months earlier, at 18 months. Also, Miriam’s feeding problems are being resolved during twice-weekly sessions at PTC.

“The therapists do a terrific job of coordination across disciplines,” says Saterbak. “The physical, occupational, and speech therapists communicate with each other, share information, and collaborate seamlessly.”

The Saterbaks taught Miriam sign language, which enables Miriam to communicate with a vocabulary of more than 200 words from American Sign Language (ASL). PTC therapists are building on the work the Saterbak’s started, and are providing resources and additional learning for Miriam’s family.

“The therapists have been exceptional,” says Saterbak. “They have done things with Miriam we couldn’t do. And I have enough faith in the therapists to be confident that she will continue to grow and improve.”

### **Family #2 – The Fousts**

*Parent – Gay Foust*

*Child – Emily, age 8*

Emily Foust was diagnosed with Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD), a form of autism. Her family was referred to speech and occupational therapists. As of October 2001, Emily has been working with the therapists at PTC.

“The therapists at PTC saved Emily’s life,” says Gay Faust, Emily’s mother. “They’re fabulous. They have made a hugely significant impact on her life and ours.”

Before starting therapy at PTC, Emily was exceedingly sensitive and unable to process multiple sensory inputs. Her language skills were very poor, and she often threw temper tantrums, acting out her anger and impatience.

“Emily is a different child today,” says Faust. “And I give PTC full credit for all the beautiful changes in Emily’s life.”

During the two years plus with PTC, Emily has learned how to regulate herself. She is calmer and more peaceful. She is able to handle all kinds of sensory input and her communication skills are improved greatly.

“Our therapists have taken a holistic approach,” says Emily’s mother, “and they share knowledge about a variety of things we can do to help. At PTC, they’re not just great therapists, they’re a great resource.”

### **Family #3 – The Jonssons**

*Parent – Araceli Jonsson*

*Child – Tomas, age 4*

The Jonsson family has three sons, ranging in age from 1 year to 5 and a half years. Their middle son, Tomas, has experienced serious developmental delays since birth. The Jonssons took Tomas to a Developmental Specialist, who referred them to PTC. They’ve been with PTC ever since.

“The therapists at PTC are compassionate, loving and safe,” says Araceli Jonsson, Tomas’ mother. “They are very invested in his life. These are wonderful therapists who love him as a person, not just as a patient. I see the tears in their eyes when Tomas makes progress – they love him.”

Tomas was born with an extreme sensory integration dysfunction. All sensory input was overwhelming – sights, sounds, touches, movement. He would gag on the texture of most foods, unable to eat anything that wasn’t crunchy. Tomas would sit for hours without moving, with his hands tightly clenched into fists, not wanting to have to touch a carpet, a toy or a person. And he wouldn’t talk.

“At 12 months old,” says Araceli, “he was already 8 months behind in development.”

The therapy at PTC has made an enormous positive difference in Tomas’ life. His parents report tremendous victories overcoming the sensory overload dysfunctions. Tomas has starting eating, talking, touching and walking, and now he is even jumping and writing a few letters with a pencil.

“There’s been a verbal explosion,” says Araceli. “It’s so incredibly exciting to hear Tomas talk, to watch him play and ride a tricycle. He’s able to eat so many kinds of foods now. We’ve even been able to enroll him in pre-school. At one point, he would scream at the sight of finger paints, completely unable to withstand the sensory input of the paint on his hands. Now he dips his fingers in the paint and creates art. It’s incredible.”

“We’re so grateful to the therapists at PTC,” says Araceli. “Not only have they transformed Tomas’ life, they took time to educate me at every point along the way. They have made a profound investment in our lives.”

#### **Family #4 – The Zimmerers**

*Parent – Nancy Zimmerer*

*Child – Nicole, age 9*

Nicole is a twin. She and her sister were born prematurely, and within a few months Nicole's parents realized Nicole wasn't developing properly. Her sister was rolling over and sitting up, but Nicole was mostly tense and motionless. The diagnosis of cerebral palsy (CP) was quick to follow, and the Zimmerers asked their pediatrician to recommend the best therapists in Houston. The pediatrician said, "Pediatric Therapy Center is the best place in Houston!" At 11 months, Nicole started a variety of therapies at PTC.

"Without therapy," says Nicole's mother Nancy, "someone with CP is always dependent on a care-giver. PTC has been awesome! Nicole is learning independence – going to the bathroom, strengthening her muscles, combing her own hair, etc."

Therapists at PTC have spent over eight years helping Nicole with gross motor skills, fine motor skills, speech therapy, physical therapy and occupational therapy. Nicole has "graduated" from speech therapy, because her communication skills are excellent. She is in age-appropriate and "regular" classes in school, and is regarded as an intelligent and popular student.

Nicole has even started walking with her "Quad canes." "Recently, she took 33 unassisted steps in the public rooms at PTC," says Nancy. "We would never have gotten this far without therapy. They stretch her muscles, tone her muscles, then teach her how to use them."

"We are extremely happy, extremely impressed, with PTC," says Nancy. "The therapists get to know the children, know their personalities, they treat Nicole as a person, and press her to her full potential. They hold both Nicole and us accountable for doing our best – and they do this in a loving environment."