



Growing Times January 2020

Promoting the maximum development of the whole child and adult through innovative, individualized and comprehensive brain-centered programs and services.

Confidence Breeds Success by Ean Koerner

Boost-Up Plus is a 3-week multisensory summer camp for children ages 5-11 that focuses on stimulating physical and cognitive development through fun and challenging gross motor, fine motor, vision and auditory activities. Incorporating elements of A Chance To Grow's S.M.A.R.T. approach, the program is able to influence a child's ability to learn, think and remember, ultimately giving them the confidence they need to achieve success in and out of the classroom.

"It's a holistic approach to help children reach their full potential," says Patrick Dreher, a Developmental Adaptive Physical Education Teacher in the Robbinsdale district and instructor of the *Boost-Up Plus* program. "We work on building automatic responses in the brain, like balance, hand-eye coordination and cross-lateral skills through our ever-changing course of activities. As these abilities become more automatic, students are more likely to absorb and retain the information being taught in the classroom, because they are more prepared to learn."

Patrick has always loved empowering others to achieve success. Beginning in his own backyard at his mother's daycare, he would organize activities for the kids to keep them moving. His passion for helping others grew as he got older, and he recalls the moment in his mid-20's where he knew this was his calling:

"I was helping with a week-long program called 'Lose the Training Wheels' that taught kids how to ride a bike. There was a child who had no confidence in his abilities and needed my help with everything. Throughout the week, though, I was able to motivate him and slowly his confidence grew. As we neared the end of the program, he said the best thing I'd ever heard: 'I don't need you anymore!' It hit me like a tidal wave: I wanted to help people overcome challenges and find success."



Gross motor work on overhead ladder in obstacle course

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Save the Date

Monday, June 22 - Friday, July 10

Ages: 7-11 (9:30 am - 12 pm)

Ages: 5-6 (12:30 pm - 1:30 pm)

**Participants will receive 35 hours
of S.M.A.R.T. training**

**S.M.A.R.T. Boost-Up Plus Summer 2020
Now Accepting Inquiries! Visit ACTG.org to get started!**

Boost your child's body and brain at our multisensory summer camp. The program incorporates developmentally appropriate gross and fine motor, auditory and vision work through a fun and challenging set of physical activities designed for healthy brain development!

If you are interested in having your child attend this program, please call our Clinic Services at (612) 440-0047 or fill out and submit an inquiry form online. A staff member will contact you for complete intake information.

Patrick returned to school and earned several degrees, including a Master of Science in Special Education. He would later attend a conference for physical educators where he was first introduced to A Chance To Grow's S.M.A.R.T. approach. This experience reinforced his belief that a moving child is a learning child. As fate would have it, he was hired shortly after as a physical education teacher at the Minnesota Transitions School, which happens to be in the same building as A Chance To Grow.

Patrick attended a 3-day S.M.A.R.T. workshop at ACTG and began introducing elements he learned into his own curriculum. The administration supported his efforts, and soon he was helping his students get the recommended 30 minutes of S.M.A.R.T. activities each day. Upon seeing this, the coordinators of *Boost-Up Plus* invited Patrick to join the team for the upcoming summer program, an invitation he happily accepted.

Since 2015, Patrick has been a *Boost-Up Plus* instructor and relishes the opportunity to lead the program each summer. "It's difficult in a school environment because I sometimes only see students twice a week, which isn't enough time to reach the 80 hours a year we aim for. It can take 2-3 school years to see any improvements at that rate. But in the summer, we have three weeks to work on specific things for each child and you can see progress happen much faster."

"Every child has their own starting point and progress means different things for different people," says Patrick. "We begin with an initial assessment to see where the child is and identify what skills we want to work on over the course of the camp. We make individualized adaptations as much as possible, and the obstacle course changes from day to day."

The course includes activities like belly crawling, balance beams, overhead ladders, fine motor work stations and more. "We meet the students at their level by making the course incrementally harder or easier, depending on their individual needs. They appreciate the changes and that excitement fuels their motivation to reach their potential for that day."



Boost-Up Plus Room and Obstacle Course

"There's lots of different things I've seen and done that have worked great for some students, but not for others," says Patrick. "This program works for everyone."

Progress doesn't happen overnight, as most parents with a child who struggles with physical or cognitive delays can attest. It takes time, commitment and patience. It also doesn't stop when the camp ends. Parents are encouraged to practice simple elements of the program at home to continue to build on the progress made at camp. Additionally, A Chance To Grow will provide parents with a detailed post-camp assessment as well as at-home resource recommendations.

Patrick relishes the moments when it "clicks" for the students, when they realize that they have the capacity inside of themselves to overcome obstacles on their own. "Once they know they have that power, they can do anything," says Patrick. "It's rewarding when they want to challenge themselves to be better or faster on the course. They begin to see that if they put in the work, they are going to make progress and find success. Confidence breeds success, and success breeds more success."

Tell us about your child's situation and discover how we can help. Children of all capabilities are welcome to attend Boost-Up Plus. Please submit an inquiry form on ACTG.org to get started.



Stay updated about current brain-based workshops, seminars and events!
www.facebook.com/AChanceToGrow/



School Anxiety: Calming the Hijacked Brain

Wednesday, January 15, 2020 from 6:30-8:00 pm

Control school anxiety and help your child to manage fear and calm the mind. In this seminar, you'll learn the factors most common in children who struggle with school anxiety and discover what is happening within the brain. Also learn about possible environmental causes for stress. Holistic strategies and brain-training interventions will also be discussed to help you empower your child to overcome their fear. For more information or to register, please visit ACTG.org or contact our Director of Neurofeedback, Kelly Pittman at (612) 706-5551 or email neuro@actg.org.

Neurofeedback rentals are now available!

Combat school anxiety with this effective brain-training system. Our home system is easy to use. Hook up the entire family this winter! Call (612) 706-5551 or email neuro@actg.org to rent your system today!

2020 S.M.A.R.T. Workshops

Space is still available for several of our upcoming **S.M.A.R.T.** and **S.M.A.R.T. Pre-K** Workshops! Sign-up two weeks in advance of any workshop and receive a \$25 discount! Register now at ACTG.org/workshops.

S.M.A.R.T. Workshop

Minneapolis: February 25-27, 2020

S.M.A.R.T. Pre-K Workshop

Minneapolis: March 3-5, 2020

Bridging The Gap Workshop

Milwaukee: April 14, 2020

That's One S.M.A.R.T. Teacher!

Most educators dread hearing the announcement regarding indoor recess, but one S.M.A.R.T. teacher, Karla from Isanti, uses her creativity to conquer the cold! When the weather won't cooperate, she brings her students into the church and lets them Alligator Crawl under the pews! This provides a physical boundary to keep them in the right form and active inside during the winter! Doing S.M.A.R.T. in a different space also keeps her course fresh and interesting. Subscribe to our S.M.A.R.T. newsletter at ACTG.org for more helpful tips and tricks!



Social Motor Works Summer Camp

Social Motor Works is a 3-week camp for children ages 5-11 that addresses concerns related to social skills, executive functioning, motor skills and reflexes, reading environmental cues, problem solving and time management. This program provides participants with tools to use in a variety of social situations as well as ways to manage one's resources to achieve a goal. Participants will work in small groups led by a certified Speech-Language Pathologist.

Social Motor Works
Monday, June 22 - Friday, July 10
Ages 7-11 (12:30 pm - 1:15 pm)
Ages 5-6 (1:30 pm - 2:15 pm)

We request that all those interested please fill out and submit an inquiry form on ACTG.org. A staff member will review your submission and follow up with you to discuss your child's participation in the program. For more information, including costs or questions, please contact Katie Hansen at (612) 706-5519 or email katie.hansen@actg.org.

Social Motor Works and Boost-Up Plus are being offered during the same 3-week period. If you would like your child to have an all-day experience, please let us know by selecting both programs on the inquiry form.



We're excited to announce the date for our 30th annual Golf Classic event!
Mark your calendars for: **Golf Classic at The Wilds on Monday, June 29, 2020**

The date for the Race for the Children at Canterbury Park will be announced soon.
Check out ACTG.org for updates, registration information and sponsorship details!



Thank you to our supporters!

We would like to thank the Northeast Minneapolis Lions Club, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and Second Harvest Heartland for helping us host our Socks for Santa and Family Fun Night events in December. Because of their generosity, the Socks for Santa event provided 260 pairs of socks and 60 lbs. of food to NE families in need. On Family Fun Night, we were able to provide our Turnquist families with presents, meals, household items and holiday essentials. We are very grateful for the support of our partners and their commitment to supporting the health and happiness of our community.



Personal Care Assistants - Hire a Family Member or a Friend!

Are you struggling to care for a loved one with special needs? If so, we invite you to consider our Home-Based Services programs, featuring personal care assistants (PCA), companion care and respite care. ACTG's experienced team is dedicated to helping families achieve positive outcomes by providing custom plans tailored to each situation. Even better, our services allow clients to hire a family member or a friend to serve as the PCA, so that your loved ones are cared for by someone they know. To see if you qualify, please call us at (612) 789-1236 or visit ACTG.org to find the right program for your family!

Turnquist Child Enrichment Center Now Hiring

Do you have a passion for helping children? Become part of a hard-working, highly dedicated team of teachers taking care of toddlers and infants in the Turnquist Childcare Enrichment Center! Working for A Chance To Grow offers competitive pay starting at \$14/hour, PTO, paid holidays, medical and dental benefits. We are currently hiring for two positions: a Toddler Assistant Teacher and an Infant Assistant Teacher. Applicants should have minimum 1 year of experience in an early childhood education setting, ability to work the hours between 6:30 am - 5:30 pm, and be trained in CPR and first aid. To apply, please visit our website and complete an online application. For questions regarding the positions, please contact Liz Ruzek at elizabeth.ruzek@actg.org.

Will you support A Chance To Grow's programs and services?

Visit ACTG.org, click on the "Donate" tab on the homepage and fill out the form. Your contribution makes a difference in the lives of children and adults with learning disabilities, developmental delays and brain injuries and is vital to continuing the programs, services and mission of A Chance To Grow. All donations are tax-deductible. Thank you for your generosity!

Want to view our newsletter online? Visit ACTG.org and sign-up to receive news and updates from A Chance To Grow.

Equal Employment Opportunity

A Chance To Grow provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants. Employment is based upon personal capabilities and qualifications without discrimination because of race, color, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, national origin, disability, gender identity, genetic information, service in the military or any other protected characteristic as established by law. This policy of Equal Employment Opportunity applies to all policies and procedures relating to recruitment & hiring, promotion, compensation, benefits, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, training and all other terms and conditions of employment.



1800 Second Street NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418
(612)789-1236
actg@actg.org