



The Snap-Clap, Chit-Chat, Pitter Patter

Her children rise up and bless her;

Proverbs 31:28

Dear Family,

HAPPY 11th birthday BKS and 1st birthday to the COAL Center on May 1st. We thank God for guiding us through the many opportunities to serve on a daily basis. Some days are easier than others but everyday is full of mercies and graces beyond our greatest expectations. We are grateful to those who have placed their family members in our care and hope you have found what you need with us.

Help us celebrate our Speech/Language Therapist during this month of Better Speech and Hearing Month. Please pick up a **BE TECH WISE WITH BABY!** Handout for important information.

May all you moms and mom figures know how very important you are in the lives of your children and families. We know you work hard every day, doing the mundane, thankless jobs unseen by most. While you may think that those acts are of little importance, in fact it is the day-to-day acts of love that turn days into weeks and then to years. We salute you, the heart of the family and here-by recognize your sacrifice to care for those you have been entrusted with to raise to the person they were created to be. Be kind to yourself. LWM



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Upcoming Events:

☺ COWS BINGO 5/5/22

☺ Closed Memorial Day
5/30/22

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Happy 11th Birthday Building Kid Steps



Happy 1 year Birthday COAL Center

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Better Hearing
& Speech Month

CONNECTING-PEOPLE

Speech/ Language Pathologist work with both children and adults who may have difficulty with making sounds clearly and smoothly, problems expressing themselves or understanding others. Clients may have cognition issues causing difficulties with attention, memory, problem-solving abilities, organizational skills, and judgment. Perhaps some clients need an Augmentative or Alternative Communication means. Others may require therapy to improve feeding and swallowing. Follow the links below to read more about Speech and Hearing.

[Better Hearing and Speech Month 2022](http://www.asha.org/bhsm)
www.asha.org/bhsm

WE ♥ Our SLP-CCC and SLP-As — Mandi, LaRae, Susie, Dariela, Jordan B. Sevanah, Sarah and coming soon Amanda W. BKS is very proud of the stellar Speech Therapy Team offering their hearts every day honoring the journey and working to improve the communication skills of our clients. Whether it is through fine-tuning articulation or providing an alternate means of communication for our non-verbal population these therapists bring it.

Meet Our Speech Peeps

Amanda Luddeke, SLP-CCC, "You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think and loved more than you know" Christopher Robin to Pooh Bear. These are words that describe us all. We all have skills and abilities that we have not yet developed. For as long as I can remember, I wanted to have my own pediatric clinic that provided a place that fostered new hope for families. The dream I have for Building Kid Steps is that is a place families can come and find hope and understanding while seeing their child achieve new skills and goals. I also want it to be a place where new therapists or those studying to help people with disabilities can come and learn from highly qualified therapists.

I obtained my undergraduate degree in Communication Disorders and Sciences from Texas State University in 2000 where I graduated Sum Cum Laude. I went to work for the DeWitt Lavaca Special Education Cooperative in 2000 as a Speech Assistant. I received my Masters of Science in Communication Disorders in 2005 from Texas Woman's University and my Certificate of Clinical Competence in 2006. I continued to work as a Speech Language Pathologist for the DeWitt Lavaca Special Education Cooperative for 3 more years. In 2009, I went to work as a speech therapist for Early Childhood Intervention in Victoria, Texas. In 2011, I became the therapy director of Building Kid Steps and recently purchased the clinic in January of 2014.

I have a background and training in Applied Behavioral Analysis, Floortime Model intervention, social skills training, sign language, augmentative and alternative communication principals and assistive technology training. I have presented at the Texas Assistive Technology Conference in Texas and consulted with several school districts on making language visible in the classroom. I have worked with severe and profound medically fragile and low incidence population since 2000. Among disabilities that I am experienced with are Autism, Down Syndrome, and Fragile X. I really have a passion for working with children with autism and nonverbal children who need assistive technology to be able to communicate. I truly enjoy being able to work with families to help their children reach their greatest potential.

While I love my job and thrive on being able to help families, my greatest joy is my family. I am a wife and a mother of two wonderful boys and beautiful daughter. Knowing how important my family is to me only makes me strive hard to work for the families that I come in contact with everyday, both in and out of Building Kid Steps. My greatest wish is that every family that comes to Building Kid Steps realizes how much we want them to feel like they are a part of our family and that we want to see their children reach their greatest potential. Here every child has only one label - "Achiever!"

Mrs. Susie Gomez is an experienced speech-language pathologist. She has provided clinical services in a variety of settings with neurotypical and neuroatypical pediatric, young adults to geriatric populations. Mrs. Gomez has supervised numerous clinicians and has recruited other professionals to enhance their education in the field of Communication Science and Disorders. Mrs. Susie has a bubbly and professional personality. She engages well with most individuals and finds delights in the individuals she serves.

Mrs. Susie's greatest joy comes from spending time with her two children and her husband. You can generally find her by the cool river waters in New Braunfels, TX. She also fills her heart with volunteering and social activities friends.

Dariela Salazar, SLP-A, I graduated Summa Cum Laude from Texas A&M-Kingsville with a Bachelor of Science degree in Communication Science and Disorders. I have experience working with children who have been diagnosed with a range of disorders and/or handicaps including Autism, Cerebral Palsy, and Down's Syndrome. I am also fluent in the Spanish language. I am trained and experienced in working with the pediatric population who have a need for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).



*to the world
you are
a Mother
But to your
family you are
the world.*



LaRae Kelly SLP-CCC, I hold a bachelor's degree in Communication Science and disorders from Texas State University-San Marcos. I also earned a master's degree in Communication Science and Disorders from Texas State University in 2015. I have had the wonderful opportunity of working in a variety of settings including inpatient, outpatient, acute-care, home health, and private practice. I have provided habilitative and rehabilitative speech and language therapy services within these various settings. My personal favorites include TBI (traumatic brain injury), cognitive impairment, and swallowing disorders. I am the sole clinician for the completion of the modified barium swallow assessments that are conducted at Cuero Regional Hospital. These assessments allow for appropriate programming to serve dysphasia patients. My greatest sense of accomplishment is aiding those individuals who have lost their ability to communicate or eat independently to regain the abilities they have lost. I also enjoy helping family members understand what their loved one is going through and provide education to family members. I am super excited about the opportunity to serve the adult clients in the COAL Center. I look forward to my personal growth in learning the Ampcare Swallow Protocol, sharing the knowledge with my clients and celebrating their victories as we journey together to improve skills and quality of life.

A Little Humor

Why is a computer so smart?



Jordan Boswell- Burchett, SLP-A, I graduated from Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in 2014 with a Bachelor of Science in Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences. Since then, I have worked in pediatric home health and private clinics. I joined the BKS staff in March of 2019 and they have been a second family to me ever since. I truly enjoy my job and the patients that we serve. There is never a dull moment at BKS and I am grateful to be part of their team. In my spare time, I enjoy hanging out at the ranch with my husband, son and dogs.

Sevanah Campos, SLP-A, I graduated from Elms College in May of 2020 with a Bachelor of Arts, Speech Language Pathology Assistant degree. I have been employed with Building Kid Steps since July of 2020. Prior to becoming a SLP-A, I graduated from the University of Houston - Victoria with a bachelor's degree in Health Studies in 2016. I moved to Wisconsin for 2 years to coach softball at the collegiate level. I have always loved working with children, so when I moved back home, I ventured out for another opportunity. Although I am just beginning this career, it is very rewarding helping each child have and learn the ability to express themselves independently. In my free time, I like to travel, play slow pitch or watch my younger cousins play softball/ baseball.

Sarah Espinoza, SLP-A, I graduated Cum Laude from Texas Woman's University in May of 2021 with a Bachelor of Science in Communication Sciences. I was fortunate enough to complete my clinical hours at BKS and have been working here since August of 2021. This is my first time working in pediatrics and I have found how much I truly enjoy working with kids! Something my mom told me repeatedly while completing my clinicals is "make a kid smile today" and it has since become my own little mantra each day. On my spare time, I enjoy reading books of all genres, working out, and spending time with family and friends.

***** Signs of Speech & Language Disorder *****

Children: Signs of a Language Disorder

- Does not smile or interact with others (birth and older)
- Does not babble (4-7 months)
- Makes only a few sounds or gestures, like pointing (7-12 mons)
- Does not understand what others say (7 mon-2 yrs)
- Says only a few words (12-18 mons)
- Words are not easily understood (18 mons-2 yrs)
- Does not put words together to make sentences (1.5-3 yrs)
- Has trouble playing and talking with other children (2-3 yrs)
- Has trouble with early reading and writing skills (2.5-3 yrs)

Adults: Signs of Speech & Language Disorders

- Struggles to say sounds or words (stuttering)
- Repetition of words or parts of words (stuttering)
- Speaks in short, fragmented phrases (expressive aphasia)
- Says words in the wrong order (expressive aphasia)
- Struggles with using words *and* understanding others (global aphasia)
- Difficulty imitating speech sounds (apraxia)
- Inconsistent errors (apraxia)
- Slow rate of speech (apraxia)
- Slurred speech (dysarthria)
- Slow or rapid rate of speech, often with a mumbling quality (dysarthria)



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*Nunc Coepi
"Now I Begin"*

Answer to the May Joke:
Why do easter eggs hide?

Because they're
little chickens



COTA Profile from April recognition
Brooke Conner, COTA– I attended the Lone Star College Tomball Occupational Therapy Assistant program and became a COTA in July 2021. Before becoming an Occupational Therapist Assistant, I was an elementary teacher and later became a school counselor. With a background in education, I enjoy working with children and am thankful to continue working with this population at BKS. I love helping children grow and reach their goals of independence through occupational therapy. Outside of BKS, I also provide occupational therapy to adults in an inpatient setting. In my free time, I enjoy traveling, working out, shopping, and spending time with my friends and family. I also love taking gambling trips with my friends and enjoying some good chips and queso!!

STAFF NEWS –

Welcome Tabitha Daugherty to our front-line crew. We are happy to have you.

Congratulations on your upcoming graduation as a Respiratory Therapist Kelsey Hicks– super proud of you!



Birthday Wishes & Blessings

Building Kid Steps	May 01
COAL Center	May 01
Sarah Espinoza	May 06
Deborah Delagarza	May 21
Sarah Parsons	May 26

*****NOTICES*****

**we will be closed
Memorial Day May 30, 2022**

We are grateful to all you moms, grandmas, aunts, sisters, friends that take up the role as mom in the lives of those we love.

