

SCOTTISH RITE TO THE RESCUE

Ill. James A. Durham, 33°, IGH, Trustee
Scottish Rite Foundation of Florida, Inc.
Valley of Pensacola



Summer Language Camp at the Pensacola Scottish Rite Masonic Center

Ever wonder about that little boy or girl down the street, you know, the one who stutters and really cannot say much of anything that makes sense? The child appears to be intelligent enough but words cannot be formed or pronounced intelligently. That child has a major handicap which, if left untreated, may relegate him or her to a lifetime of serious difficulties.

It is estimated that from 10 to 15 percent of young children suffer from a speech or language disorder and have difficulties forming even the simplest of words. In Pensacola, the Scottish Rite Childhood Language Disorders Program at Baptist Hospital Speech and Hearing Clinic is making major strides treating such children.

In April 2006, through major efforts of a pediatric speech therapist and other professional personnel, the speech and hearing clinic expanded screening services at one daycare center from one to two times per week and screened four other centers in anticipation of their summer language program. This is their "Take it to the Kids" program designed to reach children who might otherwise not be able to receive the much-needed language therapy during the summer.

During the week of July 10, 2006, the clinic showcased this exceptional summer program at the Pensacola Scottish Rite Masonic Center on Wright Street (the former Governor Perry home). Nine very special children spent the week "working" with Martha McDowell-Fleming, Director of the Speech and Hearing Clinic and her staff. Actually, they were having the time of their lives learning to read and doing what every child loves to do in summer camp – have fun.

The clinic reports that one 6-year old young boy enrolled in the Scottish Rite Language and Pre-literacy program this summer where therapist are helping him to overcome difficulties in combining words to make complete sentences. He will repeat kindergarten in the coming year, but with help from the Scottish Rite special program, the staff expects him to advance rapidly and to overcome his early developmental handicap. Services like these are available at clinics all across Florida and generally available to pre-school children who are having difficulty

speaking or understanding the spoken word. The clinics also assist school age children who have problems learning to read.

The staff at Baptist Hospital Speech and Hearing Clinic has used funding provided by the Scottish Rite Foundation of Florida to screen children in daycare centers to identify those with speech, hearing and language difficulties and to provide the necessary treatment. There were 180 children who received such services during 2005, and this is rising in 2006 due to the ability of the staff to reach more childcare centers.



Martha McDowell-Fleming, Director, Speech & Hearing Clinic
Deborah Stump, Education Specialist, Teacher, Summer Language Camp

The Baptist Hospital Speech and Hearing Clinic reports that Scottish Rite has also helped with purchases of audiologic equipment which vastly improves their services to hearing impaired children, and for the first time Scottish Rite has assisted with purchases of hearing aids.

The Scottish Rite Foundation of Florida supports 14 clinics for childhood language disorders across the state where children from all walks of life, regardless of race, creed, or the family's ability to pay for the professional care, receive specialized treatment. Each Center is staffed by speech-language pathologists who must hold at least a masters degree in speech pathology. Miracles continue to happen in Scottish Rite Clinics through increased efforts to identify childhood

language problems at the earliest opportunity. It is reported that the chances of a child with a communication disorder attaining his or her peer group level are much greater if they receive help at an early age. Parents with concerns about their child's language or learning abilities may call one of the Scottish Rite Clinics for Language Disorders located throughout the State of Florida regarding screening and treatment.

The Scottish Rite Foundation of Florida, Inc., under the leadership of President and Chairman of the Board, Ill. Robert L. Goldsmith 33°, Grand Prior of the Supreme Council and S.G.I.G. in Florida, provides funding and support for clinics located in fourteen major cities: Pensacola, Panama City, Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Gainesville, Orlando, New Port Richey, Lakeland, Tampa, Brandon, St. Petersburg, Sarasota, Lake Worth, and Ft. Myers.

Today, Scottish Rite Clinics continue to provide children with state-of-the art breakthroughs in clinical diagnostics and therapies performed by professionals in their fields. One of a child's most precious assets, the ability to communicate, is Scottish Rite Masonry's goal come true. This is being accomplished with hundreds of children through the many charitable contributions administered by the Foundation, a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. Further information regarding the Foundation or the Clinics may be obtained by contacting the Ill. Keith Albright 33°, Secretary of the Foundation at P. O. Box 5736, Winter Park, FL 32793 or by calling 1-407-657-4550.

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