

Partners at Play:

A twice-weekly afternoon social skills program led by an Educator, Speech Language Pathologist, and Occupational Therapist

Partners at Play began in the Fall of 2005 as a collaborative effort between Columbia Baptist Child Development Center, Building Blocks Therapy (a speech language pathology practice) and Myania Moses and Associates (an occupational therapy practice). The program was designed to fill a huge need that we as felt was missing in the community. As educators and allied health professionals we saw many pre-school and pre kindergarten age children who we perceived as “falling through the cracks”. Their teachers and or parents had some developmental concerns, yet these children did not qualify for “Child Find” or a public school alternative. The professionals and/or parents felt these children needed more individualized attention in a small group setting with their peers to work on social skills, sensory motor skills, language and fine motor skills among other developmental milestones. Thus Partners at Play was created.

Our program meets twice weekly, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:00-5:00 p.m. throughout the school year, beginning in October through May (following school breaks). The program is run one day a week by an educator, speech language pathologist and a teacher’s aide; on the other day an occupational therapist replaces the speech pathologist. Building Blocks Therapy and Myania Moses and Associates provide the SLPs and OTs. We collaborate regarding the children’s progress and the program in general on a weekly basis. A thematic approach is utilized to work on the development of gross and fine motor skills, sensory motor development, language development and most importantly social skills. Parents will be provided with a schedule of the activities each day. While the program is therapeutic and developmentally appropriate in nature it is not designed to take the place of regular therapy (speech, occupational or physical therapy etc.) that a child may need.

Some of our goals include:

- Improved self and co-regulation in a small group environment
- Improved attention and problem solving
- Improved play skills; including turn taking and negotiating with peers
- Improved ability to follow directions
- Improved sensory processing
- Improved language skills
- Improved fine/visual motor skills: cutting, coloring, pre-writing and writing skills

**For more information or to register contact: Kris Solberg, director of Columbia Baptist Child Development Center at: 703.534.5739 or e mail at: ksolberg@columbiabaptist.org
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