



Hart Walker Newsletter



Issue No.7

April 2007 – July 2007

Oops!! I'm late...

As I was preparing for this Newsletter, I realized that I am a month late. Sorry for that, I did include the March Clinic dates in the last Newsletter but should have had this to you much sooner...my apologies.

Our Newest "Hart Walkers" are...

As always, we HAVE to welcome our newest "Hart Walkers" to our fast growing family...

Logan Edwards, Richard Hicinbothem, Lara Garcia, Jodi Rodrigues, Jacob Verlinghieri and Mira Weisskopf !!

We are thrilled and honored you chose us and the MK II Hart Walker.

For all the new parents, (and a reminder to all you veterans) we LOVE to show your kids off so send me some photos!

I will put them in the next Newsletter and I can put them up on our web-site too. We have a fantastic collection of photos, if you haven't checked it out, you really are missing something!!

www.greatstridesforcp.com

If you do send me a photo, jot down some things your child likes to do, favorite time of the day, activities, friends, pets, funny things they say or do, anything, we love to hear about them!

I hate to beg, but if someone doesn't start sending me stuff, I'm gonna have to start making some phone calls.

Everyone, meet Frank!



How cute is he? This is Frank at his trial with John. Frank's Mom, Lisa said he was a bit nervous at first, but here, he is excited!



Frank LOVES to go to the kitchen gadget drawer, reach in and get out what HE wants. Frank also loves the computer, his Therapists find it is a great way to motivate him to move. "When Frank was standing in the walker for the first time ON HIS OWN, you could see how proud and happy he was of himself", recalls Lisa. His proud Mom also feels that Frank being upright has really changed their way of life for the better.

Turn Over for Page 2



Defying All Odds

The majority of the children we see that are being considered for the MkII Hart Walker, come to us with a diagnosis of Cerebral Palsy. I would like to share with you a case in which a particular little girl came to us with a much different diagnosis called Rett Syndrome.

Rett Syndrome, a neurodevelopmental disorder appears to occur exclusively in females but can rarely occur in males. It is typified by the regression of learned motor skills affecting hand movements, speech and walking. Affected children may also develop autistic-like behaviors, breathing irregularities, feeding and swallowing difficulties, growth retardation and seizures.

In October of 2005, I was called to do a trial at the Tully Center in Stamford, Ct by physical therapist Samantha Blazer who specializes in the pediatric population and who is also very familiar with the MkII Hart Walker.

Samantha said she had a very special patient named Lauren Stevens who she felt had the qualities to become a successful "Hart Walker".

When I arrived for the trial, I was greeted by an incredibly supportive mom, Beth and a bright-eyed little girl, Lauren, who was ready for her trial. I had several Rett Syndrome patients in my Orthotic practice and I have to be honest, I wasn't quite sure how successful this trial would be. Well, we strapped Lauren into the Hart Walker and gave her the necessary assistance to move the walker. She was very rigid throughout her legs at first but figured out what she needed to do to achieve her own walking pattern and was soon able to do this with less assistance from me.

Needless to say, all those present were very pleased with the results of Lauren's trial in the Hart Walker and decided that the walker was worth pursuing for her.

Lauren received her MkII Hart Walker on February 6, 2006!...

After some time of Lauren being in the walker, her mom, Beth and PT, Samantha noticed that Lauren was using the chest strap as a crutch to lean in to, which led to a slumped posture. They decided to use the walker without the chest strap attached and found that Lauren could hold herself upright independently which then led to Lauren becoming more efficient in the walker.

Lauren has a 5 year old sister, Erin and a 1 year old brother, Matthew. Beth says they all get into or on to their own wheeled vehicles and scoot around together which is fun for all. Besides loving to run around with her siblings, Lauren loves music and plays adaptive baseball. Beth says that for a little girl who couldn't even hold on to the K Walker, the MkII Hart Walker has opened up more independent upright opportunities for Lauren.

Because Beth knew the Hart Walker was developed for children with special needs different than Lauren's, it was a long shot that it would benefit her daughter. Yet as all of you Mom's and Dad's out there know your children better than anyone, they went for it! They are very happy with how Lauren has come along with the walker. The Steven's family are looking forward to moving into a more spacious home that will accommodate Lauren's and their needs better...an added plus? It is on a cul-de-sac in a neighborhood with LOTS of kids! We wish the Steven's family many happy memories and years in their new home!

Well, recently I had the chance to see Lauren for a follow-up. Even after being sick for a pretty long time, I found her incredibly functional in the walker. She has certainly surpassed ALL EXPECTATIONS!! Thanks to Lauren's amazing parents and a special thank you to Samantha who has been very supportive of the MkII Hart Walker.

Check out some GREAT photo's of Lauren, her sister and brother on the **next page!**...



HUGE SHOUT
OUT
TO OUR GIRL
LAUREN!!



Lauren Stevens "defying all odds" in her Hart Walker. Lauren, you are an absolutely beautiful little girl, we are so proud of you!

SMILE...
YOUR'E
ON
ERIN'S
CAMERA!!



Here is the Gang!!
Lauren, Erin & Matthew

Hopefully the weather will soon becoming warmer which means getting outside and playing!!! Yeah!!!
But while we are all still waiting for the air to warm up and the ground to dry up, (I hate the mud!!!) we still have to find indoor activities for our kids!

Our boys are older (11 and 15) and as much as they may deny it, when I pull out the Play-Dough for my 3 year old niece, they STILL end up getting their hands into it...so do I, so does John. (shhhhh...)

It's an oldie but still a goodie.

Beth Stevens likes to bake with her kids, they help pour in the ingredients and stir them up.
It is still cool enough to bake and who doesn't love homemade cookies?

Buy some of those packaged Boboli Pizza crusts and let the kids spoon on the sauce, sprinkle the cheese and whatever else they like. You can even use the BIG English muffins and make mini pizzas out of those! My personal favorite!

When the weather does finally warm, find a "Boundless Playground" close to you, call some friends and pack some snacks. Call me, if I'm free, I would love to hang with you!

Don't forget that the Stars are amazing to gaze at on a cool, clear night. Even if you in your P.J.'s already, wrap up in a blanket or coat and bring the family outside, you and they may not know what stars are what, but don't be surprised when they are older and they remember those nights when you star gazed together! They really do remember those times with you.

I know my ideas may sound very familiar and boring...

If anyone has any creative thoughts, feel free to share, like I said, my kids are older so I may be a little out of the loop.

E-Mail me any time...brayceco@sbcglobal.net

KEEP THIS INFORMATION HANDY!

Clinic Dates for April through July 2007
(some dates are subject to change)

April

Saturday, April 14

Saturday, April 28

May

Saturday, May 12

Saturday, May 26

June

Saturday, June 9

Saturday, June 23

July

Saturday, July 7

Saturday, July 28

All Clinics are held at our Cheshire location:

335 Highland Ave. Cheshire CT 06410

You can go to our web-site for directions:

www.greatstridesforcp.com

Or call us: 203-272-7862

****If you would like to receive the next Newsletter via E-Mail, contact me at brayceco@sbcglobal.net**

In our next Newsletter we will be featuring a young woman named Jodi Rodrigues.

Jodi is 32 years old and received her MkII Hart Walker in December 2006. She and her husband, Sergio live in Peekskill, NY and she works for Cochlear Implants.

Jodi is an inspiration to us and after learning about her, I know you will be inspired too!

We think she is pretty amazing and we can't wait to share her story with you!

Until then, enjoy your Spring & Summer & all the good things that come along with it!

