



# The Belle Center

A nonprofit serving children with disabilities  
and their families



## eNews: Fall 2009

Hi {FIRST\_NAME},

Fall is our most exciting time at The Belle Center! We are thrilled to support 30 kids with special needs at our preschool program this year. We're also bringing our therapies to 300 children at about 75 schools and organizations. To see how our preschool and therapies impact children, read our Success Story about Davion. Davion is a shining example on how "all children can learn and play together."

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### Visit The Belle Center's new home!

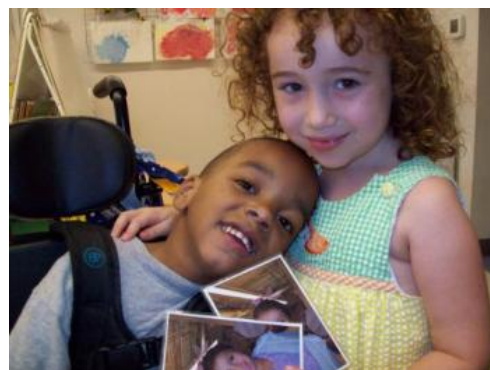
We've recently moved from Des Peres to our new home at 10916 Schuetz Rd., St. Louis, MO, 63146. (Our preschool program is still located at University City Children's Center). We are very excited about our new home because we have room to host Sibshops and other classes. This will allow us to better serve our kids with special needs and their families. Please make sure to update our address and phone number (314.692.8499), and [visit our new center!](#)

### Success story: Davion

Six-year-old Davion loves everything about first grade at Craig Elementary. Davion rides the bus to and from school, is making new friends, and spends most of the day in his regular classroom. Davion is a wonderful example of how The Belle Center's services and community partnerships prepare children to attend their local "regular" schools.

Davion completed kindergarten at The Belle Center & University City Children's Center's (UCCC) preschool partnership. On his last day of kindergarten this summer, Davion's classroom threw him a happy yet tearful "going-away" party. His friends spontaneously formed a congo line, with Davion in the lead. As they pushed Davion in his wheelchair, the kids laughed and danced to the music. It was a beautiful moment showing how "all children can learn and play together."

Although we miss seeing Davion everyday, The Belle Center still supports the first-grader. Our therapists bring their services to Davion at his home and at his new school. We also accompany Davion's mom, Tiffany, at Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings at Craig Elementary. This enables The Belle Center to help Tiffany explain to Davion's new teachers on ways they can support him.



Davion is an independent, bright first-grader with a limitless future. To help create a hopeful future for a child like Davion, [donate to The Belle Center today](#).

### **Attend FREE family-friendly rally. Support autism insurance reform!**

Did you know that insurance companies refuse to cover treatments for autism? As a result, many children with autism miss out on the education and therapies they need to reach their full potential.

Take a stand on this bipartisan issue—bring your family to TR Hughes Ballpark in O'Fallon, MO on September 20. Enjoy a day filled with live music, food, carnival games while supporting this timely cause. Planned by Sen. Scott Rupp of Wentzville and Sen. Eric Schmitt of Glendale, the rally will also provide resource booths filled with information and support for families. If you attend the rally, be sure to stop by The Belle Center's booth! For more details and to register, visit <http://www.moautismbill.com/>. To learn more about our state's bipartisan effort to help people with autism, [read this article](#) in the *St. Louis-Post Dispatch*.

### **Resources for families of The Belle Center:**

- **Join a roundtable discussion for inclusive parks & recreation programs**

Attend Recreation Inclusion Partnerships' FREE roundtable discussion to brainstorm inclusive opportunities for people with disabilities. It is at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, September 22, 2009 at The Center of Clayton (50 Gay Ave, Clayton, MO 63105). The facilitator will be Nancy Martin, a self-advocate and a member of the Special School District Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Program. Light refreshments will be served. Please contact Mary Furfaro at 314.486.2731 for more information.



- **FREE tickets for kids: "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer"**

Your family is invited to the Variety Children's Theater production of Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" October 16-18. This production is unique because it comprises of child actors with disabilities, as well as children and adults without disabilities. Since The Belle Center receives funding from Variety the Children's Charity, our families can receive two free tickets to the musical. If you have a child who receives services through The Belle Center, reserve tickets through [Angie Wuelling](#). For show dates and times, [check out Variety's Web site](#).

- **SLU focus group for young adults with disabilities**

Saint Louis University invites high school graduates with disabilities and their families to be part of a unique focus group called the Transition Assistance Project. The participants will design and test interventions that will help create opportunities for work, recreation, and housing for young adults with special needs. The Transition Assistance Project is an experimental program by Saint Louis University's Department of Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science, and the Family Counseling Center. SLU hopes to begin the next phase in early 2010. Contact Dr. Debora Davidson at davidson@slu.edu or 314.977.8575 for more information.

### **About The Belle Center**

The Belle Center is a nonprofit organization that provides early intervention services for children with disabilities and developmental delays, as well as their families. Founded in 1984, The Belle Center's preschool program is the Midwest's first full inclusion preschool where children with and without disabilities and delays learn and play together. Our mission is to ensure that all children with disabilities and delays are fully included in school and community life. The Belle Center's three programs annually serve more than 300 children with special needs and their families. We also support an additional 150 families through advocacy services and referrals.

### **Contact information**

10916 Schuetz Road • St. Louis, Missouri 63146 • p: 314.692.8499 • f: 314.692.0715  
<http://www.bellecenter.com/index.html> • [info@bellecenter.com](mailto:info@bellecenter.com)



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