

Potential Perspectives

WINTER 2020

Reflecting on 15 Years of Defining Moments

Before she even graduated high school, Kristine Quinby had the rest of her life mapped out. She was going to become a lawyer and then a politician.

"That's how I was going to change the world," she says.

But Quinby started to have second thoughts in college and ultimately chose teaching instead. She was exposed to applied behavior analysis (ABA) and its potentially significant benefits for students with autism spectrum disorder early in her training. Yet, as she began her career, she realized how little it was being used. And in the rare instances where it was, the effect was underwhelming.

"Bucks County was on the leading edge of providing ABA programming, and kids still weren't achieving their potential," she says. "On top of that, parents also had to fight their way into these programs."

Quinby started Potential in March 2006, determined to improve that. As the organization grew, she filled every role, from bookkeeper to behavior analyst, ensuring all the while that the budding staff was supported and focused on the clients. There would be setbacks, but through Quinby's unwavering commitment and the community's support, Potential's impact has grown every year.

On the eve of its 15-year anniversary, Quinby recounts some of the myriad memories that have come to define the organization.

A MESSAGE FROM KRISTINE

When preparing for this special 15th anniversary issue of *Potential Perspectives*, I was asked to come up with a list of highlights since we opened our doors in 2006. It was a welcome exercise. Too often we get fixated on "what's next" while failing to appreciate just how far we've come.

I remember fondly our first little clinic space and the pride I felt when we first opened. The support and encouragement of my family, colleagues, staff, board members, volunteers, and the community has been crucial in our journey. Thank you all so much for believing in me and my vision.

Fifteen years have passed in the blink of an eye, but the faces and names of our clients remain firmly ingrained in my memory. Starting Potential has been among the most rewarding experiences of my life. Yet there is still so much to be done.

As we kick-off this milestone year, we are doing so with renewed vigor and commitment. Strategic planning for the future is underway and we're actively evaluating potential space and staffing needs for expansion. You have probably also noticed that we've updated our branding to better capture our personality and audience. In addition to our bold new colors, we've incorporated the puzzle pieces that are synonymous with autism. And, at the start of the New Year, we'll roll out our new website. This has been a tremendous labor of love and I can't wait to share it with you.

I hope that you enjoy this issue and the trip down "memory lane." From my family to yours, please accept our best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season.

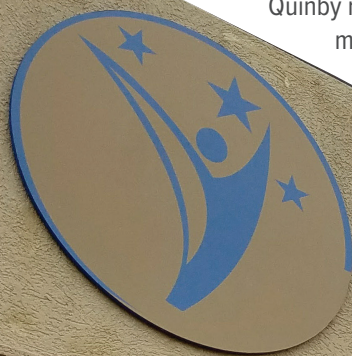
Sincerely,

Kristine Quinby

Kristine Quinby, MEd, BCBA, LBS
Founder, President and CEO
Potential, Inc./Springtime School



Happy holidays from the Quinby family.



Potential & Springtime School

REFLECTING ON 15 YEARS OF DEFINING MOMENTS

2006

- **AUGUST** Potential receives 501(c)(3) status.
- **OCTOBER** Potential opens a 1,000-square-foot clinic in Newtown.

2007

- **MAY** Potential hosts its first annual fundraising gala. The inaugural iteration was a Monte Carlo night.

“Our volunteers and donors are the reason I’ve been able to focus on building a quality service.”

“My Toyota Highlander was so full of furniture for the new clinic that I was squeezed into my driver’s seat and driving well below the speed limit on the way back from Ikea. Getting all of it set up was so rewarding. Just knowing that we were about to make a difference for so many people.”

2009

- **DECEMBER** Potential becomes an in-network provider for ABA services for Magellan Commercial Insurance. Expands its space by 1,000 square feet for the Springtime School.

“Improving access was one of the catalysts for Potential and signing our first insurance contract was a giant step toward doing that.”

2010

- **JANUARY** Potential is approved to be an Adult Autism Waiver Provider.

APRIL The Springtime School is licensed as a private elementary school for children with ASD.

AUGUST Potential enrolls its first client as an Adult Autism Waiver Provider.

“2009 and 2010 were difficult years because of the recession. But as an organization, we really started to come into our own then. We signed our first insurance contract in 2009. The Springtime School was licensed in 2010. And we began serving adults later that year.”

2012

- **MARCH** Potential stages its first adult outing group through a grant from the Bucks County Autism Support Coalition. Expands its space by another 1,000 square feet for speech and expanded center-based services.

2014

- **AUGUST** Potential opens a new 12,500-square-foot clinic in Newtown.

- The Springtime School earns its high school license.

2015

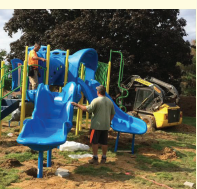
- Potential contracts with Magellan HealthChoices to provide services to children with medical assistance insurance plans.

“Until this point, we were turning away half of the families who applied because their insurance didn’t cover ABA services. It was the result of a loophole in the autism insurance law that was finally corrected when the Affordable Care Act required Medicaid to cover ABA.”

2017

- *“The question of how big we can grow without compromising our quality is something I’m always thinking about. If we stay small just because it’s easier to maintain our quality, it doesn’t feel like we’re meeting our mission. My biggest heartbreak is that we’ve had a waiting list for years and years.”*

2021





Join Us in Our Race to Buy the Bus

There are just days left before the end of the year and we're still \$10K short of our Buy the Bus campaign goal of \$50K. In these last weeks of 2020, won't you please consider pitching in to help us bring this dream to fruition?

Imagine having a child who runs away in public places or who tantrums when overwhelmed in a social setting. This is the reality that some families with an autistic loved one experience every day.

The good news is that there's a way to make a difference.

Research, and our own experience, has shown that skill-based outings can help children and adults with autism adjust to new environments. Until now, we have been able to take skill-based outings on a limited basis with some of our clients, using our own personal vehicles or a rented van. A proper bus, however, would open a whole new world of possibility by allowing even more of our clients to take part in these experiences.

With your support, we can empower our clients with the skills they need to participate in activities of daily living. Please join us in this effort. Please visit <https://tinyurl.com/buythebus> and make a tax-deductible donation today.



Since 2006, volunteers from within our organization and the community have been helping us paint our spaces.



We Asked, You Delivered – Thank You to Our Volunteers

Painting a 12,500-square-foot space is a job that would make most people cringe. But when Potential put a call out for volunteers to help with the enormous task, dozens answered. From May through October, high school and college students, staff members, and professionals from the community came together to freshen-up the interior of Potential's space with cheerful, upbeat colors.

"We can't thank everyone enough for coming together during such an unusual time to help us provide a beautiful space for our clients," says Hillary Sawyer, Donor Relationship Manager. "The project also allowed us to connect with people who had never heard about Potential. We put out a call for volunteers on Volunteer Match and received a tremendous response. People were just looking for ways to give back during this time."

Given that all this work took place during the coronavirus pandemic, volunteers strictly followed all CDC safety protocols for social distancing, masking, and cleaning to ensure everyone's safety. And the effort did not go unnoticed - staff and clients returning to the clinic have voiced their appreciation for the new look.

Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who volunteered.

Our Volunteers are Difference Makers

35

VOLUNTEERS

350+

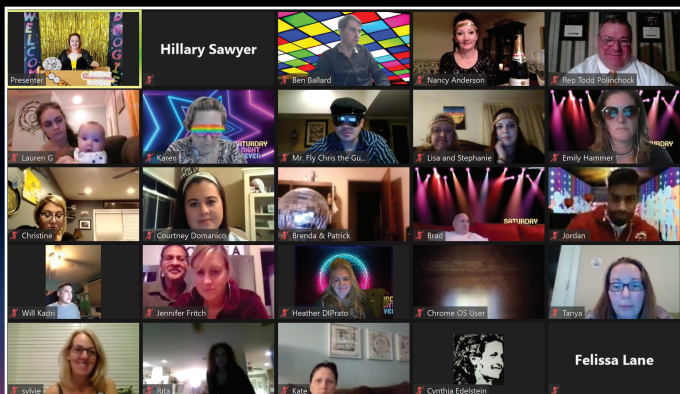
HOURS

6

MONTHS

\$25,000

SAVED



What a Groovy Night

Potential's Virtual Saturday Night Fever Gala in October brought guests—in their 1970s finest— together for an evening of celebration, recognition, and fundraising. The event raised \$12K for our Buy the Bus campaign. With our sponsors, we generated twice that amount for a total of about \$25k. Thank you so much to everyone who helped us make the evening a success!



Potential, Inc.

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potentialinc.org

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New Pilot Program Aims to Support Clients with Problem Behaviors

Ensuring that our clients have access to best-practice treatment — and that our BCBAs are equipped to provide it — is a top priority at Potential. It's with this in mind that we have partnered with Gregory Hanley, PhD, BCBA-D, a research professor at Western New England University and the creator of practical functional assessment, a treatment approach for problem behavior in people with autism or intellectual disabilities, or for those with a variety of behavioral health diagnoses.

"Our goal through this partnership is to empower our BCBAs with the tools they need to provide effective, ethical, and humane treatment for clients with problem behaviors," explains Kristine Quinby, MEd, BCBA, LBS, Founder, President and CEO. "Dr. Hanley's approach emphasizes the best practices that exist in ABA and we're excited to expand our services to accommodate the unique needs of these clients."

According to Karen Yosmanovich, MEd, BCBA, LBS, Clinical Manager, Potential's new pilot program, "Life Skills for Severe Problem Behavior," aims to help individuals with problems such as elopement or self-harm learn to use communication as a means of expressing themselves or their wants. The approach emphasizes safety, dignity, and "televisibility."

"This process is intensive and uses positive reinforcement to promote essential skills such as delay and denial toleration and

functional communication," says Yosmanovich. "It typically takes between 25 and 30 hours over a period of time to effect change." Currently there are three clients enrolled in the program.

She shares that Potential BCBAs taking part in the pilot recently completed a 10-hour web-based class and live Q&A session with Dr. Hanley. Potential has also applied for a grant to extend the program to a train-the-trainer model that would ideally roll out over the next year or two.

Visit practicalfunctionalassessment.com for more information on this program or Dr. Hanley's work.

▼ Among those who took part in the recent web-based class were Potential team members (from left to right "in person") Amanda Roth, Rachel Landers, Karen Yosmanovich, and Shyler Patton. Gregory Hanley and Tanya Hough took part virtually.

