



Potential, Inc.

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Newtown, PA 18940

potentialinc.org

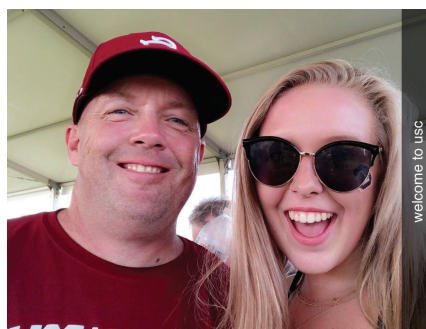
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Meet the People of Potential

We launched our People of Potential feature on social media in January as a way to introduce the amazing members of our team. In March, with the COVID-19 pandemic, we pivoted to highlight the individuals who have been serving on the front lines, providing in-home services for as many clients as possible. While we haven't worked our way through the entire list, we encourage you to visit (and like) us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to learn more about these fantastic people.

Potential Perspectives

SPRING 2020



Potential's Samantha Friend, pictured here with Jonathan, was one of 19 RBTs who provided services to clients in their homes during the COVID-19 shelter-in-place order.

Looking back on our last issue of Potential Perspectives, I couldn't help but pause when I reread the first line of my message. *"If one was to judge a year based on first impressions, then 2020 is going to be filled with excitement."*

Clearly 2020 has lived up to that prediction—though "excitement" certainly isn't the word I'd use now.



From the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Potential's leadership team has worked diligently to ensure that our clients have access to the services they need in this challenging time. This has not been easy and has required a tremendous amount of creativity, thought, patience, and cooperation on the part of our staff and families.

I would like to thank everyone who pitched in and stepped up to help us get through the past few months. From those staff members who volunteered to work one-to-one with clients in their homes or who picked up extra responsibilities, to those in our community who donated time, resources, or PPE. You embody the values that guide our organization and are part of what makes Potential truly special.

Within this issue we'll share more about Potential's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and our plans for the near future. I think we can all agree that these are truly unprecedented times, but this experience has shown me that a compassionate, motivated community—such as ours—can achieve great things.

Sincerely,

Kristine Quinby

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



Save the Date

August

4 Parent Training – Building Communication

24–28 Potential Staff Training Week

September

12 Car Show for Autism

October

16 Saturday Night Fever gala

November

3 Parent Training Surviving the Holidays

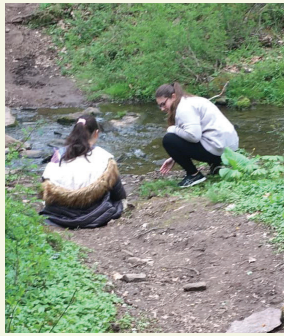
Committed to Our Clients Throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic

Adapting and coping with change are skills that come naturally for most of us. This is not the case for individuals with autism. Unstructured time poses a serious threat for this population and can lead them to become frustrated, upset and often engage in inappropriate behaviors and activities. Individuals with autism don't retain what they've learned the same as most people and without continued support will lose any behavioral skills that they may have acquired through therapy and education. In severe cases, they can become so overwhelmed that psychiatric hospitalization is required.

Potential recognized the perfect storm created by COVID-19 and immediately went into action to try and mitigate the threat that the social distancing and shelter-in-place orders posed to many of its clients. Taking a two-pronged approach, Potential first identified which families would like to continue receiving autism services and which therapists would be available to go into homes to meet this need. It then matched each family to a single therapist to reduce risk of COVID-19 infection (both parties had to first complete the COVID-19 questionnaire provided by the CDC).

"We were happy to learn that the Governor's stay-at-home order stated that services to those with intellectual disabilities and autism were essential," says Kristine Quinby, MEd, BCBA, LBS, Founder, President and CEO of Potential. "As a result, we were able to provide in-home services to 20 individuals. We just wish we could have served more

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Sadie struggled during the first couple days of the shelter-in-place order, but things turned around when she started receiving in-person services with Potential RBT Chloe Mirande.

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Committed to Our Clients Throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic

in this way.” She adds that few organizations in the area were offering autism services during the COVID-19 outbreak.

“The first few days of the shelter-in-place order were very confusing for our daughter Sadie,” explains Ed Burleigh, the father of a Potential student. “She became agitated and aggressive. But once we were able to put a schedule together and restore some of her services, she turned around instantly. We’re not sure how we would have gotten through this difficult period without the support we received from Potential.”

To further support its clients, Potential also incorporated telehealth and distance learning into its routine.

According to Quinby, it’s been a difficult balance. “Our desire is to continue to provide our clients with much-needed structure and one-on-one instruction so that they can continue to learn, or at least maintain their skills. At the same time we recognize—and respect—that our staff have concerns too. We’re so grateful for those members of our team who have been able to step up and work with clients at this challenging time.”

Starting mid-May, Potential took its first step toward establishing a sense of normalcy for its clients and staff when it launched a limited, trial-run opening. Strict social distancing guidelines are being practiced and so far, everyone—clients and staff alike—are adapting well. By the time of publication, 13 clients were receiving in-person services at Potential.

“We certainly look forward to the day when we can all be learning together,” says Quinby. “But we understand the challenges of the present situation and are doing our best to ensure clients receive the services they need in the safest environment and approach possible.”

20 Number of individuals currently* receiving services in the home

13 Number of individuals currently* receiving services in the clinic

26 Number of individuals currently* receiving telehealth** support

2,131 Service hours provided by Potential during Bucks County’s 12-week shelter-in-place period***

* As of publication date

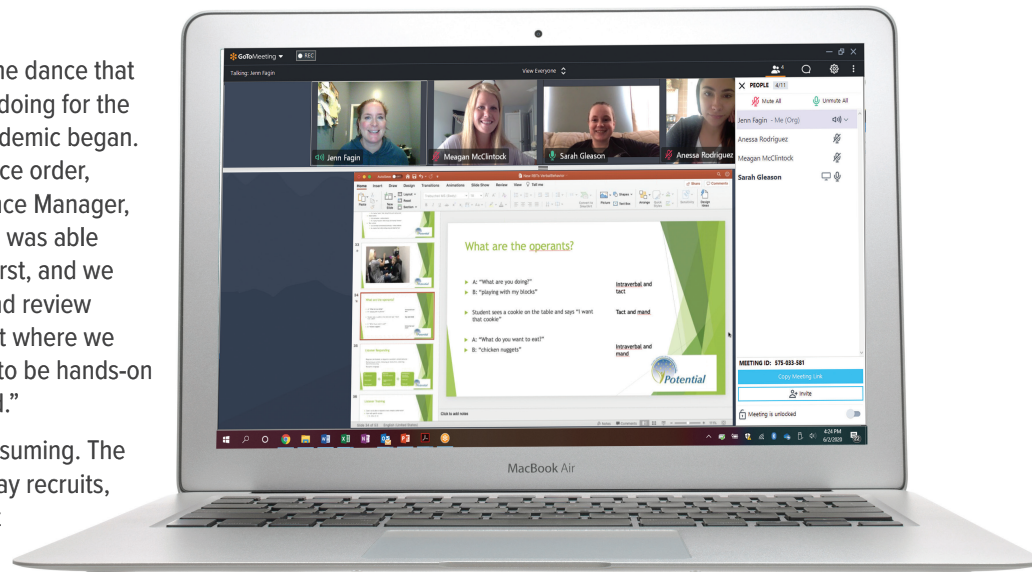
** A person may be receiving both telehealth and in-home services

*** March 15 – June 5, 2020

Training for the Future

Two steps forward, three steps back. It’s the dance that Potential’s Jen Fagin seems to have been doing for the past three months since the COVID-19 pandemic began. In the days leading up to the shelter-in-place order, Fagin, who serves at Potential’s Performance Manager, was busy training four new RBT recruits. “I was able to adapt to an online training platform at first, and we managed to watch videos, do check-ins and review content,” she says. “Then we got to a point where we couldn’t do anymore because we needed to be hands-on with clients. So everything was put on hold.”

Fast forward two months and training is resuming. The class, which consists of both March and May recruits, is a bit smaller than originally planned. But Fagin is happy to just be moving in the right direction again. “We met virtually to bring the two May recruits up to speed on the classroom-based instruction,” she says. “Then, on June 8 these two students plus one from our earlier class, picked up where we left off, with the hands-on, skill-based training.”



Fagin shares that she hopes to bring the other recruits on later in the summer when they finish or graduate from college and more client hours are available.

Three Great Ways to Support Potential’s Buy the Bus Campaign

We’re still making steady progress toward our goal of buying a bus for Potential! Since the launch of our campaign, we’ve raised a little over \$18K and are nearly halfway to our \$50K goal.



There are three ways you can help support this effort. The first is to simply make a tax-deductible donation at <https://tinyurl.com/buythebus>.

The second is to join us for our annual gala, which has been rescheduled for Friday, October 16 from 6 – 11 p.m. To learn more or purchase tickets visit <https://tinyurl.com/snfickets>.

Grant Helps Offset COVID-19-Related Expenses

Potential is pleased to share that it is the recipient of a \$4,500 grant from Foundations Community Partnership (FCP). The grant, which was earmarked for COVID-19-related expenses, helped Potential cover the purchase of personal protective equipment. According to Hillary Sawyer, Potential’s Development Associate, “we are very grateful to FCP for this much-needed support during a challenging financial period.”



Getting Ready for Our Clients’ Return

While our building may be quieter than usual, we certainly aren’t bored! For the past several weeks we’ve been working hard to provide a fresh, clean space for our returning clients and staff.

More than half of the building has been painted and our playground is getting spruced up. We’re also working to add flower and vegetable gardens for our staff and clients to enjoy.

We would like to thank the volunteers who have helped us with the bulk of this work. Through your contribution of time and talent, we’ve saved nearly \$10K for the school.

While we’ve made great progress, there is still much that is left to be done. Volunteers are needed to help complete painting and assist with weeding throughout the summer. If you’re available to help, please sign up here <https://buff.ly/2YWfYkO>. We are observing physical distancing best practices, limiting the number of volunteers we utilize (only two people to a room), and all volunteers are required to wear masks. We will provide necessary painting supplies (e.g. paint, rollers, brushes) but volunteers are welcome to bring their own supplies too.

Or you can join us on September 12th for our 5th Annual Car Show for Autism. Please visit CarShowforAutism.org for more information.

By supporting the Buy the Bus Campaign you will be helping Potential purchase a bus that will expand opportunities for our clients which otherwise are not possible. Field trips, community events and other therapeutic skill-based outings will help our clients gain social skills, a sense of independence and exposure to opportunities and environments they might not otherwise encounter. Please consider donating today. Thank you for your generosity and for helping us expand our clients’ world.



Creating a Safe Learning Environment for Clients and Staff

How do you provide a safe learning environment in the era of COVID-19? It’s a question that schools and service providers across the country are all working to wrap their heads around these days.

At Potential, the safety of clients and staff is—and has always been—a top concern. COVID-19 brings a unique set of challenges to the equation, however, and has prompted us to put into place several precautions to ensure a safe, clean environment for anyone coming to our building for services. Learn more about these precautions by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/Potential-Covid-19>.



Additionally, we’re looking for donations of soil and plants for our new gardens, and for someone to help us create a walkway (using pavers, brick, or other similar material) from the pavement to the playground. If you can help us with either of these needs, please contact Hillary Sawyer at development@potentialinc.org.