



Non-Competitive **Fitness** Proven to Help Autistic Kids Funfit's Family-Inclusive programming Shown to Help

WASHINGTON, D.C. (RUSHPRNEWS) -April 19, 2008 - Non-competitive, active play fitness programming is a fun way to bring success into the life of a child on the autistic spectrum and to add joy into the life of their parents. In developing fitness programs that include autistic children, Celia Kibler, Funfit's founder and program director first looked at the problems such children may face.

She concluded that many of these issues may directly impact their ability to participate in **exercise** and needed to be addressed with the involvement of the whole family. These problems are in addition to the basic deficits in communication abilities, social skills, and behaviour. Some of these problems are listed below.

- Coordination: clumsy, fall often, knock people over, run into people
- Visual Tracking: unable to follow balls
- Slow Mental Processing: slow reaction times, hard to anticipate
- Short Attention Span: poor coordination
- Fine Motor Skills: difficulty manually manipulating items

Therefore Kibler concluded that parents need to structure the exercise to the abilities of your child. Funfit has designed **exercise programs** around special interests to motivate the kids. A focus on bilateral exercise which improves communication between the left and the right hemispheres of the **brain** such as walking, bicycling, and jumping jacks are encouraged.

Once introduced to the programs, autistic children usually love learning new skills and enjoy accomplishments they've never had and look forward to their next class. Parents will see that neurological connections are strengthened leading to better trunk stability, balance and coordination. Through family game play and **fitness training**, children build confidence and self-esteem.

Funfit Family Fitness Center offers a variety of proven successful programming in Fitness, Martial Arts, Yoga and enrichment that allows families with children on the autistic spectrum to partake in family inclusive activities with their child. Cognitive development, speech and social development and body awareness, balance, coordination and **relaxation** are enhanced through specially designed activities, as well as positive interaction with other families and kids with and without special needs.

Activities and game play are always age-appropriate, non-competitive and fun, and designed to entice the child to participate and to continue to participate regardless of skill, gender or abilities.

The end result is the successful achievements each child feels in class, maximum physical benefits, the ability to participate in a class with all other types of children . In addition, many of the games and activities that families learn at Funfit can be brought back and played at home, allowing the family to continue enjoying each other and reinforcing the skills learned in class.

“By doing what your child loves, your child will love being with you,” Richard Solomon, MD, founder of the P.L.A.Y. Project

ABOUT CELIA KIBLER

About Celia Kibler: Celia Kibler, President of Funfit Inc. and co-creator of the Funfit fitness program for children since 1987. BS from the University of Maryland. Certified, Level 2, Radiant Child [Yoga Instructor](#). Past faculty member of Montgomery College Challenge Program teaching Health and Fitness to mentally and physically challenged adults. Invited speaker at the International Kids Fitness Association Conference (no longer active), Maryland [Recreation and Parks Conference](#), as well as speaker on Teen Fitness to Prince Georges County Recreation in Maryland. Business member of the International Dance Exercise Association. She is also a certified Level 3 Radiant Child Yoga Instructor. Other certifications include NESTA/PACE [Personal Trainer Certification](#) and IFA Sports Nutritionist Certification.

Celia Kibler has been appointed as the Fitness Advisor for the National Children's Museum in Washington and as such will further play an important part in promoting fitness for all children.

The FUNFIT FAMILY [FITNESS CENTER](#)

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