



# Fiscal Year 2018 Annual Report

We create limitless possibilities for infants, children and adults with developmental delays and disabilities. We go the extra mile to ensure that every child and family has the therapies and programs they need to live, learn, work and play in their communities.

VILLA PARK | NAPERVILLE | ELGIN

[eastersealsdfvr.org](http://eastersealsdfvr.org)

Photo by Alicia Taylor



# A Message from the President & CEO

Our services are always evolving to best meet the needs of children and families. Decades of clinical experience have honed our ability to anticipate, identify and respond to the ever-changing needs of children with developmental delays. As leaders in our field, we take an active approach to developing new programs that are shaped by our client's goals. Fiscal year 2018 was no exception.

- We built an Autism Collaborative that offers comprehensive programming and specialized services.
- We introduced another neonatal follow-up clinic to further support the development of premature babies.
- We gained recognition in the community with a new Naperville site and a new brand identity.
- We continue to partner with the state's leading medical providers who trust and value our clinical expertise.

The guidance of our Board, the dedication of our team, and the support of our community fuel our mission and drive our vision. Together, we are creating limitless possibilities for the children and families we serve.



**Theresa Forthofer**

President & CEO

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# 2018

## A New Look

We reintroduced Easterseals DuPage & Fox Valley to the world with renewed relevance. Along with the National Easterseals organization and our colleague affiliates across the country, we adopted a new look in the form of a brighter logo, a new presentation of our name, and a clear brand voice. This “brand renaissance” unified our identity and messaging to increase recognition of Easterseals and awareness of our services. Together, we are helping more infants and children with developmental delays and disabilities build the skills they need to live, learn, work and play in their communities.

## A New Home

In early 2018 we proudly opened the doors to a new site for our Naperville location. These improved facilities allow for larger treatment rooms and enhanced services. The ribbon-cutting and open house drew community leaders including DuPage County Board Members, Jim Healy and Janice Anderson, as well as DuPage Circuit Judge, Jeff McKay, Senators Michael Connelly and John Curran, and Representative David S. Olsen. This highly-customized therapy center was designed to best meet the needs of children in and around Naperville as they work toward achieving their therapeutic goals.

## A New Space

June 2018 marked 20 years in our current Villa Park building. This milestone came with an exciting transformation to our space that exhibits our commitment to excellence and advancement. The Waltemade Learning Center was born out of Martha Waltemade’s deep commitment to Easterseals and education. For more than 50 years, she shared her time, talent and treasure and made it her mission to ensure continued professional growth and training for clinicians to develop and share their expertise. Through a generous bequest, her vision was realized.

An extensive remodeling and redesign of existing meeting rooms gave way to the Waltemade Learning Center – a state-of-the-art space that serves an educational purpose. This collaborative environment is a place for therapists, doctors and clinical experts to learn, grow and teach. The Learning Center houses our strong network of mentorships, advisory boards and continuing education courses that keep us at the forefront of therapeutic care.



# Comprehensive Care

Whether a child is facing a mild developmental delay, complex disability or undiagnosed concern, we are here to help them get off to the best start. When families come to Easterseals, they gain a partner to support their child's growth through their earliest developmental milestones. As they age, we track their progress and stay focused on their future to provide the personalized care they need – be it weekly therapies, occasional visits or transition services that carry them through adulthood. We are always introducing partnerships and programs that support children with disabilities at each phase of their development.



## Tracking Babies' Milestones with Pathways.org

We are proud to collaborate with Pathways.org and the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab on their latest project to support child development. These renowned organizations share our commitment to identifying and treating developmental delays as early as possible. Pathway's work includes a series of videos to distinguish between typical and atypical development in a child's first six months. Forty of our therapists hold Neuro-Developmental Treatment (NDT) Certifications, with 13 holding an additional Advanced Baby Certification. This expertise made our team an obvious choice to participate in this important project. These videos are the first phase of an extensive baby initiative that will serve as a resource for parents and support future trainings for other professionals.

## A Designated Space for Teens

Clients who have entered their teenage years or young adulthood now have a designated therapy treatment space. Teens can work toward therapy goals alongside their peers, and their sessions are geared toward their age group and interests. A generous donation funded specialized occupational and physical therapy equipment to accommodate older children. This includes adjustable benches, a pilates bar, adult-sized air cushions, larger bolsters, a swing that can bear higher weights and an iPad loaded with teen-friendly apps and music. An upper extremity ranger was also installed to help improve range-of-motion, strength and coordination. This space speaks to our comprehensive care as we respond to the evolving needs of children with disabilities.



# Neonatal Follow-Up Clinic Helps Babies Thrive

## The Need

One in ten babies in the United States is born prematurely. Babies born before 37 weeks are considered preterm and are at risk for developmental delays and long-term health issues. Left unaddressed, these children are unlikely to reach their milestones which may ultimately impact their education and ability to work.

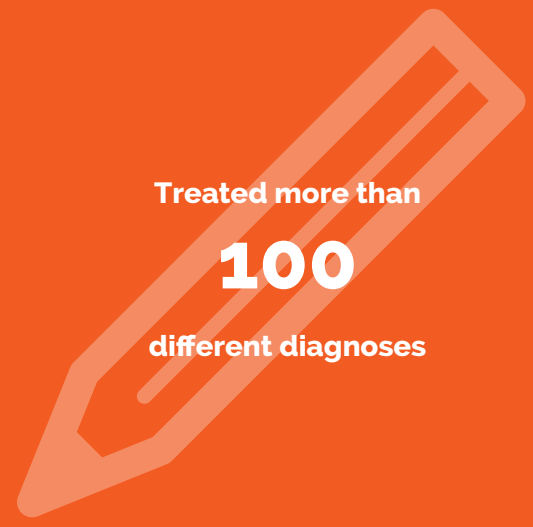
## Our Response

Since 1999, there have been more than 3,800 visits to our neonatal follow-up clinic in Villa Park. Once discharged from the hospital, premature infants visit the clinic every six months for developmental assessments and a series of follow up appointments. The interdisciplinary therapy team provides insight and recommendations to support the child's development in their first two years.

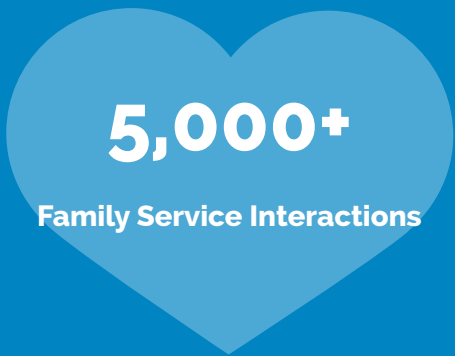
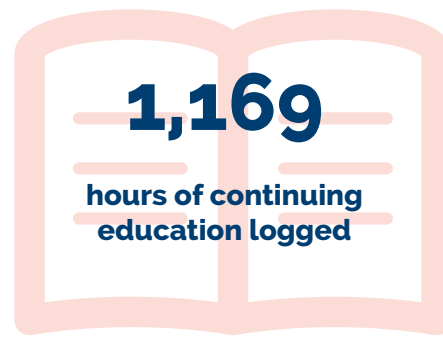
Our team is highly respected for their advanced certifications and hand-on experience treating babies. Advocate Sherman Hospital recognized this unique and valuable expertise and with their urging, a neonatal follow up clinic was started at our Elgin location. Together, physical, occupational and speech-language therapists help premature or medically complex babies thrive.

## The Outcome

Within a year the new neonatal follow-up clinic was operating at capacity and 23 babies were on track to achieve important developmental milestones – to eat, to crawl, to sit, to walk. This includes Jose who was born ten weeks prematurely and was showing gross motor delays. He made such great progress in the hands of the neonatal team that by the time a state evaluation was conducted for Early Intervention services, he had caught up and no longer required in-home therapies.



**36**  
children participated in an Augmentative & Alternative Communication mentoring program



**46,804**  
hours of therapy provided



**167**  
children participated in social and recreational Community Based Therapy Programs



\*According to a family survey

# The Autism Collaborative

**1 in 59 children are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder**

We approached the growing need for autism services head on. The depth and growth of these much-needed services led to the aptly-named, Autism Collaborative. This service rich model enhances our current expertise in autism and encompasses the comprehensive programming that defines us.

In addition to our core therapy services, the Autism Collaborative includes specialized clinics, medical partnerships, behavioral therapy, clinical experts, diagnostics and family support. Two of the year's standout programs, Fun with Food and Treadmill for Students with Autism and Apraxia Protocol (TAAP), are also included in the collaborative for their proven effectiveness supporting children with autism, as well as children with other developmental delays.

**Learn more about Fun with Food and TAAP on page 9.**

## The Autism Collaborative

**Behavioral Therapy**

**Autism Diagnostic Clinic**

**Occupational Therapy**

**Speech-Language Therapy**

**Physical Therapy**

**Nutrition Therapy**

**Auditory Processing**

**Sensory Regulation Strategies**

**Social Skills Groups**

**Family Support**



Max handles a green pepper after a Fun with Food session

# Fueling Healthy Children: Fun with Food

*“I love watching the kids change the way they see food - from a flight or fight reaction to giant belly laughs. When these families find us, they are worried, stressed, and feel like failures because they can't get their kid to eat and every meal of every day is a battle. When the kids and families change the relationship they have with food and mealtimes, they change the relationship they have with each other. Exploring foods through play and engagement with peers is so powerful. It's fun watching it all unfold.”*

**– Laura McKinney, Occupational Therapist**

## The Need

As many as 90% of children with developmental delays have at least one nutrition risk factor.

Nutrition risks compromise a child's energy, endurance and focus, making it even more difficult to reach their milestones and overcome medical difficulties. Challenges are magnified for those already facing a developmental delay or disability.

## Our Response

We offer one of the few medical nutrition therapy programs in the Midwest, specifically for children with special needs. Our focus on sound nutrition extends across therapy disciplines. Our team of registered dietitian nutritionists collaborate with speech-language pathologists and occupational therapists to help meet a child's feeding needs. A growing number of families sought support for children who struggled with weight gain, mealtime routines and food tolerance. In response, we expanded our Fun with Food Program which applies a sensory-based feeding approach in a group setting. The program promotes the healthy exploration of foods for children with a limited diet, often resulting from Autism Spectrum Disorder, sensory processing disorder or feeding disorders. A combination of physical warm-ups, games and discussion gradually build up to touching, smelling, licking or biting a new food. By creating a fun, supportive experience with peers, children are more likely to explore different tastes and textures.

## The Outcome

Fun with Food is transforming mealtime for three-year-old Max and his family. A dairy allergy, paired with food sensitivity and sensory-processing challenges greatly impacted Max's relationship with food. The pain he experienced before his allergy was diagnosed made him hesitant to eat anything, and the sight of unfamiliar food would often spur tantrums. The Easterseals Feeding Clinic helped identify his sensory-processing difficulties and recommended Fun with Food. The group has helped Max accept new foods on his plate without issue and is working to expand his diet beyond mostly dry foods and smoothies. He loves tools, and now has fun interacting with food using tongs, spiralizers and other utensils. He is finding joy at mealtime.





*Brinley maneuvers the moving walkway at the airport thanks to TAAP*

# **Build Your Muscles, Build Your Mind: Treadmill for Students with Autism & Apraxia Protocol (TAAP)**

## **The Need**

Children with autism and apraxia (motor disorder) often struggle with visual processing – the brain's ability to understand the visual information it receives. 80% of sensory information enters the brain visually, which is why visual processing is crucial to learning. When this skill is impacted, a child may struggle with school work, interpreting social cues and physical coordination.

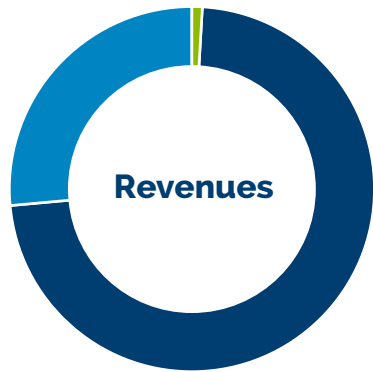
## **Our Response**

Our occupational and physical therapy teams collaborated to launch "Build Your Muscles, Build Your Mind." This intensive, treadmill-based therapy program (TAAP) is rooted in evidence that children develop visual processing through gross motor play. Exercise is proven to strengthen key areas of the brain involved in attention, memory and learning. Adding a complex activity to an aerobic exercise expands the brain's connections even further. Over the course of 8-weeks, treadmill sequences progress to include more challenging add-ons such as naming colors while walking backwards or catching a ball while walking uphill. By activating these skills at the same time, brain function improves.

## **The Outcome**

All participants noted measurable change as a result of this intensive therapy program. Visual processing progress came with increased walking speed, endurance, alignment, body awareness, core strength, balance and confidence. Group members motivated each other and social interactions improved along with their visual motor skills.

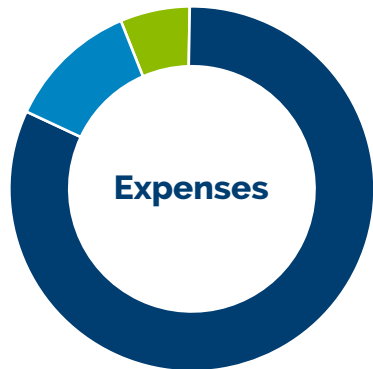
While traveling over the summer, Brinley's family was shocked to see her step confidently on and off the moving walkway at the airport without assistance. Before the TAAP program she required hand holding and guidance so that she wouldn't trip and fall. They credit TAAP with improving her visual processing and coordination enough to carry out the sequence of motor planning steps required to use a moving walkway.



**Program Revenue**  
74.7%

**Contributions & Bequests**  
24.2%

**Service Billing,  
Miscellaneous**  
1.1%



**Program Services**  
82.7%

**Management and General**  
12.0%

**Fundraising**  
5.3%

## Revenues & Expenses: Fiscal Year 2018 | September 1, 2017 – August 31, 2018

This condensed financial summary has been prepared by Easterseals DuPage & Fox Valley.

### Statement of Financial Position - August 31, 2017 & 2018

Assets	2017	2018	Liabilities & Net Assets	2017	2018
Cash	738,582	\$ 898,552	Liabilities	\$ 641,109	\$ 676,858
Investments	1,350,117	1,333,558	Long Term Debt	1,114,957	1,084,393
Receivables, Net	689,555	791,983	Total Liabilities	\$ 1,756,066	\$1,761,251
Other Assets	603,638	439,321			
Land, Building & Equipment, Net	2,930,401	2,868,341	Total Net Assets	\$ 4,556,227	\$4,570,504
Total Assets	\$ 6,312,293	\$ 6,331,755	Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 6,312,293	\$6,331,755

### Statement of Activities - August 31, 2017 & 2018

Revenues	2017	2018	Expenses	2017	2018
Contributions & Bequests	\$ 2,115,933	\$ 1,989,755	Program Services	\$ 6,370,215	\$ 6,839,657
Program Revenue	5,806,041	6,134,976	Management & General	949,548	995,925
Service Billing Revenue	59,590	66,614	Fundraising	448,078	438,271
Miscellaneous Revenue	27,251	25,550	Total Expenses	\$ 7,767,841	\$ 8,273,853
Total Revenue	\$ 8,008,815	\$ 8,216,895			
			Other Revenue (Expense)	\$ 19,711	\$ 71,235
			Change in Net Assets	260,685	14,277
			Net Assets at Beginning of Year	4,295,542	4,556,227
			Net Assets at End of Year	\$ 4,556,227	\$ 4,570,504

Complete financial statements including notes and the independent auditor's report of Tighe, Kress, Orr, P.C., are available upon request. A complete donor list is also available upon request.

Fiscal year 2017 and 2018 contributions include capital campaign donations.



Our mission is to enable infants, children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum independence and to provide support for the families who love and care for them.



# Thank You

Donor Report | Fiscal Year 2018

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\*Donors of \$1,000 and up are recognized as members of the Easterseals Presidents' Council.

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