



Growing Times July 2022

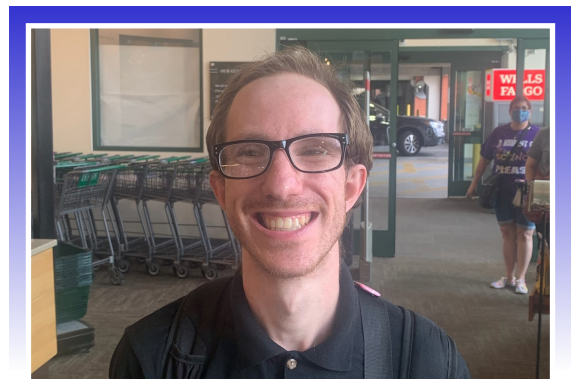
Promoting the maximum development of the whole child and adult through innovative, individualized and comprehensive brain-centered programs and services.

Seeing the Invisible Problem

For as long as he can remember, Samson has had vision problems. When he was young, he was always tripping over things, misjudging distances. He was given glasses at an early age, but even with them, he had trouble seeing.

This became a problem in school. He had no trouble learning to read, he could understand what he read, but the actual act of reading was exhausting. As he grew older, and school required more extensive reading of longer and more complicated texts, he would get so tired while working on assignments, he'd want to go to sleep. He tried to compensate by reading at his own pace, but that only worked some of the time, he'd still get tired. Reading for school became stressful and frustrating, so much so that he'd want to give up.

He gave up reading for pleasure, and instead turned to video games, playing repetitive games whose patterns he could remember so he didn't have to track with his eyes so much.



Samson, enjoying the view!

But Samson is a smart guy with a wide range of interests and a determination to get ahead. Despite his reading problems, he graduated from a rigorous private school and got a BA from the University of Minnesota. He loves theatre and dance, history and politics. He is fluent in a second language, Spanish, and having visited Spain twice, his long-term goal is to move there.

But none of these accomplishments came easily. He says his vision issues were an "invisible problem" that bedeviled his teachers and friends – everyone knew he was smart, but couldn't understand why he had trouble keeping up with his work. He has loving, concerned parents who did everything they could think of to help him, encouraging him, taking him to specialists, including regular eye doctor visits. Optometrists would prescribe glasses, but his problems persisted.

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Race for the Children
August 7 at Canterbury Park

- Live Horse Racing
- Catered Lunch
- Pick-Six Game
- Silent Auction & Wine Pull
- Mini-Games & Prizes

Register Today at ACTG.org

Join us for a Day at the Races!

The 31st Running of the Race for the Children returns on Sunday, August 7, 2022 at Canterbury Park in Shakopee, MN. The event will feature fun family activities and great live racing! Attendees will also receive a complimentary racing form and buffet lunch in the Longshots Party Area. Registration is now open and sponsorship opportunities are available. To sign-up, or for more information, please visit ACTG.org/RacefortheChildren! Proceeds support the programs and services of A Chance To Grow.

As Samson discovered when he came to A Chance To Grow's Vision Clinic, the problem was, they were focusing only on his eyes, not on the eye/brain connection that was at the root of his problem.

Samson has been to multiple specialists who were unable to help him with his vision and related issues and when a family friend referred him to ACTG, it seemed like a last resort, which we find is often the case with our clients. Our vision clinic, run by Dr. Shelby May, OOD, specializes in developmental vision, that is, the relationship between the eye itself and visual processing in the brain. And finally, Samson and his parents got answers.

Dr. May used our newest tool, the cutting-edge RightEye vision system, which uses a computer to track eye movements, generating data hundreds of times more accurate than even the most skilled doctor could give based on her own observations. This generated a picture of how Samson's eyes track what he sees, and it was clear what his problem was: His eyes have great difficulty tracking.

When Samson's mother saw the evidence, she cried. It was the first time in Samson's 31 years that anyone could show her what was wrong.

With the information generated by the program, Dr. May was able to diagnose Samson with Oculomotor Dysfunction and Accommodative Excess, meaning his eyes have difficulty tracking, and he overcompensates to correct. She also found that his glasses prescription is anisometric, meaning he has a large difference in the prescription for each eye. Those issues have made it very difficult for his two eyes to develop in a way that worked together. It also profoundly affects his depth perception.

This explains so much of what Samson has experienced. When eyes can't work together, sustained attention for near tasks, like reading, are straining and exhausting. Ultimately vision is uncomfortable and demotivating, affecting vision-driven tasks. That's basically everything: reading, driving, learning, even walking around and knowing where you are in space depend on those skills.

Dr. May prescribed eye exercises, which Samson has been doing regularly at home, as well as sessions on equipment

in the office. The plan is based on very careful goal setting that emphasizes mastery of individual skills. When each skill is mastered, Dr. May and Samson will carefully put them together, giving Samson control of his system as a whole. After that, it's just continued practice and maintenance. "The whole process is Samson's work," says Dr. May, "I'm just facilitating and giving him the best tools I have for him to regain control."

Samson reports that he never realized his eyes were jumping so much. Since beginning his vision therapy, he says he can see things much better. He is hoping one day soon, he will be able to drive, and become more independent. He says, "Tell people it's important to ask questions and look at things differently, find someone who will look for deeper issues. It wasn't about the eye itself, it was about the eye/brain connection."

Schedule an Eye Exam at ACTG's Vision Clinic

Helping Individuals of All Ages Obtain Optimal Vision!

ACTG.org/VisionServices

- Vision Exams for the Whole Family
- Glasses & Contacts Prescriptions
- Preventative Eye Care & Disease Management
- Developmental & Perceptual Testing
- OptomEYES Therapies



Take Care of Your Eyes Let Us Help!

Call (612) 789-1236 to get started!



Stay updated about current brain-based workshops, seminars and events!
www.facebook.com/AChanceToGrow/



The 2022 Summer S.M.A.R.T. Workshops are in full swing! Learn about a developing brain and how S.M.A.R.T.'s movement-based activities will ENERGIZE your student's learning readiness! Don't miss your chance to experience this transformational workshop. Registration is open for all our upcoming Elementary & Pre-K workshops! Our experienced instructors will help you understand how to easily implement these brain-stimulating activities in your classroom. [Register today at ACTG.org/workshops](https://ACTG.org/workshops).

S.M.A.R.T. Workshops

- August 16-18, 2022
(Wausau, WI)
- October 25-27, 2022
- February 21-23, 2023

S.M.A.R.T. Pre-K Workshops

- July 19-21, 2022
- August 2-4, 2022
(New Ulm, MN)
- November 1-3, 2022



Can't make a 3-day workshop? We are holding a 1-day **Bridging the Gap** workshop on Wednesday, September 28, 2022. All workshops will be held at A Chance To Grow in Minneapolis, MN unless otherwise noted. Register two weeks in advance and save \$25! Register today to secure your spot!

MNRI NeuroTactile Integration Course: October 29-30

A Chance To Grow will be hosting a **Masgutova Neurosensorimotor Reflex Integration** course led by Pamela Curlee on October 29-30, 2022 at its facility in NE Minneapolis. The course explores the role **NeuroTactile Integration** plays in establishing a foundation for motor, communication & cognitive development, and emotional & behavioral regulation. Professionals, parents and caregivers interested in learning more about MNRI are encouraged to attend. Cost is \$495. For additional course information or to register, please visit www.masgutovamethod.com/events. Questions? Call (612) 706-5553.



Turnquist Child Enrichment Center Awarded Multiple Grants

The Turnquist Child Enrichment Center (TCEC) is pleased to announce it has been awarded multiple grants to support the growth and stability of the children and families who receive our services!

The **Sauer Family Foundation** awarded a \$11,190 grant to TCEC to implement the Conscious Discipline curriculum, which creates a compassionate culture in the classroom that increases self-regulation, sense of safety, connection, empathy and intrinsic motivation in children who have experienced or are at risk for experiencing trauma. Our TCEC children are at high risk for poverty, trauma, learning difficulties and behavioral issues. Most are low-income, special needs, are in foster care and/or are children of teen parents. The Conscious Discipline approach will provide support for positive social-emotional development for these children. Grant activities include acquiring materials, training staff, and integrating the curriculum into daily activities.



Second Harvest Heartland awarded a \$5,000 grant to TCEC to create a food pantry. Until now, TCEC staff has only been able to create pop-up pantries in available space with only shelf-stable items. This grant will allow TCEC to create a permanent pantry space that has refrigeration and more room, thus allowing us to provide fresh fruits and vegetables, milk, and other perishables, as well as canned and packaged items on a daily basis. The new pantry will not only provide healthy and nutritious items to our families, many of whom experience food insecurity, it will also attract new families to our center, allowing us to expand services to the NE area more broadly. The grant money will be used to buy equipment for the pantry.



"We are so grateful to the Sauer Family Foundation and Second Harvest for awarding us these grants," says Elizabeth Ruzek, Director of Turnquist. "These funds will help us continue to nurture the minds and bodies of our students and their families so that all may reach their full potential."

Skip the summer slide with our comprehensive summer brain-training program! Combining in-clinic neurofeedback sessions with in-home support via Audio-Visual Entrainment, this flexible program allows you to train your brain on your schedule! If you or a loved one struggles with emotional instability, poor focus or anxious thoughts, please visit [ACTG.org/brain-training](https://actg.org/brain-training) to submit a program inquiry form.

Includes 20 in-clinic neurofeedback sessions with assessments at each session, as well as your own AVE unit. For pricing and questions, please contact (612) 789-1236 or email neuro@actg.org.



Advanced-Brain Wellness Program: AVE Brain Training

Are you stressed or do you find it hard to focus? Do you lie awake at night with your thoughts spinning? Are you lacking energy? If you said yes to any of these, then this program may be a perfect fit for you! Support your brain's health and take charge of your wellness with Audio-Visual Entrainment - a holistic brain-training program that uses lights and sounds to improve your focus, energy, and calm.

Train once or twice weekly, for 3-6 weeks, in our private training rooms with a custom program that fits your schedule! You'll be amazed at how you feel after a 30-minute session. Imagine how you'll feel after regular training tailored to your goals. It's one of the easiest and most relaxing ways to support a healthy brain and bring back some calm and focus into your life. Register today at [ACTG.org/advancedbrainwellness](https://actg.org/advancedbrainwellness).

ADVANCED-BRAIN WELLNESS PROGRAM

// AVE BRAIN TRAINING //

ONLY \$199!
15% SAVINGS



6 AVE SESSIONS
+ INTRODUCTION TO AVE
+ WEEKLY ASSESSMENTS
+ \$50 AVE UNIT CREDIT

BRING CALM AND FOCUS
INTO YOUR LIFE WITH AVE!

Third-Party Billing Tops \$3 Million in Revenue for Minnesota Charter Schools

Since 2011, charter schools throughout Minnesota have relied on ACTG's Third-Party Billing service to receive extra funding for their special education needs. School funding is always less than what is needed and our service allows schools to receive funding through federal sources on top of the federal and state funding they already receive. To get this extra funding, schools have us bill for services like occupational therapy, speech and language pathology, audiology, mental health services, interpreters, special transportation, PCA services and more. With our extensive understanding of school finance, we are able to help schools navigate the complexities of third-party billing to make sure they are reporting expenditures properly with the Minnesota Department of Education and Minnesota Department of Health Services to ensure they receive full reimbursement.

To date, we have served 70 charter schools and generated over \$3 million in revenue for these schools, which they can use to help fund special education needs. This past year alone, we assisted 46 schools and more than 1,800 eligible students. To learn more about Third-Party Billing, please visit [ACTG.org/thirdpartybilling](https://actg.org/thirdpartybilling) or call us at (612) 789-1236.

Will you support A Chance To Grow's programs and services?

Visit [ACTG.org](https://actg.org), click on the "Donate" tab on the homepage and fill out the form. Your contribution makes a difference in the lives of individuals with learning disabilities, developmental delays and brain injuries. All donations are tax-deductible.

View our newsletter online! Visit [ACTG.org](https://actg.org) and subscribe!

Equal Employment Opportunity

A Chance To Grow provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants.

Employment is based upon capabilities and qualifications without discrimination because of race, color, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, national origin, disability, gender identity, genetic information, service in the military or any other protected characteristic as established by law. This policy of Equal Employment Opportunity applies to all policies and procedures relating to recruitment & hiring, promotion, compensation, benefits, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, training and all other conditions of employment.



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