

PDT's 2nd Annual Bike Camp - Show Notes

Bike Camp is a week-long event where attending children participated in daily learning-to-bike activities, coordination & balance development, and visual motor activities. Children with disabilities and typically developing children ages 4 – 6 participated in our second annual bike camp.

Our annual Bike Camp was inspired by an interview with Samantha Arritt. She described her participation in a similar event during graduate school. Haden & Kjrsti knew this would be a great event for our own patients.

The PDT approach for bike camp is to use our therapist's skills, knowledge, and creativity to implement learning-to-bike activities without the need to expensive equipment. This allows for maximum home carryover. The approach is also a holistic approach that allows us to treat the whole child.

Everyday started with warm ups. We would start with stretching, then ice breakers for peer engagement. Many times a weighted ball was used to play social games.

A tandem bike was throughout the warm ups as well. It allows the children to feel more vestibular movement that they will experience when learning to ride independently.

Patients brought their own bikes to bike camp. We had a bike tech there from Hawley's Bicycle World, Mark Taylor. To prepare the bikes for learning to ride, all the pedals were removed from the bicycles, tires were inflated to proper pressures, and each attendee's bike was given a thorough examination to ensure it was in proper riding condition.

Children first walked with the bikes on downhill slopes and then progressed to walking and coasting (lifting their feet) to get the sensation of independent riding.

Some children needing cueing on how to get on and off the bike. Physical therapists used their experience from individual treatment sessions to help children with the balance and motor planning required for learning how to get on and off the bike.

Beach towels were used to secure children who were learning to ride independently. The towel would wrap around the child's trunk / chest area. This allows the children the ability to learn the balance and core strength management skills needed for independent riding with the safety of an adult there to keep them from falling. This is a much more effective approach than keeping a hand on the child's seat.

Once the children got to a point when they were coasting well, their pedals were put back on their bicycle.

Children had to learn how to get the pedals going in order to get the bike moving forward. One approach that was used was taking a sticker and cutting it in half. One half was placed on the bike frame and another on the pedal. This was a visual cue to teach children where the pedal needed to be to start pedaling.

Peer engagement, coordination development, and building confidence were key to seeing each child's development throughout the camp.

Each child throughout the camp was instructed and treated on an individual basis. Each attendee came with different needs and presented differently.

Each child came to bike camp with a high level of excitement and anticipation. Parents grew in engagement and participation throughout the camp. Some parents even requested continued bike riding development in therapy.