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The Jackson Center for Conductive Education is a non-profit organization that strives to give children with cerebral palsy independence through conductive education.

We are parents. We are people who refuse to stop searching for a brighter future for our children. We are believers.

We believe that...

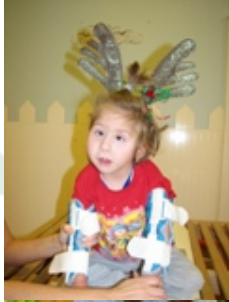
...with God's help, our children can accomplish more than even we expect.

...our children are whole human beings who deserve the opportunity to achieve independence.

...hard work pays off.

...our hopes for our children are within our reach, rather than just in our dreams.

We believe in the innate sense of a child to want to be a child.



The Jackson Center for Conductive Education
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CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION:

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Conductive Education is a system of learning that improves motor skills for those with motor disorders resulting from damage or disease to the central nervous system. It is not a cure. It is not a major medical breakthrough. It is not even a therapy, but a series of repetitive tasks and education that addresses basic functional movements in a small group setting.



The goal of Conductive Education is to give the child with motor disabilities greater independence in the activities of daily life. Conductive Education looks for ways in which each child can develop purposeful movement, operating on the premise that although the human body may have limitations, the human mind does not.

“Conductive Education operates on the premise that although the human body may have limitations, the human mind does not.”

Accordingly, Conductive Education addresses skills in dressing, eating and hygiene as well as play and learning. Conductive Education strives to equip children with the opportunity to actively experience childhood as other children do.



History:

Conductive Education was developed in 1948 by Dr. Andras Petö at the Petö Institute in Budapest, Hungary and is founded on the belief that motor disabled children can learn and develop physical movement through repetitive skill exercises. While "healthy children" learn physical movement through assimilation within their peer groups, the motor disabled child must be taught to develop these same movements as a skill set. Petö's intricately devised learning program utilizes specially trained Conductors who guide and motivate the child through active moving patterns that are eventually integrated into the daily activities of life.



Today, Conductive Education is widely established in Australia, Canada, Germany, Hungary, Israel, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Jackson Center is the only Conductive Education program in Indiana.

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How Does It Work?:

Conductive Education approaches problems of movement as problems of learning.

The learning and development of movement, speech and mental ability are approached simultaneously over a period of time to achieve recognized goals. Conductive Education's intensive group approach is aimed at creating new neurological pathways to overcome significant damage.

Using music, devices and apparatus that aid movement, repetition, and the student's desire to achieve simple tasks, children develop and maximize functional independence through goal-directed activity, verbal regulation and group dynamics. A child uses speech or inner speech to express an intention, and then carries it out through rhythmic movement. This use of language facilitates and regulates motor activity and focuses attention on the movement.

“Conductive Education’s intensive group approach is aimed at creating new neurological pathways to overcome significant

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Benefits:

Conductive Education allows a child with motor disabilities to practice and learn new cognitive organizational skills in a motivating and compassionate environment. The child is encouraged to use new and active problem solving to direct their movements. Over time the child's brain creates new connections between thought and physical action.

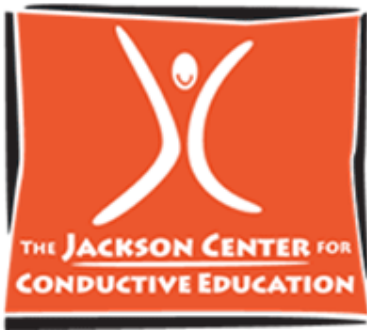
The emotional security and positive atmosphere of Conductive Education classes at the Jackson Center allows the child to express individual creativity and build their self esteem. As they observe other children solving similar problems, they are encouraged to become ambitious, seek help when it is needed, and explore individual strategies for problem-solving related to daily living.

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Read Parent & Family Testimonies



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PARENT TESTIMONIES

Carolyn Lytle, MD, MPH **Associate Professor of Clinical Pediatrics** **Riley Hospital for Children**

I am writing this in support of the conductive education activities at the Jackson Center in Indianapolis, Indiana. I am a pediatrician in Developmental Pediatrics at Riley Hospital for Children and the medical director of the Cerebral Palsy Program at Riley. The clinic is a weekly multidisciplinary clinic and follows 1200 children from 2-18 years of age. The majority of these children are moderately to severely physically involved because they benefit most from the availability of multiple providers in one clinic setting.

All of the children followed in CP clinic receive therapies – most commonly, physical, occupational and/or speech therapies. Long-term therapy is a mainstay in the treatment of these children and usually continues into adulthood.

The majority of children receive their therapy at school and occasionally qualify for additional private therapy as well. I have several patients who receive services at the Jackson Center for Conductive Education. Their classes are 2-3 times per week and concentrate on working intensely with each child to help them maximize their fine motor and gross motor skills. The classes are labor intense and benefit each child by working on attaining new skills to help with mobility, strength, and independence.

I have seen tremendous gains in the development of the children who I see regularly in Cerebral Palsy Clinic who attend conductive education classes. The parents are delighted with the progress and drive long distances or change personal schedules around in order to have their child attend classes on a regular basis. This is a valuable asset for the central Indiana community and I hope more children benefit from conductive education in the future.

The Durell Family

Our daughter, Julia, is a beautiful 6 ½ year old little girl who is simply angelic. She has been attending The Jackson Center since its beginning in July 2005. We have observed the biggest increase in her core trunk strength that has allowed her improved sitting and head control. Another change we have enjoyed has been a marked increase in alertness and animated behavior with family and friends participating in conversation. It has been a joy to have our daughter be more responsive and engaged in activities.

The Good Family

Anna is sitting alone and she is crawling. She is also trying to pull to stand. The Jackson Center has helped Anna a lot. We are very happy with the center and the opportunities that it has brought our family.

The Hinrichs Family

As parents of a child with cerebral palsy, we sometimes become discouraged or frustrated with his progress from traditional therapies. Additionally, the continual barrage of doctor visits, medications, and surgeries can be overwhelming. We are fortunate to have the Jackson Center at this time in Lee's life. With conductive education, Lee is making terrific progress with his physical control and abilities as well as socialization and self-awareness. As

parents, we are thrilled to have the Jackson Center as a resource where we can learn and can tap into the collective knowledge of our conductor and therapist, the assistants, and all of the other parents of children at the center.

Since Lee has been at the Jackson Center, we have learned a great deal about specialized equipment, surgical options, medicines, and therapy techniques that will hopefully allow Lee to reach his full potential. In addition, we have made many wonderful friends in the other parents, the staff, and the other children at the Jackson Center.

The Geryak Family

Conductive Education has changed Andrew in countless ways, including being able to tolerate noise and commotion better, his endurance has increased tremendously, his awareness to what is going on around him is better, and he now knows that he is able to be independent in ways he never knew before and shows a real interest and desire in gaining that independence.

The program has made our family aware of the things that Andrew is capable of and encourages us to push him to become independent.

The Gottlieb Family

Conductive Education has opened up Karliee's world. In the last year and a half, Karliee has become more social and wants to join in on conversations. She has really developed her own personality. She has started helping with feeding and dressing. She is working on drinking out of an open cup. This is something I would not have thought possible two years back. She was always happy just lying on the floor but now she is rolling and scooting across the floor with no help. I am so glad that Conductive Education has opened up this world for Karliee and her family.

The Gillum Family

Since Ben's involvement in conductive education at The Jackson Center, we have seen him go from physically not being able to sit and hold his head up to sitting with his head up for a short period of time by himself. His willingness to do the tasks that Zsuzsi asks him to do is just amazing to watch.

In addition to witnessing Ben's growth and progress, we have grown as well. The Jackson Center is more than a program just for Benjamin. They have been a great support system for the families as well as a tremendous resource in learning about the various other programs that provide assistance for Ben and us as a family.

The Jackson Center is a full-service provider. Not only do they provide service at the Jackson Center, but they have scheduled routine visits out to Ben's school in Boone County to provide assistance in making sure that Ben's developmental needs are being met there as well.

We are so thrilled to be involved with the family at The Jackson Center and cannot say enough good things about what The Jackson Center has done for our son Benjamin. He is a strong, maturing little boy that can't wait to conquer the world.

Kate Gillum (age 9) (Ben's twin sister)

The Jackson Center for Conductive Education has really changed my brother Ben's life. He is now holding his head up all the time and gets so excited when we ask him if he wants to walk. I have seen so many changes in Ben since he has been at the Jackson Center. It was so cool to work at the center this summer and also to see all the kids having the time of their life. I thought it was so cool to help all of the kids and see what they all can do. I have met so many friends and a lot of fun kids too. The kids have had a lot of fun adventures with their conductor, Zsuzsi, and have had big smiles on their faces and giggled through all of it. There will always be a place in my heart and I will never forget them. Those kids have been tough through thick and thin and will do anything they want to do. I know that all of those kids are ready to conquer the world!!!

The DePoy Family

Jackson now desires independence. He is able to set his eyes on a destination and gives everything he has to attempt to achieve it. We, as a family, are able to see what he is able to achieve and consequently expect more out of him. Jackson has always thrived on acceptance from his family and peers. In class, Jackson is joined by several children

much like him. This has increased his confidence by allowing him to see he is not the only child that has to work extra hard to achieve a task. Not only does he practice and demonstrate his task series skills in the conductive education classes but he is able to apply these skills across environments (home, school, community). Along with these skills that we take for granted, he is sitting independently on a variety of surfaces, running in his gait trainer (NO seat required), he is hand over hand feeding, picking food off his plate (sometimes taking it to his mouth and other times throwing it on the floor), bringing a cup to his mouth independently, and best of all has made great strides in potty training.

We want independence for Jackson in whatever form it can take. We want to equip him with the skill necessary to live a fulfilling, independent life. It is absolutely amazing to watch the challenges he has met and achieved. The conductor and staff has embraced him and stretched his limitations to endless possibilities. Boy, what hope the future holds!

The Griffith Family

These classes have allowed me to raise my expectations for the quality of Thomas' life. Just because he will do things differently than other children does not mean he will not do them. I see him getting stronger and more confident with every session. It is the first time since Thomas was diagnosed with CP that I have allowed myself to think about all the wonderful possibilities that his future could hold.

The Terry Family

I have seen more results from my son, Cole after only one six week session at The Jackson Center compared to a year of other various therapies. I am thankful every day for what The Jackson Center has helped my son achieve.

Rhoda E. S. Waiss (Proud and Oh-So-Blessed mother to Triston and Liam)

Liam is our second of two beautiful boys. He is 4 years old, absolutely adorable, extremely loving and full of life. He happens to have CP, PVL and Speech Apraxia. My greatest hesitation about writing a testimony for the Jackson Center, and for Conductive Education specifically, is that it will likely sound incredulous because it has been my experience, typically speaking, that there is so little out there that provides genuine "*significant*" improvement in the functional lives of children who have Cerebral Palsy. Up till now, Hippotherapy has provided Liam with the single greatest contribution to improving his functional condition. My husband and I firmly believe that we have found the "finishing piece." It is the piece that connects the dots for everything...the piece that is going to make our greatest wishes for Liam come true.

The day our dream "died" (when we realized that our precious son had a severe life long disability) we had no way of predicting how much certainty we could in fact *still have*, about him being able to live a successful, fulfilling, but most important, **independent** life; a life of "free will"...one full of "choices for the making" and "opportunities for the taking." We now have that certainty. There is *no doubt* in my mind that my son will be independent as a result of conductive education. It will take time, and it will take a lot of hard work and dedication, but it will all be **worth it**. The alternative...a life dependent upon a personal aid for everything...a life that compromises on his right to privacy and on the preservation of his personal dignity, is no longer something I lay awake at night crying about. Conductive education has not only restored, and even extended, the possibilities for Liam's life...it has restored my faith, it has pacified my deepest fears and it has given me the greatest thing you can give any mother in this situation...."reasonable and realistic "**HOPE**" for a bright and functional future. For all the children out there, that meet the criteria as being "most likely to benefit" from CE...participation in this type of program *should be* the Norm!!!

Liam has "come alive" in every sense because of CE. For instance, he came to CE with an expressive repertoire of about 7-10 unrelated, isolated words (very difficult to understand except to those who knew him well), and now after just 6 months in the program, he is speaking in small, grammatically correct 4-7 word sentences. He is initiating conversation, actually *interjecting* himself into social situations that before, he would only have sat and observed quietly. He has gone from a passive observer to an active "doer" and the best part is...he has developed tenacity, and a willingness to try...and try again. Before, if he managed to muster up the courage to try something, he would abandon it promptly if he didn't succeed on his first or second attempt. He has gained a confidence that just shines and precedes everything he does now...and he tries to do almost everything. He actually asks for help when he needs it and he is thrilled to assert himself as he sees fit. While, Liam is struggling to find the coordination for

performing transitions on his own, he is well on his way to learning how. He is able to back himself off of a bed or a couch into a standing position, wait there securely, and call for help. He is able to stand up on his own from a sitting position at a plinth (table) and slowly side step (cruise) his way along it to the other end, then with minimal assist, he can transfer to holding onto the CE ladder and walk away from the table. He is able to lower himself down along a CE ladder with control and even climb his way back up with minimal assistance, if any at all. He's able to sit straddling a bench for up to an hour without any prompts whatsoever and is able to maintain a prone position on all fours for several minutes at a time; he's even working on a true crawl with minimal to moderate assist at this time. Liam is drinking from an open cup all by himself fairly consistently now and he is really motivated to learn how to use feeding utensils just like his older brother.

There are so many other significant triumphs that I could mention, but the single greatest change in Liam that was visible from the end of the very first session (five weeks) was that his ability to motor plan for himself was actually establishing itself. Before, he didn't have a clue what to do, or how to begin doing it. Now, even if he is unable to execute the task for himself, there is NO question that he KNOWS what he means to do and how to go about doing it. Conductive education has taught him self-initiation, it has promoted his motivation, it has given birth to personal intent, and it has laid the foundation for physical and speech motor planning...now we just have to work hard to put it all together for him and enable him in the execution. Liam has become a problem solver...something, that before now, I dared to dream existed within him, but had no clue how we were going to actually bring out of him. He is proving to the world that he IS SMART, that he DOES GET IT, and that he CAN DO IT. It is just all in the teaching...

Conductive Education has had the most profound effect on Liam. I would go so far as to say that it has had a profound effect on *every* child I've see in the program with him. I am committed to making sure that Liam has continued access to CE until such time as he no longer needs its guidance and instruction. We will forever be indebted to the Jackson Center and its dedicated and benevolent staff for this miracle of self-achievement for Liam; may they continue to bless families like mine with their influence and their encouragement to us to "HOPE FOR EVERYTHING" for our children.

I would challenge the medical, educational, insurance, and even the various legislative communities in this country to see to it that every child in America who could stand to benefit from this program, has access to it. To do any less would be "criminal". These children deserve the very REAL opportunity for independence...how could we as families possibly accept anything less for them?

GO FOR IT...you'll be nothing short of amazed at what your child is capable of...we did, and Liam "blows us away" with his changes and his accomplishments each and every day!!!

The Sarkine Family

Our physical therapist commented on how Megan's balance and head control seem to have improved already. I've noticed changes in her in terms of how she responds to the other kids in the class. The first day, she barely noticed they were there, each day she seems to be more interested in watching and trying to interact with them (mostly looking for a little peer sympathy, I think!).

The Zenor Family

Since Sydney has been attending the Jackson Center, we have noticed several changes in our little girl. Besides becoming stronger, she is more focused at home and other therapies. It is fun to see how she has memorized the entire 3 hour class routine and will prepare for the next exercise just by asking "What's next?" She has become more independent and tries to get around the house more on her own. With the help of the Jackson Center Staff, she has gained self confidence on many tasks which is crucial to her moving forward for her physical success! Thank you all!

The Ettinger Family (Twins - Blake and Trey)

I think The Jackson Center is a true blessing. It's an opportunity for my sons to gain independence, have more confidence, and help them lead a healthy, happy life. They have shown such improvement in a short time! I can't wait to see what a whole summer can do for Blake. Just knowing Blake could be walking much better, fills my heart with so much joy. One day, I know I'll be seeing him run up and down the soccer field!

We love it at The Jackson Center. Trey is working so hard, and his hard work is already paying off. He seems to be sitting better, vocalizing more, and doing a lot better on his belly. The staff is awesome and you can see the love they have for the children in their work. We are so fortunate to be in this program, and would recommend it to anyone and everyone!

The Walker Family

How blessed we are in Indiana to have The Jackson Center for Conductive Education! I first learned about CE during a 60 MINUTES episode and immediately began looking into a center where I might take our son, Christian. Unfortunately, there were no centers in Indiana and one of the closest was in Michigan. I began to plot how to arrange to take my son out of state for a session, while leaving my daughter and husband behind! Not a very good solution! Although we missed the very first sessions at The Jackson Center, Christian was enrolled and began classes in January 2006. We began to see changes almost immediately. Christian was using a walker when he started, but he did not have enough arm strength to walk without arm supports. Therefore, he would lay his arms in the support "troughs" and had a terrible stance and gait. We were able to remove these arm supports and switch to simple handrails within a few months. Christian's speech has gotten better. While he was always very "verbal", his enunciation became clearer and seems to continue to improve. He has gained strength and flexibility in ways that traditional therapy could never achieve.

Our biggest blessing that has come to our son through The Jackson Center, however, has occurred since April. We were told that he needed to have bilateral de-rotational osteotomies (major hip reconstruction surgery) requiring a 6 week body cast. Through Zsuzsi and Lara, we learned of Dr. Nuzzo who does a variety of orthopedic procedures for kids with cerebral palsy. We immediately sent our packet out to Dr. Nuzzo and within a month, we were sitting in Dr. Nuzzo's office getting prepared to have surgery the next day! Christian had his hip (only the one that really did need the procedure) reconstructed on May 11. While wearing a hip abduction brace, Christian was able to start back at the Jackson Center at the beginning of June. I truly do not know what we would have done without being able to go to conduction education in order to get Christian and his hip rehabilitated. Five days a week, three hours a day, Christian goes to class to be with Zsuzsi, Lara and all our other tremendous assistants and interns and all of his best friends. Lovingly, they pushed him (while he loudly protested at times) and slowly got him to take his first tentative steps. Zsuzsi has such tremendous knowledge and common sense and she was able to help give me some wonderful tips and insights into helping him progress.

It can be difficult to explain to other therapists and school personnel exactly what conductive education is and what a class is like. They have a hard time comprehending that 3 hours in a CE class at The Jackson Center is exactly that ... 3 hours of hard work and learning. There is not one minute wasted, as any one who has watched a class at The Jackson Center can attest to. The classes are so well planned, that each day is different, exciting, challenging and fun for the students. Working along side their friends and classmates, they are encourage to continue to grow and progress. Christian has been receiving up to 8 hours each week of traditional therapies (speech, PT, OT, developmental) since he was 5 months old. I can honestly say that our first 6 months at The Jackson Center has been the most rewarding experience we have had in all 5 years of Christian's life. The Jackson Center is not just a school for conductive education. It is a true community of parents and children all walking this journey and sharing experiences along the way.

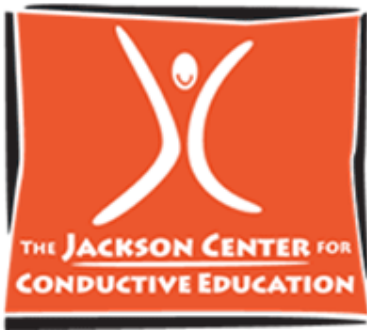
The Dane Family

The Jackson Center has given my son the opportunity to interact with children his own age and who have the same struggles he has in an environment that is not only benefiting his physical development but is educational, loving and fun.

The Esterline Family

We have been going to The Jackson Center since January of 2006. It is now October. Since we have been there, Daisy has become so much more than we had ever imagined. She is so social towards people everywhere we go. She is moving around by herself like she had never done before. She is walking in her gait trainer with little assistance. She rolls and scoots all over the floor and gets into things now. The Jackson Center has given us so much motivation for the future. We can now have higher goals for her in life.

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CLASSES:

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The Jackson Center for Conductive Education sessions are typically six weeks long with a two week break between sessions. Classes last three hours and occur two to three times per week. They cover independence skills such as mobility, dressing and hygiene. Additionally, because Conductive Education focuses on the whole person, sessions incorporate social, cognitive, physical, intellectual and emotional learning.

Each six-week session culminates with a field trip where children are challenged to use the skills obtained in class to apply problem solving to everyday challenges in the community.

Children are screened for placement based upon their age and ability. Placement provides an optimal environment for learning and facilitates motivation and socialization. These social groups are task-oriented, encouraging and affirming of each individual's effort. The Jackson Center classes currently serve children from six months to nine years old, expanding over time to include other age groups as demand warrants.

Classes are led by Conductors, four-year degreed professionals who are trained in all aspects of children's physical, intellectual, social, emotional and psychological development. At the Jackson Center children are also assisted by an occupational therapist and classroom aides.

Roles:

[Our Staff](#)

Conductor:

Conductors are movement specialists who hold a four-year, university-based degree. Most have been trained at the Petö Institute in Hungary, but there are now a few other recognized training programs, including one in the United States. Through the Conductive Education program, the Conductor teaches skills that promote independence in self care and mobility while helping them to gain self-esteem and achieve academic skills.

Rather than "solving" the motor problems themselves, Conductors guide and encourage each child's own active problem-solving for movement tasks. As the thinking becomes habitual and new tasks are learned, the brain rewires new connections.

Occupational Therapist:

Occupational therapists use purposeful activity to promote health and to enable individuals to reach the highest level of independence while achieving functional



outcomes and goals. Goals are directed toward improving daily living/playing skills or enhancing skills for educational performance. Occupational therapists address sensorimotor, oral-motor, perceptual and neuromuscular function as well as emotional, motivational, cognitive and psychosocial components of performance.

Classroom Aides :

The youngest children enrolled at The Jackson Center are assisted in class by a parent or caregiver. Older children are assisted one-on-one by classroom aides.

Prospective Students:

Conductive Education is generally beneficial to those with motor disorders where damage originates from the central nervous system. Typically such disorders include cerebral palsy, spina bifida, stroke, multiple sclerosis, and Parkinson's Disease.

Candidates for Conductive Education should have the cognitive ability to understand and follow simple visual and verbal directions. It may be inappropriate for those who have severe hearing and visual impairments or other medical conditions that would negatively interfere with the intensity of the program. Examples of these disorders include uncontrolled seizures, severe heart problems, asthma or bone density loss.

Conductive Education may be beneficial throughout the life span from approximately six months of age. Classes at The Jackson Center are currently offered for children from six months to nine years old. However, classes for other ages may be offered as demand warrants.

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CALENDAR:

2007 Class Sessions:

January 8 - February 16

March 5 - April 6

April 16 - May 25

June 4 - June 29

July 9 - August 3

August 20 - October 5

October 15 - November 21

December 2 - December 21

***Note: All Federal Holidays are observed*

Upcoming Events

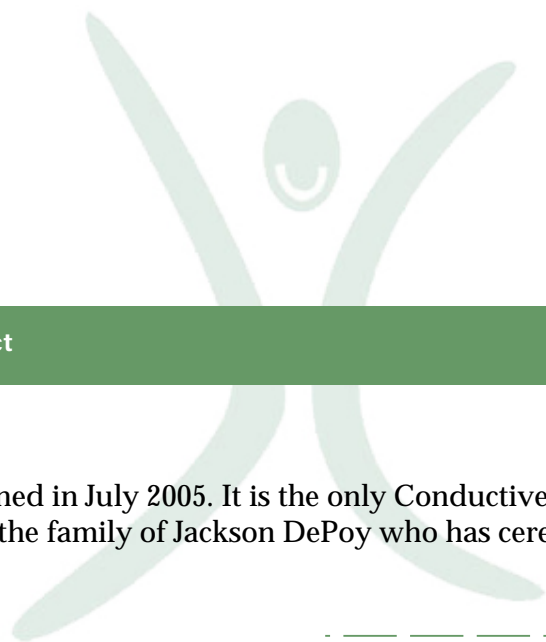
The Jackson Center for Conductive Education has three major fundraising activities. The Annual Jackson Center Golf Outing is hosted each year in June.

Grape Escape to benefit the Jackson Center is hosted annually in August. Grape Escape is an evening of music, wine tasting and a silent auction. All proceeds from these events go directly to programming at the Jackson Center.

The Jackson Center also offers a line of greeting cards featuring art created by Jackson Center students. Greeting cards are available by contacting The Jackson Center at: thejacksoncenter@sbcglobal.net



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ABOUT US:

The Jackson Center for Conductive Education opened in July 2005. It is the only Conductive Education program in Indiana. It was founded by the family of Jackson DePoy who has cerebral palsy.

Until age three, Jackson had approximately 8 hours of therapy per week through the Indiana Early Intervention program. At age three, he was enrolled in developmental preschool through the local school system. Although he made progress through these programs, he was not self-sufficient.

"We believe in the innate sense of a child to want to be a child."

Jackson's family learned of Conductive Education in the spring of 2004 from a program aired by CBS on 60 Minutes. After watching this program and researching Conductive Education, Jackson's parents knew that it was something that they had to try for Jackson. Because the number of Conductive Education centers in the U.S. is limited and there were none in Indiana, the family found a program in Chicago, IL, called The Center for Independence through Conductive Education.

In order to "test" Jackson's ability to succeed in the program, The Center for Independence agreed to accept Jackson for an intensive four-week program. The program also taught Jackson's mother, Lara, an occupational therapist, the basics of the program.

Recognizing that Jackson greatly benefited from Conductive Education, and that other Hoosier families could benefit as well, Jackson's family and friends began fundraising and were successful in opening The Jackson Center less than one year after Jackson's trip to Chicago.

The Jackson Center is a 501(c)(3) Not-for-Profit Organization. In its first year of operation, The Jackson Center offered forty-weeks of classes. Eighteen children attended multiple sessions. The Jackson Center is funded through a combination of fees for services, charitable contributions, and fundraising.

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