



The Treatment and  
Learning Centers

**TLC**

*a family of services where caring comes first*

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## **TLC-THE TREATMENT AND LEARNING CENTERS CLIENT STORIES**

### **Victoria**

After running a successful housekeeping business for six years, Victoria developed a severe arthritis that forced her to give up her business. The physical limitations imposed by her arthritis restricted Victoria's job options, making it difficult to find work. She accepted a cashier position at a local pharmacy, but the job, much like her previous housekeeping work, demanded long hours of standing. The continual pressure on her joints soon prevented her from doing the squatting and bending necessary to stock the store. She was soon forced to leave the job. As months went by, Victoria remained unemployed, something that both discouraged and depressed her. The situation deteriorated until she had no option but to move into a shelter.

During her stay at the shelter, Victoria participated in a counseling program that eventually referred her to The Treatment and Learning Centers. TLC, recognizing her needs, placed her in The Outcomes Service for career assessment. Given her interests, skills and abilities, as well as the limitations imposed by her arthritis, Victoria set her goals on attaining an administrative position in an office of some sort. Throughout the process, Victoria maintained a superbly upbeat attitude. While her motivation and enthusiasm would have served her well in any workplace her lack of computer skill prevented her from being marketable for an office-job position.

Knowing the disparity between her career goals and her career skills, The Outcomes Service enrolled Victoria in its Employee Development Program (EDS). She started practicing typing skills while becoming more familiar with various computer applications such as Microsoft Word, Excel, and Outlook. In very little time, she gained more confidence and skill in these areas. In addition to exposing her to office technology, the EDS staff also helped Victoria create a resume, practice her interview skills, and conduct an organized job search. Before long, Victoria received an offer to be an entry-level administrative assistant position at the Department of Energy.

With the help of the job coach EDS provided and the support of her new supervisor, Victoria continued to improve her skills and, in time, became a valued employee. Her renewed financial stability allowed her to move into her own apartment and even purchase a car. Almost more important than her renewed financial stability is Victoria's renewed self-confidence and self-esteem, her rediscovered sense of utility and purpose, her capacity to feel self-reliant, and her ability to feel able despite the crippling nature of her arthritis.

TLC's Outcomes Service gave Victoria the resources she needed to recover and achieve. The combination of these resources and Victoria's determination proved successful: just recently, Victoria accepted a promotion at the Department of Energy.

### **Taylor**

Taylor was in sixth grade when he entered The Treatment and Learning Centers' tutoring program. Like many other public school students, he struggled with large classes, where teachers face more difficulty giving students the personalized attention they need in order to develop and succeed. Taylor's struggles with reading comprehension, writing, and studying were causing his grades and self-esteem to drop.

Taylor soon began working regularly with TLC tutors, who used the Wilson Reading System to boost his language comprehension. Working hard and progressing well, Taylor witnessed results that reinforced his belief in himself. Today, Taylor is an eighth grader. He continues to work with TLC experts on reading comprehension, paragraph writing, and organizational skills. In two years at TLC, Taylor's grades have improved. His family is very proud of him—as are his tutors at TLC.

### **Elisabeth**

At a very early age, Elisabeth's parents struggled to find a child care program with a supportive and positive environment for their daughter. By age two, Elisabeth had attended two different facilities, neither of which met the families' needs. Then Elisabeth's parents switched her to TLC's Early Learning Center. An organization that offers childcare programs for children aged six weeks to five years, The Early Learning Center is dedicated to helping children discover that learning is fun by adhering to the belief that learning occurs through play and that learning is a form of play.

Elisabeth's mother noticed the application of this philosophy when she toured the Center for the very first time.

“It was quickly obvious that there was warmth and love exuding from the teachers and reciprocated by the children,” she said. “Today, we are constantly amazed by the variety of topics the children are introduced to—from colors and numbers to careers to holidays and then around the world to ancient Egypt!”

Elisabeth began in the Center's Teddy Bear Room with children about her age. At first, she acted timid and shy toward teachers and fellow students; she seemed reluctant to play and engage herself in activities. One of the major triumphs her parents note is that now, at five years old, after three years at The Early Learning Center, Elisabeth's trepidation has subsided.

“She looks forward to her day, she proudly shows us her artwork, and she tells us what she has learned each day,” says her mother.

At The Early Learning Center, Elisabeth grew to be a more capable, intelligent, and social child. Because of their daughter's success, Elisabeth's parents enrolled their son James in the program as soon as he turned six weeks old. Elisabeth and James attended The Early Learning Center

together until Elisabeth turned five and was ready for grade school. Their parents are proud of Elisabeth's progress and anticipate similar feelings about James' experience: "We look forward to another three years with the wonderful and dedicated staff at The Early Learning Center."

### **Julia**

When Julia was in elementary school, she attended TLC's Katherine Thomas School. KTS is an independent day school for children, preschool through tenth grade, with language and learning disabilities and high functioning autism; it offers smaller class sizes, a multi-sensory, developmental, language-intensive curriculum, and a nurturing environment to help foster self-esteem and enhance social skills. After elementary school, Julia left KTS to receive home schooling. During that time, she continued receiving services from TLC's outpatient departments in speech, occupational therapy, and tutoring. She attended Montrose Christian School for high school.

When Julia left KTS, the staff did not expect to hear from her or her parents very often. In 2001, however, they received a volunteer application from Julia, now 16. She wanted to return to KTS to work in the classroom with children undergoing the same struggles she faced. KTS accepted Julia as a volunteer and, because of her personal understanding of each child's experience; she formed a strong connection with the children and quickly became one of KTS's best volunteers.

Julia's story is one of success on multiple levels. Her time as an elementary student at KTS clearly compelled her to give back; following her first volunteer experience at age 16, Julia returned to KTS every summer. This contributed to her future academic success; in 2003, Julia graduated high school and prepared to attend Elon College in North Carolina. Attending a four-year college was a major milestone that, due to her learning disabilities, Julia hoped, but did not necessarily expect, to achieve. Today, she is succeeding and achieving: in fall 2005 she begins her junior year at Elon as a special/elementary education major.

Because of Julia's accomplishments as a KTS volunteer, TLC's Camp Littlefoot hired her as a paid teaching assistant. She will be a wonderful role model for the Littlefoot campers; with Julia as a mentor, we hope they will realize that their own perseverance, combined with help from TLC, can help them achieve all of their goals.

*For more information about TLC, please visit [www.ttlc.org](http://www.ttlc.org) or call 301.424.5200.*