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That's Using Your Head



Tribune photo by JESSICA BALANZA

Nelson Mane, a chiropractic orthopedist and neurologist, works with Holly Jackson. Twelve-year-old Holly visits Mane three times a week, and he is helping her to establish neurological pathways on the right side of her brain.

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TAMPA - When 12-year-old Holly Jackson began visiting him two months ago, chiropractor Nelson Mane said she had the reflexes of a 3-month-old.

Kelly Jackson adopted Holly from an orphanage in China at 18 months and soon realized that while Holly was at the orphanage she didn't reach many childhood milestones, such as rolling over, sitting up and crawling.

"The right side of her brain didn't excel as fast as her left," Jackson said.

Jackson said she heard a lot about doctors who provide therapy for the brain but thought none practiced locally. But after some research she found out about Mane and went to one of his seminars.

And after two months of visits, Holly is keeping her balance on a wobble board, doing jumping jacks and keeping a rhythm.

"I know in my daughter's case that the deprivation has been horrible," Jackson said.

Mane, a chiropractic orthopedist and neurologist who also treats childhood neurobehavioral disorders, has found that by exercising the right side of Holly's brain he has helped her establish pathways that were not established early on.

"I work on her senses by stimulating that pathway and building it up," he said.

Mane didn't think his career in medicine would lead him to work with children.

He began his work as a chiropractic orthopedist and then added functional neurology to his resume in 1989. About a year ago that changed when Mane began working on a sub specialty in childhood neurobehavioral disorders.

On a daily basis he finds himself working with children who deal with neurological disorders such as autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, and dyslexia at his office, 1602 W. Sligh Ave., Suite 500.

"The difference between what I do and what others do is that I work on the weakness to decrease the discrepancies," he said.

The standard medical practice is to treat the symptoms by prescribing medication, Mane said.

Mane uses the sensory motor integration hemispheric approach, which is therapy that can be targeted for the different sides of the brain. He believes that by building the pathways and strengthening them it can help a child overcome some of the issues with a particular disorder.

"We can literally exercise the brain like we do our muscles," Mane said. "Like any workout routine, we first eliminate any negative factors such as vitamin deficiencies, toxins and infections. Then we exercise and thereby strengthen the weakened pathways and circuits."

When a child initially comes to Mane's office he begins by having the parent provide a historical explanation going as far back as pregnancy. This is then followed by a neurological exam. Based on the results, Mane determines which side of the child's brain is underdeveloped and begins therapy to help that side.

Visits can last up to 45 minutes. During those sessions Mane goes through a series of exercises that stimulate the specific side of the brain that is weak. The exercises range from identifying smells, to following a beat and/or maintaining balance. Exercises and the amount of time of each session depend on the child.

Jackson said she likes Mane's approach.

"He develops her Holly's brain at the speed it needs to work at. And that is key," she said. "For her to let a doctor get near her is amazing. As you can see, she loves it."



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