



Positive Outcomes, LLC Outreach

A newsletter for parents, providers, and the community

This Month:

For our families

Upcoming: We will be closed on Thursday, July 4th in observance of Independence Day. Enjoy a safe and holiday!

In the community

The annual Colorado Springs “Star Spangled Symphony” concert with the Colorado Springs Philharmonic will be held at the Pike’s Peak Center Thursday, July 4th from 4:30pm-6:30 pm. This is a free event on a first come, first serve basis. Learn more at <https://www.peakradar.com/event/star-spangled-symphony-2/>

Interested in learning where fireworks will be displayed? Check out information here:

<https://www.visitcos.com/events/holidays/4th-of-july/>

How to Navigate Fireworks and Sensory Sensitivities

The 4th of July, a day we celebrate our Nations’ independence and a day, or extended weekend, of activities many look forward to. We might fill our time with family gatherings, cookouts and, of course, fireworks! The food, family and friends gathered, and the exciting sights and sounds of the fireworks are what we are often eager to experience. For those who are neurodivergent, the things many people might look forward to are the things that can make this time filled with anxiety and struggle.

Think of how you felt and responded the last time you unexpectedly heard a very loud sound. Did you jump, gasp, or did your heart race faster? This response is part of the autonomic nervous system’s “fight or flight” branch (discussed in our June newsletter). While those who are neurotypical might recognize just a few moments after the sound that there is no danger and be able to self-regulate, for someone with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), or other neurodivergence, it may take several minutes to recognize there is no danger. During this time, you might see unexpected or unsafe behavior that can include behaviors that you may not have observed in an extended length of time. If you

or a loved one has sensory sensitivities, be sure to plan for the challenges that can arise with the noises and sounds associated with this holiday. This is not exclusive to fireworks displays but can occur in large crowds during family gatherings or outings to public venues that bring their own sets of potentially overwhelming sounds, sights, and smells that can activate the “fight or flight” response.

So how can you make some of the louder, and perhaps more chaotic, celebrations more comfortable for yourself or your loved one? **Preparation** is key. Talk about the day with your child so they know what to expect. You can support conversations by watching a video of fireworks or borrowing illustrated books about the 4th of July from your local library branch. **Pack a “go kit”**. This is a small backpack or bag with items like earplugs or noise cancelling headphones, sensory fidgets, sunglasses to reduce the bright light of the fireworks, a small comfort item like a blanket or stuffed animal, chewable bracelet or necklace for oral sensory needs, favorite snacks/drinks, and activities like bubbles, crayons/paper, small cars/dolls/toy animals. Next, just like real estate, **consider location**. If you are home or at a family/friend’s home, can your child easily access a quiet location where they can take a break from the sights and sounds? If you are out in a public venue, can you view fireworks from your car to reduce noise levels? Also keep in mind those **antecedent supports** that might be helpful; If you will be attending events a visual schedule of the day can help support the novel transitions. Create the schedule with your child beforehand and review it at the start of your day. If you are with family/friends lighting fireworks, you can try a countdown so your child knows when to expect the sound. Before the sound occurs, try providing verbal and/or model prompts for covering ears to muffle the sound or closing eyes/looking down or away to provide a visual break from the lights of the fireworks. Lastly, but certainly not least, remember to **ask for help**. Everyone needs help at some time whether for your child’s needs or for your own. When asking for help, give specific requests so other adults can provide assistance in a way that will best support you and your child. And of course, don’t forget to have fun!



Our featured team member: Ali Richeaux-McDade

represented by her pet Angus who is great at responding to his name. He will often meow from his current location if you call him and then he will come running to you!

What is your role with Positive Outcomes, LLC? I am the Clinical Director of ABA Services and a BCBA

What do you enjoy most about being the Clinical Director of ABA and a BCBA? I enjoy

working alongside families, RBTs, and other stakeholders to promote behavior change. Behavior does not occur in a vacuum, and it truly requires a village to ensure that our clients are developing the skill needed to be successful across environments. I am so grateful to work with such great colleagues and families!

What is the most rewarding part of your position? The most rewarding part of my position is when our clients are ready to graduate from ABA services. It is fulfilling to see clients advocate for their needs as well as when parents are equipped with the skills needed to support their child.

The Word Bird



The Premack Principle

Is an ABA principle that states high-probability behavior can be used to reinforce low-probability behavior. This is based on the idea that individuals are more likely to engage in a less preferred behavior if it leads to the

opportunity to engage in a more preferred behavior. This principle is presented most often with “first/then” statements.

Examples:

- A child wants to watch television but needs to brush their teeth. The parent states “first brush your teeth and then you can watch television”. By making tv time contingent on brushing teeth, the child is more likely to brush their teeth to access tv time.
- If clean laundry is piled on your bed because you don't like putting away laundry, but you want to go to bed, you are more likely to first put away the laundry to then access your bed.
- A child wants a cookie but needs to finish dinner. When presented with “first dinner, then cookie”, the child is more likely to finish their dinner to access the cookie.
- Setting a goal to first complete a work task before you take a walk on your break is implementing the Premack principle.



Connection Center

**Resources are listed in alphabetical order and are not an endorsement or referral by Positive Outcomes, LLC but are provided as general information.*

The **American Autism Association** though in person services are for FL and NY residents, they offer online information kits and virtual workshop recordings. You can learn more on their website at <https://www.myautism.org>

The **ARC of the Pikes Peak Region** offers social programs, advocacy support, guardianship programs, and succeeding in school and life programs. You can learn more on their website under their program tab. <https://www.thearcpr.org/school-life/>

The **Autism Society of Colorado** offers online support groups for adults with autism, parents/caregivers of autistic children, autistic LGBTQ community, and for spouses/partners of autistic adults. They also offer social gathering opportunities for autistic teens and adults. You can learn more on their website under their program tab and events calendar. <https://www.autismcolorado.org>

The **Autism Vision of Colorado** offers support groups for men, moms, teens, artists and gamers. Support groups have recurring dates. You can learn more on their website on the events calendar tab. <https://www.autismvisionco.org>

The **Colorado Springs Down Syndrome Association** offers social groups and groups for dads, teens, young adults, new parents, and school age children. They also offer resources for families. You can learn more on their website under their program and resource tabs. <https://csdsa.org>

The **Peak Parent Center** offers parent/family advocacy supports, educational supports, local and national disability specific organization information, and webinars/trainings. You can learn more on their website. <https://www.peakparent.org>

[New to our organization or researching options and ready to learn more?](#)

For more information visit our website at www.positiveoutcomesllc.com

Or call our office at: 719-344-8756 Monday-Friday 8am-6pm

Click below to follow us on social media

