

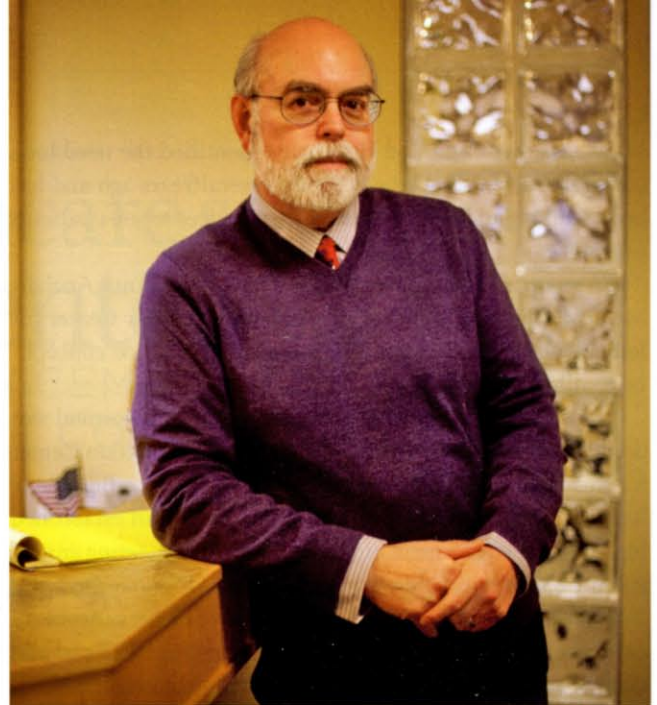
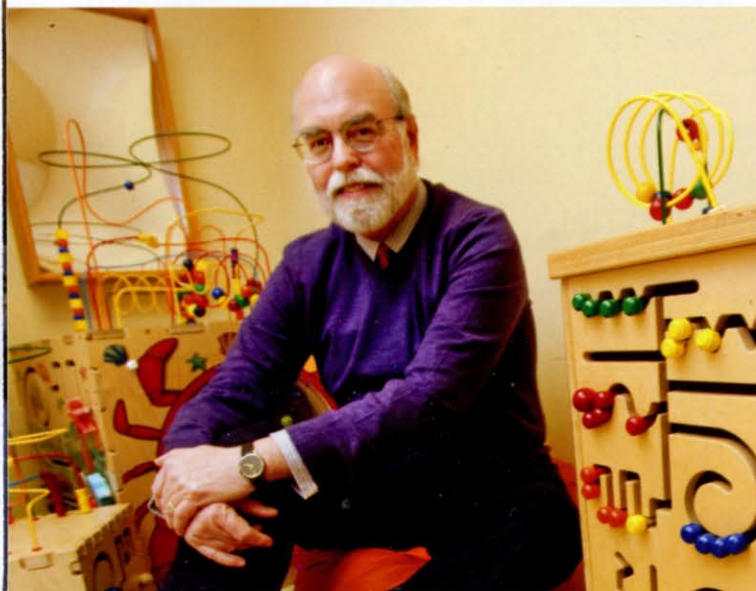
AIDING AREA CHILDREN AND Families

CHILD & ADOLESCENT HEALTH SPECIALISTS, P.C., PROVIDES AN AREA RESOURCE FOR PEDIATRIC PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM DEVELOPMENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONCERNS.

LOCATED IN COHASSET, MA, Child & Adolescent Health Specialists, P.C., is staffed by Robert Belknap, M.D., M.P.H., a pediatric developmental-behavioral health specialist who is a full-time staff member at South Shore Hospital and a member of the South Shore Physician Hospital Organization. Dr. Belknap is specially trained to handle concerns arising from developmental delays and conditions such as autism, Asperger syndrome, anxiety and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

Originally drawn to the field of general pediatrics, including neonatology and gastroenterology, Dr. Belknap began seeing a variety of patients he didn't feel prepared to treat due to their physiological or behavioral delays.

"I was seeing more and more children in my practice that were experiencing difficulties at home and at school due to autism, anxiety, growth disorders and attention deficit disorders," says Dr. Belknap. "I began to do more research in this area and became interested in developmental-behavioral pediatrics. At that point, I left my practice and completed my fellowship at the University of South Florida with J. Michael Cupoli, M.D. Dr. Cupoli had been trained by T. Berry Brazelton, M.D., who had just retired."



Addressing Developmental Concerns

Dr. Belknap offers a wide range of diagnostic and therapeutic modalities for the management of developmental disorders. To provide for an accurate diagnosis of the conditions contributing to a child's developmental or behavioral concerns, Dr. Belknap performs a careful developmental history, which includes examining the child interacting with his or her parents. Other testing is done as needed.

Some of the most common conditions he sees in his practice are autism spectrum disorders and include autism and Asperger syndrome. For these children, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and applied behavioral analysis are available, as well as socialization skills classes designed to help children learn to relate to others. Dr. Belknap and his staff also work with parents to obtain specialized educational services for their children and to analyze lifestyle factors to see if they could be affecting or exacerbating a child's behavior. If an autistic child cannot sleep for example, use of melatonin before bedtime can help the child relax, which provides benefits for the entire household. Dietary adjustments can be useful, as well. Working with parents, Dr. Belknap can prescribe medication when these are necessary.

"When I work with a child's parents to determine a diagnosis and help for that child and he or she does well, that is an impact that will last for decades," says Dr. Belknap. "That is a truly wonderful feeling and a very rewarding aspect of this job."

Appropriate Time for Referral

In many cases, the earlier intervention can begin, the better the outcome the child will experience. Dr. Belknap encourages all physicians to refer their patients if there is any cause for concern as early as possible.

For more information about the services provided through Child & Adolescent Health Specialists, P.C., visit www.drbelknap.com or call (781) 383-8380. ■