

# Cerebral Palsy: The Basics

Presented by:

Jae Kim, MSW, and

Dr. Torey Gilbertson, PT, PhD, DPT, PCS

Presentation created by Chanita Stone

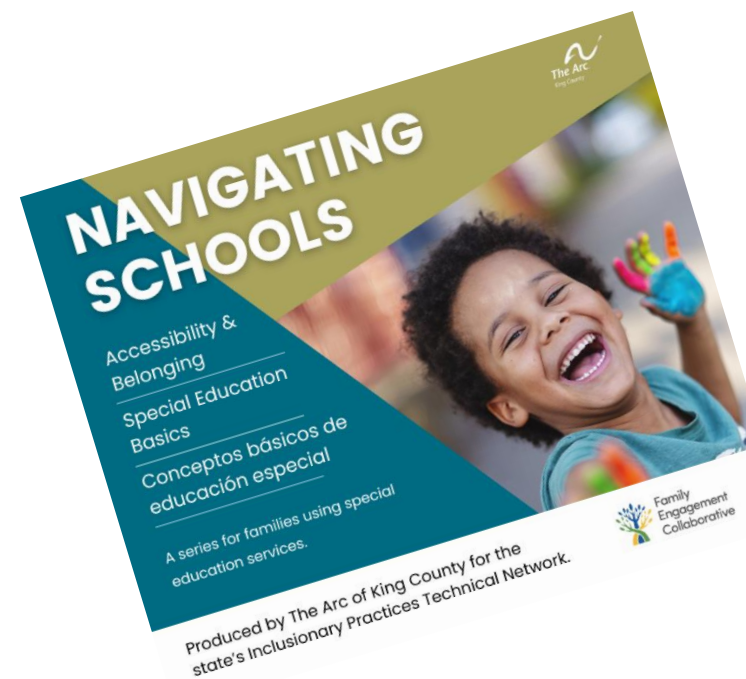


# About this series

This presentation is part of a series of workshops we are doing this spring as part of the [Inclusionary Practices Technical Assistance Network](#).

This is a statewide collaboration between the [Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction](#), WestEd, and education partners across Washington state.

One of these partners is the [Family Engagement Collaborative](#), and The Arc of King County is part of this collaborative. This spring we are hosting workshops to help educators learn more about disability and ways to support families, and help families learn more about inclusive learning and ways to navigate the special education process.



# UNDERSTANDING DISABILITY

The Arc  
King County

A class series for anyone who works with or supports students with disabilities.

- Autism: The Basics
- Cerebral Palsy: The Basics
- Disability is Diversity

A close-up photo of a young girl with dark hair and glasses, smiling. Her right hand is raised, showing green and yellow paint on her fingers and palm. The background is blurred.

Produced by The Arc of King County for the state's Inclusionary Practices Technical Network.





# Who we are ...

The Arc of King County promotes and protects the rights of people with intellectual or other developmental disabilities (IDD) so we can all live, learn, work and play in the community.

The Arc is driven by the fundamental belief that everyone deserves to write their own life story. That means:

- Real access to education
- Meaningful employment
- Quality healthcare
- Genuine community connections

At our chapter, we offer information and family support, systems navigation, education & civic engagement support. We also run a supported living program for adults with IDD.

We help (or refer!) on any topic. The most common are special education, housing, and Medicaid long-term supports.

<https://arcofkingcounty.org/>



Need assistance? [ask@arcofkingcounty.org](mailto:ask@arcofkingcounty.org)

## **Todays' presenters:**

Jae Kim, MSW, Information & Referral Program Manager,

[jkim@arcofkingcounty.org](mailto:jkim@arcofkingcounty.org), &

Dr. Torey Gilbertson, PT, PhD, DPT, PCS





# Agenda

- Why we are here?
  - About The Arc of King County
  - What is CP
  - Types of CP
  - Impairments Found with CP
  - Assumptions
  - Interventions
  - Our Stories
  - Resources
- 
- 





# **Why are we here?**

To share information and form  
a supportive community for  
parents and caregivers of youth with  
Cerebral Palsy




# The Arc of King County



## Our Mission

The Arc of King County promotes and protects the rights of people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities so they can live, learn, work, and play in the community – improving the quality of life for us all.





# What is CP?

Cerebral palsy (CP) is a group of non-progressive permanent movement disorders that appear in early childhood. It is caused by abnormal brain development or injury to the developing brain, often affecting muscle tone, movement, and motor skills. The condition is characterized by a range of physical disabilities, which can vary in its impact on an individual.



# Types of CP

---

## Spastic

This is the most common type, characterized by stiff and tight muscles (spasticity) that can limit movement

## Dyskinetic

Involves involuntary movements, which can be slow and writhing (athetoid) or rapid and jerky (choreoathetosis). Muscle tone can fluctuate between too tight and too loose

## Ataxic

Characterized by problems with balance and coordination, resulting in unsteady movements and difficulty with tasks requiring precise motor skills

## Mixed CP

A combination of different types of CP, where an individual may exhibit characteristics of more than one type



# Common impairments found with CP

---

## **Seizure Disorders**

Epilepsy is more common among those with CP, with seizures varying in type and frequency.

## **Vision Problems**

Issues such as strabismus (crossed eyes), refractive errors, or cortical visual impairment may affect visual perception.

## **Feeding and Swallowing Difficulties**

Problems with oral motor control can lead to challenges in feeding and swallowing, sometimes necessitating specialized nutrition.

## **Speech and Language Disorders**

Difficulties with speech production and language comprehension can occur, impacting communication abilities.

## **Behavioral and Emotional Issues**

Individuals with CP may experience anxiety, depression, or behavioral challenges due to their physical limitations and social interactions.

## **Musculoskeletal Issues**

Muscle weakness, joint deformities, and skeletal problems may develop over time due to abnormal movement patterns.

# POV: People assuming



## Misconceptions & Assumptions

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7

Intellectual Disability

Lack of Ability

Non-Speaking

Uniformity of Symptoms

Always in a Wheelchair

Lack of Independence

Social Limitations

Some individuals with CP may experience intellectual disabilities that may contribute to learning difficulties. Other's ability to learn may not be impacted at all, resulting in average or above-average intelligence.

**Always  
assume  
competence!**

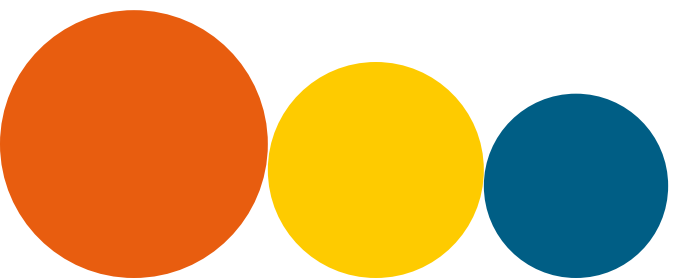




# Therapeutic Interventions

---

- Physical therapy – PT
- Occupational therapy – OT
- Speech language pathology – SLP
- Prosthetics and & orthotics – P&O
- ALL focus on quality of life considerations and independence
- ALL incorporate the family
  - ✓ Goal planning
  - ✓ Home exercises or programs



# Physical Therapy (PT) or children with CP

---

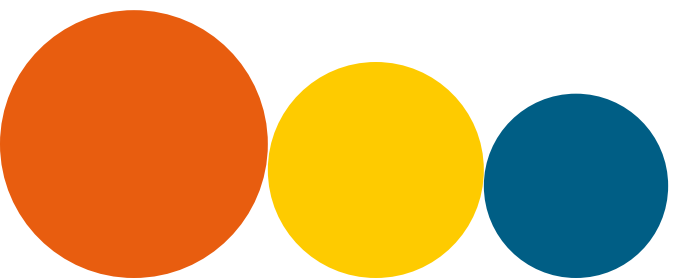
- Positioning and equipment needs: seating, bathing, mobility

For young children:

- Developmental milestones: sitting, rolling, posture
- Mobility: crawling, cruising along furniture, walking (if indicated)

For older youth:

- Posture, strength, mobility, balance, coordination





# Occupational Therapy (OT) for Children with CP

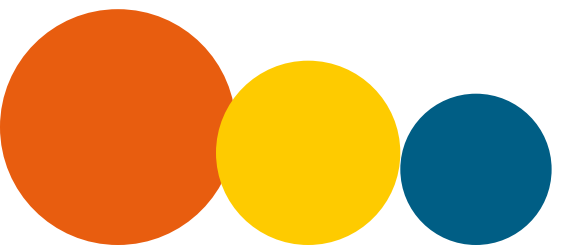
- Positioning and equipment needs (adaptive and other)
- Sensory processing
- Visual motor skills

For young children:

- Posture, mobility, socialization

For older youth:

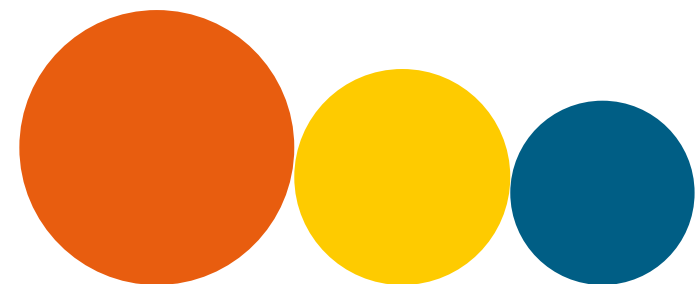
- Independence with dressing, eating, hygiene, etc.
- Developing routines



# Speech language pathology (SLP) for children with CP

---

- Cognitive skills (memory, multitasking, planning, etc.)
- Communication
- Expressive:
  - ✓ Speech and articulation
  - ✓ Making choices, verbally or using communication boards, or using augmentative assistive communication (AAC) devices
- Receptive
- Breathing
- Swallowing/eating
- Routines

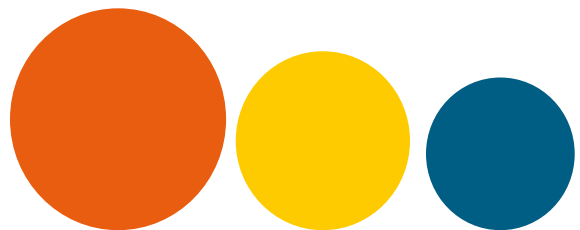




# Prosthetics and & orthotics (P&O) for children with CP

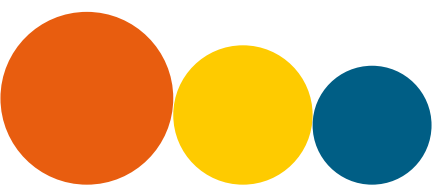
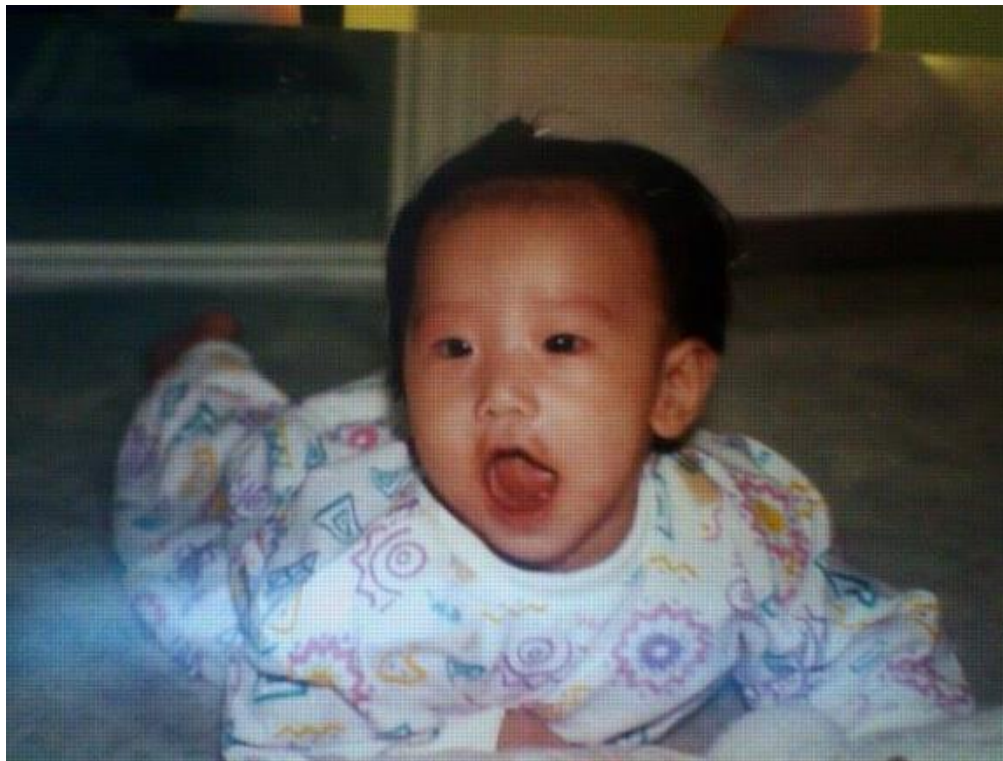
---

- Biomechanical alignment
- Comfort
- Independence through bracing
  - ✓ Universal
  - ✓ Custom fabrication
  - ✓ Common body parts
    - Wrist(s)
    - Ankles/feet
    - Trunk



# Jae's Story

---





# Resources

## The Arc of King County

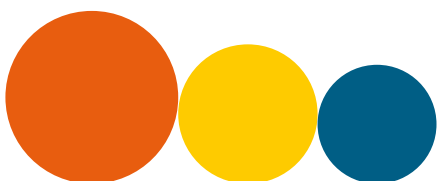
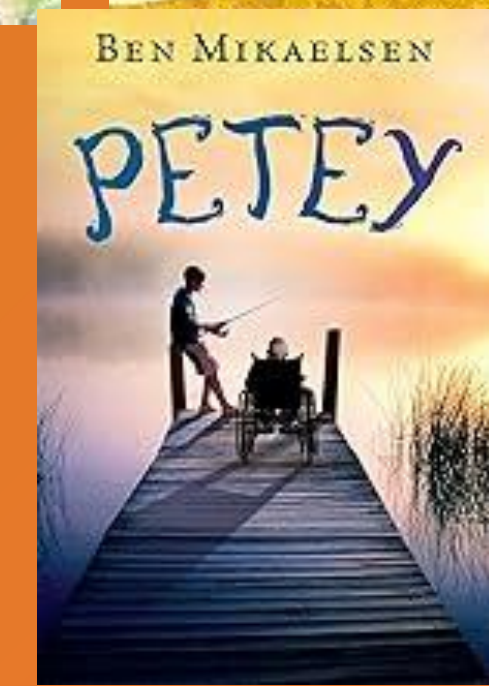
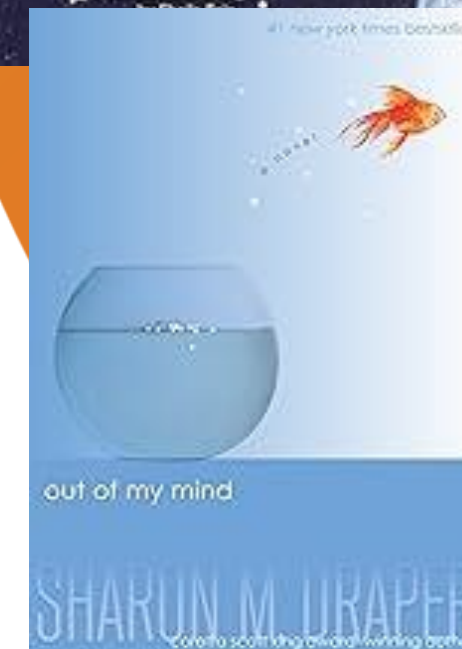
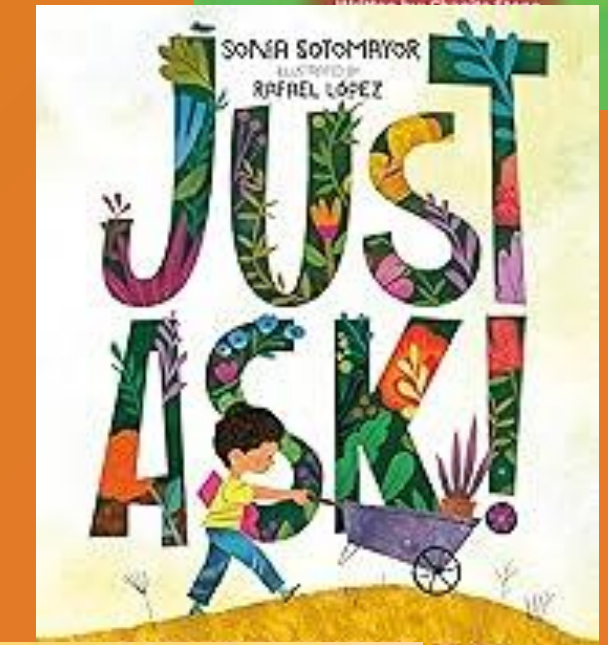
- [Parent to Parent](#) peer support
- Coffee and Conversation meetups
- Cafe y Conversaciones
- Silver Tsunami support for older families
- [Online resource guide](#)
- Information & referral, [ask@arcofkingcounty.org](mailto:ask@arcofkingcounty.org)

## Additional Support

- Seattle Children's CP [Patient & Family Resources](#)
- [Seattle Area CP Parent & Guardian Support Group \(FB\)](#)
- [Can Child](#) resources

Book recommendations by parent and author Chanita Stone!

## Amazon Book List



# Thank You for Your Attention



**Jae Kim**

MSW

[Jkim@arcofkingcounty.org](mailto:Jkim@arcofkingcounty.org)

Information & Referral  
Program Manager,  
The Arc of King County



**Torey Gilbertson**

PT, PhD, DPT, PCS

[gilbet@uw.edu](mailto:gilbet@uw.edu)

Assistant Teaching Professor,  
University of Washington,  
Department of Rehabilitation Medicine







Before you go...

Please let us know what you thought of today's presentation.

Your feedback allows us to understand and improve upon our training.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PSDGXQC>