

06.18.24

Mary Stanislawski came to Cedar South to meet with Rachel Lopez, DCC; Patsy Whitlow, DCA and Cindy Gratzek, RPS

Mary came with a list of things to share with staff that were beneficial to her and Samantha, when she was teaching, in handling Samantha's "episodes"

- Keep some of Samantha's items separate so when she starts to escalate you can offer her those items as a distraction.
- Samantha likes to take a small item of hers with her, when she leaves the house. It will be something she can easily fit in the palm of her hand or a pocket – usually a small character from a movie.
- Samantha likes to sort very small objects: pencil erasers, maybe colored buttons, try the small colored wooden objects that are at CS
- She likes to put together puzzles – regular picture puzzles (200 pieces)
- The following can be used as a distraction and/or as outings: movies, bowling, baking, make playdough, play with Slime, go to the library, sit outside, go for a walk; enjoys science projects and/or books.

Helpful things to know about Samantha:

- Likes routine – wants to know what is for lunch or supper
- When she returns from school she will be more active and not be directed to do things as she has been very structured in school all day.
- She understands emotions, is very curious, likes new things, has a great sense of humor
- One week prior to getting her menses she is more agitated – take note on her birth control pill dispenser.
- Change is difficult for her; staff should let her know when they are going to be off. Use the calendar in her room to write on.
- In the past, she was able to take off her shoes, pants and wet brief and then put a new one on and redress herself – this may be something we could work on. She used to wear underwear at school.
- Receptive skills are much higher than her expressive skills. She understands more than she is able to verbally express.
- When encouraging Samantha to use a quieter voice or she is beginning to escalate – remind her she needs to be at a "2" and that she is now at a "3". Encourage her to take a slow, deep breath and reach her arms towards the ceiling. She responds better to saying a number rather than a color. (This is using the chart sent to CS from the school).
- Samantha likes to have books read to her. Vooks.com is a site the WAO school used; the cost is \$6.99/month or \$49.99/year. Another site is Storyline Online.net – I think this one is free.

Mary encouraged the home to purchase the 5 Point Scale by Michelle Garcia to use with Samantha. She stated the parents did not put a lot of expectations on Samantha as their focus was on her being happy.

Submitted by Cindy Gratzek, RPS