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**Conductive Learn Center celebrates new facility
With an Open House October 15, 2002**

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN – The Conductive Learning Center, a growing program for children with cerebral palsy, spina bifida, and other motor disorders is celebrating its move into a larger facility with an Open House on Tuesday, October 15, 2002.

The event will be held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Conductive Learning Center, 2428 Burton SE (in the Lake Michigan Academy Building). A brief program on the center and its work will be held at 6:15 p.m. Parents and children will be available in each classroom to share their experiences and answer any questions.

"We look forward to showing off our space at the new site, and to introducing our program to more people in the West Michigan community," said Executive Director Dave Dvorak. "This new facility will allow us to meet the growing interest for our programs, and to grow with demand and need."

The Conductive Learning Center was established by Aquinas College in 1998 (and housed there until this year) in response to parent demand for a comprehensive, proven approach to learning and development for children with motor disorders. The program was developed at and operates in cooperation with the International Peto Institute of Conductive Education in Budapest, Hungary.

Conductive Education is based on the theory that the central nervous system has the capacity to form new neural connections, despite neurological damage. By repeating tasks and integrating intentional movement with learning, the brain creates alternate paths to send messages to muscle groups to create the desired movements. Through this methodology, a child can gain movement and skills, and achieve greater levels of independence.

Conductive Education was developed in 1945 in Hungary and has since become well established in many parts of Europe and Canada. It is now just beginning to be recognized in the United States for its efficacy and its results. Statistics indicate that 70 to 80 percent of the children who participate in the program between the ages of 6 and 12 months are able to integrate into the community appropriate to their age between the ages of 3 and 6 years.

Along with educators, physicians, therapists, and other professionals across the state, parents are learning about and referring children to the Conductive Learning Center in increasing numbers.

"Our goals are to help children with cerebral palsy, spina bifida, and other motor disorders become independent and be prepared for the traditional classroom," Dvorak said.

The program targets children up to age six, when the impact of the program is greatest.

Specially Peto-trained teachers, who are called conductors, lead classes at the center. Programs are individualized within a group setting to ensure that methods and goals are appropriate to each child's development level, intellectual ability, and personal characteristics.

For more information on the Conductive Learning Center or on Conductive Education, call Dave Dvorak at 616.459.8281, Ext. 5467.

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