

# Palmetto Health Children's Hospital Outpatient Physical and Specialty Therapy

provides physical, occupational and speech therapy, delivering specialty care through specialty teams. We use evidenced-based treatment techniques and creative approaches to engage children and to maximize the benefits they receive from therapy.

One of these creative approaches includes Animal Assisted Therapy.

To contact PAALS for information on how to volunteer, make a donation or apply for a service dog visit [paals.org](http://paals.org) or call 803-788-7063.

Palmetto Health Children's Hospital  
Outpatient Physical and Specialty Therapy

*We're located behind Palmetto Health Children's Hospital*

14 Richland Medical Park Dr., Suite 100  
Columbia, SC 29203

Phone: 803-434-1260

Fax: 803-434-1411



Children's  
Miracle Network  
Hospitals  
Helping Local Kids

*Because the best care matters*

[PalmettoHealthChildrens.org](http://PalmettoHealthChildrens.org)  
**803-296-KIDS (5437)**



*Outpatient Physical  
and Specialty Therapy  
Animal Assisted Therapy*



## Research has shown that the presence of a well trained dog can lessen the physical and psychological stress of children.

The first formal work and research into Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) was conducted in 1961 by Dr. Boris Levinson.

By being in close proximity with a calm and gentle dog, a child's heart rate and blood pressure have been observed to reduce. With a dog by their side, children have been noted to demonstrate less behavioral, emotional and verbal distress when involved in potentially stressful activities.

## Animal Assisted Therapy

AAT allows for more effective treatment for patients and has been shown to improve therapy outcomes. The therapy has been highly motivational to students and patients in reaching their therapeutic goals including walking, dressing and speaking.

### **We are excited to offer Animal Assisted Therapy as an option for qualifying patients.**

Our animal assistance teams have been trained and certified to provide animal assisted therapy by Palmetto Animal Assisted Life Services (PAALS), a local organization. All dogs coming from PAALS are well groomed, vaccinated and trained to interact with children and adults with special needs. Following two years of structured training, they are selected for their reliability, predictability, controllability and their ability to inspire confidence.

### **Ways a speech therapist might incorporate AAT into their therapy sessions:**

- The child might list the steps (sequencing) for washing a dog
- The child might follow directions to interact with the dog (get the ball and give it to the dog)
- Imitating animal sounds (having the child copy the dog's sound when the dog barks)
- Describing (the child may provide attributes/description)

## *Specialty care you can trust.*

*Our therapy programs offer specialized care that is backed by advanced specialty certifications and the vast experience of our teams. Our commitment to individualized, one-on-one patient care ensures a unique and meaningful patient and family experience.*

### **Ways an occupational therapist might use AAT:**

- Providing functional use of the upper body
- Performing acts of daily living on the dog (such as brushing hair)
- Providing patients with a way to experience and organize sensory input without being overwhelmed

### **Ways a physical therapist might utilize AAT:**

- Exercises designed to increase balance and equilibrium
- Ambulation with assistance for stability
- As a motivator for ball skills and for retrieval
- Modeling stair negotiation and allowing increased stability for patient

## Children's Hospital Physical and Specialty Therapy

Our therapy programs offer individualized care through specialty programs which include:

- Animal Assisted Therapy Program
- Feeding Program
- Post Concussion Program (0-14 years)
- Sensory Integration
- It Takes Two to Talk Program (empowers parents to be effective language facilitators for their children)

*A physician referral is needed for therapy.*