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**VTPU Facebook Group Co-Creator**  
**Vision Therapy & Autism Advocate**

1/13-15/2018

# What is Vision Therapy Parents Unite (VTPU)?

- Global Social Media FaceBook (FB) group
- 4 ½ years young (June 2013)
- Has over 13,000 members comprised of VTs, Vision Therapy Drs. of Optometry (VTODs), ODs, Atlas Orthogonists (AOs), Special Needs (SpEd) lawyers, Advocates for other SpEd, Teachers, etc.
- 5 Admins:
  - Michele Hillman (Maryland) (Co-Creator)
  - Kelly Snedden (Kansas) (Co-Creator)
  - Wendy Wright Kinkade (Texas) also a VT now
  - Lori Ann Jorde (Canada)
  - Angelica Kashie (New Hampshire)



# What is Vision Therapy Parents Unite (VTPU)?

- VT FB groups we refer to
  - UK Vision Therapy Support Group
    - ~200 members
  - Vision Therapy Australia Support Group
    - ~700 members
  - Vision Therapy in Europe
    - ~25 members
  - Eye Can Do All Things – Vision Therapy Support San Antonio
    - 42 members



# What is Vision Therapy Parents Unite (VTPU)?

- Sites we often refer to
  - <http://www.covd.org/>
  - <http://oepf.org/>
  - <http://babo.co.uk/>
  - <https://www.acbo.org.au/>
  - <http://www.atlasorthogonality.com/PatientSite/aboutAO.html>
  - <https://www.upledger.com/>
  - <https://noravisionrehab.com/>



# What led to the creation of VTPU?



Joshua,  
infant

# What led to the creation of VTPU?



Joshua,  
7/2006  
After  
strabismus  
surgery



# What led to the creation of VTPU?



Joshua,  
3-4 years old



# Joshua's Journey

- Formula issues
- Failure to Thrive
- Speech delays
- Hearing delays, tubes put in at age 4
- Developmental delays
  - Didn't like Tummy time
  - Didn't like Swinging
  - Running into things
  - Not reading, Not writing, Not Drawing
- Saw PO every 3-6 mos. and had 20/20 vision, eyes perfectly aligned





# Joshua's Journey

- Kennedy Krieger Institute visits
- Johns Hopkins visits
- Neurobehavioral assessment/DX
  - Moderate Autism PDD-NOS
    - He will not be a productive member of society
    - He will live with us for the rest of his life
    - Get a special needs trust in place
- Public School System, IEP, SpEd Advocate
- Private OT noticed some issues; performed Sensory Integrated Praxis Test
- Results: SPD and needs a full VT exam

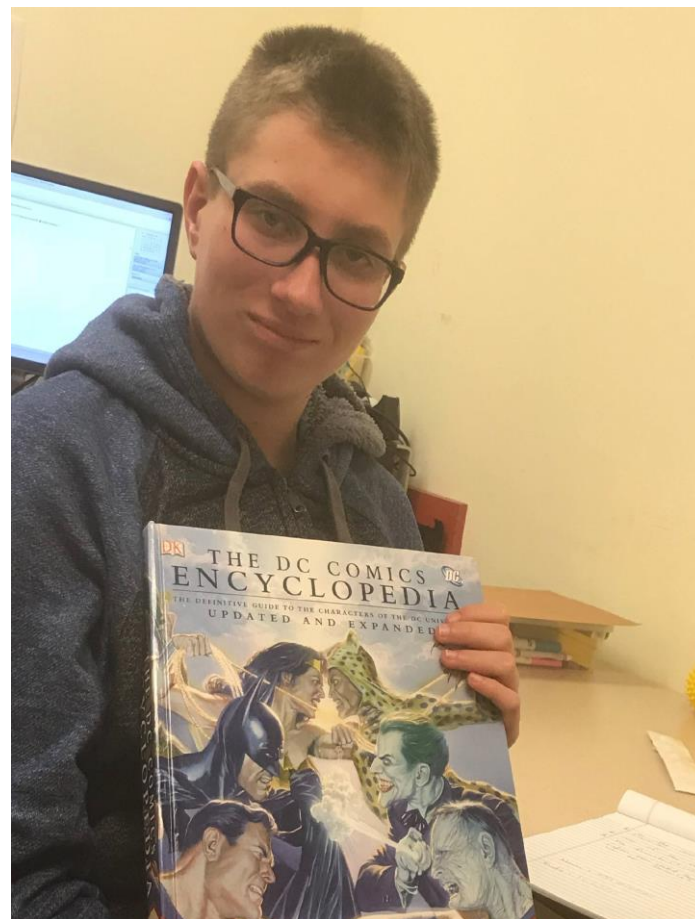


# What led to the creation of VTPU?



Joshua's Journey

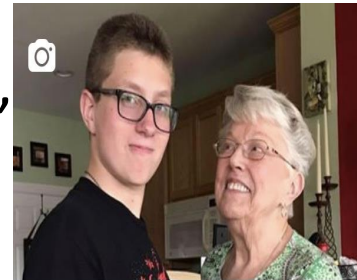
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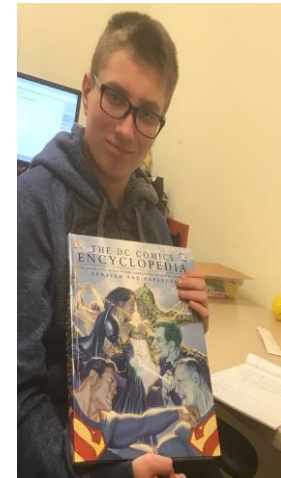
# What led to the creation of VTPU?

- Joshua Hillman

- David A. Damari OD, FCOVD,
- Robin Mays Benoit
- Dr. Marsha Benshir FNORA
- Founding story
  - Kelly Snedden
  - Michele Hillman



Joshua's Journey  
Create Page @username



- Received COVDs Making Vision Therapy “Visible” Award April 2015

<https://www.facebook.com/Joshuas-Journey-271053699695369/>



# Futures Restored because of VT

**Joshua Hillman**, 7<sup>th</sup> grader, mainstreamed, IEP, speech and uses iPad and apps with school. On hiatus from VT, has had a little syntonics which helped with fight or flight, CST, AO and working on SLP and more syntonics this year

**Cade Snedden** - graduated 1 semester early from high school and is attending college, studying IT with an interest in software development and cyber security.



# What is the VTPU Mission Statement?

- VT Parents Unite is a group designed for passionate parents who know the huge benefits that Vision Therapy provides and are passionate about making sure all those who need it, know about it and can access it.
- We desire to raise the awareness of:
  - the symptoms for proper and timely diagnosis;
  - the benefits of VT in our communities; and
  - the level of knowledge and coverage by insurance companies across the U.S.



# What does VTPU do?



# What does VTPU do?

- Creates a “safe haven” for caregivers to speak about and receive feedback on visual/behavior/developmental/nutritional/school/auditory/speech/OT/diseases and much more that affect the visual processing system in a social networking platform
- Facilitate communication between parents and professionals, often requesting support from specific participating members
- We help with referrals to VT offices, with help from our network of VTODs and VTs
- We recommend different types of therapy/insight depending on situation
- We act, at times, as a liaison between parents and offices/VTs/VTODs
- We share our information from other FB groups/pages to VTPU
- Provide insightful documents for members to apply at home and in school.



# What VTPU doesn't do

- Create drama
- Tolerate disrespect
- Negative comments about person or office
- Fundraise/Ask for money from our members





# Benefits of VTPU

- Sense of caregivers perspective
- More involvement within community
- Get your name/practice recognized & referred
- Learn perspectives/different treatments that work well in addition to/with VT
- Diversity
- Network



# Testimonials

- Kelly.....Caught her eyes looking straight today...so glad we decided to do vision therapy instead of strabismus surgery...the progress is slower...but I feel so much better that I won't have to worry about any complications and/or new visual problems from it.
- Madre.... So happy, after 2 weeks of intensive VT and syntonics, the school sent home a note to say that they have noticed a huge improvement in my son's pace of reading. Still have to pinch myself. I was quite sceptical about VT and didn't expect too much improvement but now I am so happy we did go ahead.
- Toni..... Update- Just left Dr. Press' office in Park Ridge. Absolutely amazing experience. He was incredible with my son. He has such a calming tone; I really was floored that my kiddo did not flip out. The entire office was very friendly. Thank you all so much for the recommendation

# Testimonials

- **Darren a VT.....** Just an encouraging word to all you awesome parents out there struggling to help your brilliant children over the bumps... DO NOT GIVE UP!. The road is long at times and tough but the difference in the end is what I always tell my patients and parents: "We are doing this because I want you to be able to be what YOU want to be... instead of what someone else LETS you be.  
I have one of the toughest jobs I have ever had... but one I would not trade for anything. We will come to know and love your children just as you do... to be interested in their goals and dreams.. we will pray we keep their self esteem up during this journey... and we will help you keep it together when you are lost and wondering how you are going to fit one more thing into your hectic life. Remember... your children are struggling and working hard and probably have been for years. They have adapted as much as they can into "normalcy" at school... it will take a therapist they trust to re-train them from coping habits to correct habits.  
This group is AWESOME. I know it just has to feel good to find other people who have the same struggles. Keep sharing information and support. I welcome questions through messenger if of a private nature or here in public. I have shared the existence of this group with a few of my patient parents who I am sure can help.
- **Mary.....** I know this group is more about vision therapy but the support here is amazing, so wondering if anyone could help..

# Testimonials

- **Donna.....** [Angelica Kashie](#) - I spoke to you a couple of months ago about my daughter who was diagnosed with Irlens. We chatted about syntonics. I saw Geoff Shayler this week and it seems my daughter is a candidate for the therapy. However, its an intense course and I will have yo take her out of school, which is frowned upon here in the UK. Im willing to do it and pay the cost of treatment so I am putting a case together to the school to get it authorised, makes life easier. Geoff has given me the necessary medical info but Im looking for more anecdotal evidence and I guess, success story. Do you have any pearls of wisdom please on the benefits of Syntonics and VT. hope you dont mind me asking.  
Thanks Donna
- **Monika.....** I came to this group to find some answers for my son. This group is nothing short of amazing... This group has brought me hope that I haven't felt in a long time. THANK YOU. The question I have now is related to my sister. She suffered a stroke last year. She is mostly recovered BUT has some lingering issues that I believe are related to vision. Is suggesting to her to see a VTOD out of the realm of possibility? She's been to regular eye doc but out side of prism glasses that help not don't help 100%... She feels dizzy at times and trouble reading... Can a VTOD doctor potentially help?
- **Heather.....** So thankful for this group, amazing doctors and VTs!!!! This is WITHOUT her glasses. She can't hold this for more than a few minutes, but the progress makes a mama cry! The day her eye crossed(Yes.. She just woke up this way one day!) vs. two weeks ago.

# Testimonials

- **Angelica....** Please help. My friend had a car accident on September 3rd, 2017. She can't work and is in a bad way. She has a concussion...here are her symptoms:

headaches

leg pain/numbness

eye pain

vision

memory loss

super anxious

depression

crying

What should she do FIRST?

What should she do next?

How quickly can she expect results?

She'd also like to know what happens if she can't return to work?

Any and all advice is greatly appreciated! TIA

- This lady can now sleep through the night because of an AO, she's receiving VT and working on other issues too. With the help of the members this lady is getting her life back!

All of these stories and many more is why we do what we do in VTPU!

# Summary

- 4 ½ years young, 5 admins to ~13K members, Global, Social Media Group
- Refer, encourage, network, support, guide, nurture, create bonds, help, insightful, learn, etc.
- Provide SAFE-HAVEN, EDUCATION, HOPE, INSPIRATION.....
- We are a creative/passionate group wanting the best for our loved ones/patients
- We want VT to become a common term just like PT has become
- We will NOT stop caring and spreading awareness!



# Questions/Thoughts/Suggestions

