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Wednesday, Jan. 24, 2007

Business Editor: Jim Medina, 645-1049, jmedina@VenturaCountyStar.com

D4

BUSINESS

WHO'S NEW IN BUSINESS

Children's Therapy Network

Owner: Cassandra Woods, owner and physical therapist

Product or service: Physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language therapy to special needs children

Location: Port Hueneme

Date established: October 2005

Hours open: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Services are provided in the client's home.

Telephone: 382-6245

E-mail: cassiept@yahoo.com

Employees: 3

Start-up capital: \$5,000 (but a permanent office has yet to be established)

Estimated annual gross revenues: \$100,000

Questions to Cassandra Woods. What prompted you to start your own business?

I've always been a dreamer and have dreamed of owning my own business. Because of this, I often found myself frustrated with being unable to share and implement ideas and have more input when working under others.

What is your educational and career background? I have my master's degree in physical therapy. I have more than 10 years of experience as a therapist, with six of those years treating children.

How much research did you do before starting your business? That's hard to say exactly because throughout the years, I have picked up bits of information here and there. The irony of researching for business is that the more you learn, the more you realize what you don't know.

What were the most helpful



Cam Sanders / Special to The Star

Physical therapist Cassie Woods of Children's Therapy Network uses toys and songs to help client Nicole Valenzora build strength, balance and coordination as part of her therapy after being born prematurely.

sources, including Web sites? Initially advice given to me from other entrepreneurs was really beneficial. I am finding that there is an overwhelming amount of free information, such as SCORE, California Small Business Association, and Web sites designed to help women in business (e.g. Women's Economic Ventures).

When were you the most

discouraged? Initially, I would have thought that it was the fear of just starting out on my own. For every person that was helping me, it felt as though there were two that were trying to discourage me. Regardless of this, I stubbornly believe the best of people. Unfortunately, this has resulted in disappointment, and my eyes have been opened to the fact that there are indeed people

in the business world who ascribe to the motto of "dog eat dog."

What company or individual do you admire? I most admire a pair of women whom I worked for when I lived in Miami. They own a pediatric therapy organization that allows employees autonomy while encouraging creativity. I would very much like to model my company after theirs. I also admire the strength and persistence of these women in starting their business despite many obstacles. Their company is now one of the biggest pediatric therapy organizations in Miami.

What will make your business stand out from competitors? Two things: my approach to clients, and my approach to my employees. The Children's Therapy Network's mission is to provide holistic treatment, focusing not only on the whole child but the whole family as well. To achieve this goal, Children's Therapy Network focuses on ensuring that the child is learning in his/her most natural environment by encouraging parent education, training and counseling. I hope to create a warm environment where families will be eager to participate and for which employees will want to work.

Who is your target client/customer base? Families with children who have special needs and school districts supporting those families.

— *Businesses less than one year old can be profiled in Who's New in Business. Businesses older than one year can be profiled in Company Spotlight. Those owning franchises in the region can be profiled in Franchise Focus. Only businesses that have never been profiled in The Star may participate. For more details or the questionnaire, call 645-1049.*