

Got-Special KIDS



Students at the Heidt Center of Excellence recently began training at Got Special KIDS to learn workplace skills any employer would find valuable.

“I started Got-Special KIDS after we learned our son had autism,” said Tamara Andersson, Got-Special KIDS founder and prior owner. “I discovered there was very little out there in the way of therapeutic, educational or sensory resources for kids on the autism spectrum, or who have sensory processing disorders or other behavioral and learning challenges. Once we were well-established in the special education and special needs communities, I decided to gift my company to an organization that serves the underserved. The Children’s Home was the obvious choice!”

The students are learning the basics of the largely mail-order operation and are doing everything from processing orders when they come in, fulfilling the order, securely packing it and shipping it efficiently and properly.

“This program is in its infancy but the conceptualization is very exciting to watch,” said Jill Smith, operations director of The Children’s Home. “What we’re doing is taking an active role in empowering a special needs population that is vastly under-employed on a national level. Many of these students thought they’d never be able to work but we’re illustrating that doesn’t always have to be the case.”

The students are making progress and making it fast.

“Its been amazing so far,” said Shayla Becze, job readiness and senior retail operations manager of The Children’s Home. “The students are passionate and eager to learn. When you see how they tackle the tasks they’ve been assigned it reinforces what we already knew – everyone, regardless of whatever life challenges they may have, endeavors to lead an independent life with dignity and respect. Got-Special KIDS is actively providing the autism community with those tools and capabilities.”

The autism community is often over-represented in issues pertaining to under employment or unemployment. But, these men and women often have talents that make them desirable job candidates in the job market.



Continued on Page 2



“Nationally, about 66% of the autism community are unemployed,” said Dawn Kaylor, human resources manager of The Children’s Home. “But, studies from a variety of sources show that the special needs community make very desirable employees. They tend to be fiercely loyal to their organization, which leads to very low turnover, and they are routinely among the most laser focused and productive people in any work environment. Some companies are actually recruiting workers on the autism spectrum because they have found these employees tend to excel at jobs that require repetitive tasks, an aptitude for detecting patterns, or higher math or skills involving coding.”



The Got-Special KIDS story is still developing but will be an exciting new chapter for The Children’s Home. The organization currently ships products to an international audience and will embody the idea of, “For the special-needs community; by the special-needs community.”

Follow the Got-Special KIDS story at www.tchcincy.org or at the Got-Special KIDS Facebook page, which can be found [@GotSpecialKIDS](https://www.facebook.com/GotSpecialKIDS). The Got-Special KIDS products and ordering information is available at www.got-specialkids.com.