

progressive caring

Dawn Burden puts a lot of miles on her car, driving her 2-year-old daughter Grace to appointments at Children's Hospital in Columbus and her pediatrician in Lancaster. Grace has brain damage that presents major daily challenges for the family. So Dawn was very happy when she discovered that Grace could have both speech and physical therapy nearer to her Meigs County home — in Athens at **O'Bleness Memorial Hospital's Rehabilitation Center** in the Castrop Center. Speech therapy for children has been offered at the O'Bleness facility since 2005 through Kim Hale, MA, CCC-SLP, of TherapyTech Inc. in Athens. In addition, Grace has physical therapy at O'Bleness in an area specifically designed for pediatric rehabilitation. Physical therapy services and additional speech therapy services are provided at the center through an arrangement with Ohio University Therapy Associates (OUTA).



Dawn and Grace Burden

“Grace sustained brain injury when she was a few weeks old, so all of her development has been very slow,” Dawn said. Grace has difficulty with every physical task — sitting, crawling, walking, eating, talking, even breathing. Kim is assisting Grace with learning to talk and with swallowing.

During a typical session, Kim and Grace sit on the floor as Kim repeats a basic word — “more.” Grace watches Kim’s mouth intently as she draws the word out. After a few moments of silence, Grace tries to mimic the sound. A big smile

follows her successful attempt. Kim has brought colorful cupcakes to tempt Grace to eat, taste or just play.

“We work really hard to utilize a family-based intervention approach with a strong coordination with the pediatric physical therapists from OUTA,” Kim said. “Dawn and Grace’s older sister, Bethany, participate in every activity. Dawn and Bethany are the best therapists Grace could ever have. They are driven by love.”

“With all the other long trips we have to make, it is a relief to have these services in Athens,” Dawn said.