

304 ½ Silver Street
Bennington, VT 05201

November 19, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Todd Fiorentino and I own a massage therapy practice in Bennington, Vermont called Energy Rising. As you may know, a number of ailments – previously thought only treatable with drugs - have been relieved through massage. This phenomenon is currently under study by the Touch Research Institute (TURI).

As an example, some doctors have been able to reduce dosages of anti-depressants when combined with bodywork. Although sometimes these patients still can not come off the drugs, it is substantial that they can take less. This is a good start and one that may translate into other fields.

I became interested in autism after becoming friends with a few teachers of autistic children. Their “stories of the day” made me wonder if bodywork might prove useful. Given what is now coming to light regarding the mind-body connection and how there is no true separation, I explored the question.

TURI conducted at least two studies on children with autism. A series of massage therapy sessions were given to children in each study, which led to a number of improvements. Children exhibited less off-task/antisocial behavior, better sleep patterns and greater attentiveness than the control group.

Massage therapy for children is done in a different fashion than for adults. It may be done fully clothed, in a chair (or on a table) and with the parent in the room. Just as children desire to be hugged, they really enjoy massage! I hope you will consider the results of these studies and perhaps contact me to put together a program for the parents and children of your institute.

I believe that if parents were aware of the positive effects of massage therapy, many would opt for the service for their young ones. Massage is a healthy way to help ground children in this reality, in this body. From what I know of autism, these are important goals of any treatment protocol. Thanks very much.

Sincerely,

Todd Fiorentino
Massage Therapist