

Ty Ankrom's Here's What I Think ...

With most of the county schools back in session, another summer break has ended.



For the speech language pathologists who spent a month of the summer working with children, their summers may have seemed even shorter.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays in July, Julie Wolfe, Bethany McFerin and Sara Christ worked with about 50 children at the Head Start building providing a summer speech clinic. While the clinic was open to children and youth ranging from 3 to 13, therapists primarily worked with 3- to 6-year-olds.

Julie and Bethany said that while the eight sessions aren't enough to see progress in "leaps and bounds," they do keep children learning.

"Offering extra help with students' speech and language disorders over the summer allows them to keep up with their progress heading into the next school year," Bethany

said.

And Bethany enjoys seeing that progress.

"When I get to see the imaginary light bulb go off over their heads (because) they realize that they've made progress" was Bethany's favorite part of the clinic.

For Julie, being able to connect with parents is a high point.

"Because parents are responsible for transportation, it provides us with the opportunity to share the session activities or outcomes with them face to face. This is a chance to share suggestions or cues we have used during the therapy sessions with the families," Julie said.



Bethany McFerin, left, a speech language pathologist, speaks with a parent after a session. This was Bethany's first year working at the summer clinic.



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Bethany said another benefit of connecting with parents is getting their feedback.

The ESC is able to provide the summer clinic through a partnership with Hands for the Disabled and the four county school districts.

Parents or guardians who would like their child to take part in next year's summer clinic can contact the ESC at (740) 474-7529 or the speech pathologist at their child's school.

Ty Ankrom is the superintendent of the Pickaway County Educational Service Center. He can be reached at ty.ankrom@pickawayesc.org.