

# Realizing her Potential

## Pipersville's Quinby opens business to help those with autism

*David Campbell*

With precision, North Wales artist Courtney McKenna paints a wintry scene on the rear wall of Kristine Quinby's new business in Newtown.

McKenna's "The Four Seasons," her colorful and unique artistic design covering Quinby's entire "outdoor room," should be complete by the end of summer, if all goes according to plan.

When it is finished, Quinby hopes that the outdoor room joins the space- and train-themed rooms in providing a serene setting for her clients at Potential, which is dedicated to quality services for individuals with autism.

Opening in March of 2006, Potential, Quinby's brainchild, is a non-profit organization whose goal is to provide the highest quality interventions for individuals on the autism spectrum and other developmental disabilities.

A former teacher's aide, teacher, therapeutic support staff

and case manager, Quinby opted to launch Potential using her innovative approach to teaching.

An independent consultant before jumping into Potential, the Pipersville resident said she wanted to provide children with "appropriate educational and behavioral treatment" at her place of business.

"I just realized that I was only one person," she said. "I could only reach so many kids. I wanted to help fill in some of the gaps that were out there because the educational system frequently does not provide everything that kids need. They are only charged with providing appropriate education, not the best education."

To assist her, Quinby hired Brian Young, who conducts workshops at Potential, as her outreach program coordinator, Rachel Wohl as her social skills coordinator and Allison Traina as Potential's executive assistant. It is Quinby's hope that her staff remains with Potential.

"We're focusing on acquiring



*Courtney McKenna paints "The Four Seasons" at Potential.*

top-quality staff, paying decent salaries, giving them decent benefits, so that they'll stay with us and use the knowledge that they're gaining through working with us and keep that knowledge here," said Quinby, Potential's executive director.

Potential is the only clinic provider in the general area and

the only nonprofit clinic in the region.

"I wanted to be able to help families with these types of services in both the educational and behavioral realms, while, hopefully, being able to provide them with some support financially," she said.

Although Quinby has been unable to offer financial assistance to families at this time, she plans to hold a series of fund-raisers to get the ball rolling (a car wash was held June 30 at the Starbucks in Warminster). A casino night is also in the planning stages.

Quinby said she chose the Newtown location because of its proximity to I-95 and New Jersey, where a number of her clients reside.

Services are offered to ages 12 months through adult in home and school consultation and clinic settings, "utilizing current research in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), which includes an analysis of Verbal Behavior

(VB) to improve communication, behavior, toileting, social skills and more."

In the future, Quinby would like to see Potential assist its clients by instituting a sliding scale fee, offering Act 48 credits and conducting research "to find the best educational and behavioral techniques to use with them," among other things.

Quinby said it's more beneficial for her clients to come to Potential instead of meeting them at their homes.

"It's much better for kids to come here because they'll have constant supervision by a board-certified behavior analyst," said Quinby. "We have access to all the materials that they would need. We have a very controlled environment. We're able to minimize distractions and other factors."

Potential, Inc. is at 638 Newtown-Yardley Road, Commons West, Suite 1F. Visit them at [potentialinc.org](http://potentialinc.org) or call 888-AUTISM-0.