



From the Director's Desk

Dear Friends,

One of the great joys in my life is having the privilege of being associated with the wonderful staff and participants here at the CEC. As I watch a little fella march determinedly, grinning from ear to ear, into the CEC for his time at Big Red School, I know that he will

learn and make progress in an environment created by skilled, dedicated, and gifted professionals. When I see a young girl arrive enthusiastically at the Kelly Autism Program for her after-school program in Prime Time, I know that she will be accepted for who she is and motivated to discover by compassionate and capable students in training. And when I have the privilege of having a Circle of Support college student come by my office to tell me how his day is going, and to see how mine is unfolding, I am confident that we are making progress in achieving our mission of creating a world where all individuals flourish as valued members of the community.

For many university students in training, this experience is their first exposure to this level of teaching and mentoring with individuals on the autism spectrum. I am humbled and moved by the strength and commitment of our staff and participants. Such good work, so many lives touched, and none of it is possible without your partnership.

We continue to explore new ways to support our students as they progress through school and prepare for life in the working world. I am pleased to announce a new program, KAP Cares, that will help us further enrich our learning environment.

On behalf of the individuals and families we are privileged to serve, we thank you for all that you do to help make our vital work possible.

Very best wishes,

Mary Lloyd Moore

Dr. Mary Lloyd Moore, Ed. D., SLP-CCC

Executive Director, Suzanne Vitale Clinical Education Complex

**Did You Know:
 Circle of Support at KAP**

Kelly Autism Program's Circle of Support for WKU's college students is among the elite national programs for academically qualified students diagnosed within the Autism Spectrum Disorder Continuum.

What makes our Circle of Support elite? We are one of the few nationally recognized programs offering affordable comprehensive services to our students. These services include a single dorm room, mandatory study tables, extensive social programs, staff mental health counselor, and encouragement to fully participate in university life. The Circle of Support has proven to increase a student's chances to graduate.

To further expand our Circle of Support, the staff is planning a comprehensive program addressing employment success and sustainability.

Upcoming Events and Dates

End of Semester December 14th
 Coffee Hour: "Embedding New Skills Into Everyday Routines" January 25th

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Chronicling our Successes: Past, Present and Future Vision

Men at Work



KAP CARES

Frank Kersting, former KAP Director

The goal of CEC is to make our 'Beacon on the Hill' ever brighter for parents needing comprehensive services for their child diagnosed within the ASD continuum. Our services start with the preschool program and

continue through the Kelly Autism Program. Currently, our programs end with college graduation.

The CEC Advisory Board, our director, Dr. Moore, and the staff share a vision of developing comprehensive services for all children, once they enroll in the preschool program or KAP. In 2005, visionaries funded the CEC's initial growth. Now it is time for the CEC family to help make the beacon even stronger. Our programs are growing and parents have requested that we extend our services for young adults. With that goal in mind, we are establishing a new program, KAP Cares, to ask grandparents to help us fuel our quest for a brighter CEC beacon.

Why KAP CARES? The CEC serves more than 100 families. As our children grow older, parents are asking for extended programs to address independence, productivity and community engagement.

The premise is very simple: parents are very busy with the day-to-day tasks and expenses of raising their children to maximize their abilities to be as independent, productive and engaged in the community as possible. Grandparents, family members, and friends can have a special role in the success of their grandchildren through their financial support of KAP CARES. Together, we will realize our shared vision of successful children living rich, productive lives. The CEC needs engaged and supportive friends, parents and grandparents to join together to give their own grandchildren and other children a brighter future. If you are a grandparent, family member, or friend willing to help, give Laura a call at (270) 745-4232.



Dante, friends with Suzanne





KAP Cares in Action

Coffee Hour



Suzanne Vitale

At the beginning of the new semester for the past ten years, John Kelly and I have welcomed entering freshmen into the KAP post-secondary program on

The Hill. They are the university's new Hilltoppers, the class of 2022. These young, eager, intelligent freshmen have bravely decided to leave the security of their family, home and community to begin their new journey for independence, productivity and community engagement. Many of these students come from other Kentucky communities and states across the nation. They have come to the right place for that educational experience: the nationally recognized KAP post-secondary program.

While we were greeting these eager freshmen, a discussion with John Kelly and Frank Kersting came back to me. The discussion centered on KAP CARES, and grandparent involvement in young people's lives. An opportunity presented itself. At our church and other community churches, there is a program offering friendship to incoming university freshmen. I felt 'moved by the Spirit' to begin a conversation with an entering KAP freshman showing the expected anxiety about leaving his home and community anchors.

Long story short: This student, Dante, and I are now friends. He enjoys knowing there is someone in this community for him. His family is a phone call away, while I can introduce him to the rich Bowling Green community offerings. We have gone to the Greenwood Mall and to several restaurants together. Dante has met my family and Jack, my grandson, said, 'Well, Dante, guess I have a new friend at WKU now.' Dante enjoys our limited contact, which gives him comfort in knowing there is someone here for him. Dr. Moore had asked us to consider this aspect of KAP CARES. I am here to report that the KAP community should seriously pursue this dream for the good of our students from other communities and states.



Shannon Sales, Director

The Family Resource Program (FRP) kicked off another Coffee Hour to support our amazing parents! Our Coffee Hour was held on Friday, Sept. 7, for families and professionals in the community who serve the special

needs population.

Caroline Hudson and Leisa Hutchison, who are both speech language pathologists, were the presenters for the workshop. The topic entitled "Show me the way" focused on visual supports that demonstrated and taught parents new, innovative ways to connect with their children by eliminating communication barriers and providing opportunities. The presentation was a powerful message that illustrated the importance of understanding a child's needs with options that could improve his or her development. The families were thrilled to receive the information and were provided a sample social schedule to assist with completing functional tasks within the home. One mom had this to say about the Coffee Hours:

"Coffee Hours through the Family Resource Program help me better understand how my boy sees the world, prepares me for what may be coming next, and provides support by bringing the families together so we don't feel alone. The education and advice I have received at the Coffee Hours have been invaluable. I come away from each workshop with new, practical tools to help my son with his journey."

Plan to join us for our next CEC Coffee Hour! Stay tuned for details.





Halloween Fun at the CEC





Language and Speech Therapy Services at the CEC

Early Childhood Program News



Caroline Hudson, Director

I am very pleased to have joined the Clinical Education Complex to direct its Speech-Language Pathology program. Our speech-language pathologists work to prevent, assess, diagnose, and treat speech, language, social

communicative deficits, cognitive-communication, and swallowing disorders in children and adults. We also focus on reading, writing, and math language abilities. The addition of a Director of Speech-Language Pathology at the CEC demonstrates the continued commitment to improve the social language skills of every CEC participant.

Social communication problems are a hallmark symptom of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and I am excited to have the opportunity to bring my experience and expertise to support CEC participants. The ability to help individuals find a voice and connect with others is extremely gratifying. I have observed individuals with the right type of Alternative and Augmentative Communication support achieve remarkable goals like placing second in a local talent show with a stand-up comedy routine. I have also witnessed young children who participated in early intervention services meet goals and objectives, growing up to be high school honor roll students. I am confident that with the right intervention and supports current and future CEC participants will meet their maximum potential as communicators.



Lisa Murphy, Director

The Renshaw Early Childhood Center (RECC) continues to do an excellent job in providing quality care and education for young children, according to 2018 NAEYC

family survey results. Survey results indicate that families feel they have good relationships with teachers, communicate regularly with teachers, are informed of child progress, receive program information, and understand confidentiality.

The RECC family survey yielded 81% of scores in the 90% to 100% range. 4% of scores were in the 80 to 89% range. Family involvement in classroom activities and family involvement in program planning and decision-making continue to be areas for improvement at RECC.

Family involvement in the classroom results improved from 88% in 2016 to 93% in 2018. Families always feeling welcome in the classroom and being invited to help plan and make decisions improved from 83% in 2016 to 85% in 2018.

Teaching Staff Surveys yielded results of 100% in all areas. A parent suggested daily written information about a child's progress, and a sticker system was developed and implemented the second week of the semester. Children receive a sticker with a comment about their favorite part of the day or a specific celebration, as well as a comment on areas that they continue to need help with.

RECC 2018 program goals include the development of a CEC-wide "parent involvement" policy and procedure as well as the provision of home activity packets throughout the semester. A CEC-wide parent support group for parents of young children with autism will also be organized.





KAP Primetime Summer Program-A wonderful summer opportunity



Michelle Elkins, KAP Program Director

Summer programming had a new look this year! The programming focused on theme weeks that the students had brainstormed. The weekly themes were science, cooking, stress/anger management/mental health, and sports. The college staff partnered with the Primetime staff to create and facilitate activities. The elementary and middle school students attended on Monday and Wednesday with high school and adults attending on Tuesday and Thursdays. The students were exceptionally engaged and able to gain social and practical skills while also having fun.

During science week, activities included a fossil dig and a strategic egg drop. We were able to use different materials to build a protection for an egg and drop it off the parking structure. The students loved this activity and were very excited to see if their egg survived!

During our cooking week, the students were guided through preparing a meal and a dessert. They were not only able to learn and participate in the preparation of the meal items but were then also able to enjoy eating the fruits of their labor. The students learned about budgeting, measuring, portion size, cooking time and many other key cooking skills.

Cassandra Hanna, LCSW, a licensed mental health counselor and social worker, planned our stress management and mental health week. We were able to learn from a book called *The Red Beast*, participate in relaxation techniques, create our own fidgets and items for stress relief, and have a yoga session. These skills were immediately helpful to our students as they learn to handle difficult situations.

The final week was a sports week where we had the opportunity to participate in many different sports and learn rules, turn-taking skills, and how to handle competition. We capped off the experience and week with a morning at the Preston Center on campus, which

consisted of fitness activities and a day of healthy competition.

All the students really enjoyed and learned from our first successful curriculum-based, theme-week Primetime Summer Program. One of our students commented, "I loved digging for fossils and working with my new friends." Plan to enroll your KAP student next year for a summer of fun and learning.

Mobile Multi-Sensory Room is Open for Business!

Amy Hardin

The WKU Alumni Association, Hilltopper IMG Sports Marketing, and the Suzanne Vitale Clinical Education Complex have partnered together to create a mobile multi-sensory unit available at all WKU home football games. The WKU Alumni Association began meeting with CEC staff in January 2018 about this powerful partnership, and eight months later, the idea became a reality!!

The mobile multi-sensory room, located in the Hilltopper IMG Sports Marketing bus, is open during all tailgating activities and through halftime of football games. Through this cooperative effort families can enjoy a WKU football game by providing their child a fun, safe and relaxing environment.

Our mobile multi-sensory room accommodates and supports the sensory, communication, and social/emotional needs of individuals on the autism spectrum. It may be used to relax, calm, or re-energize, as a multi-sensory experience or as a single sensory focus. Moreover, a multisensory environment offers a highly motivating environment for users to enjoy sensory activities that are meaningful and appropriate, facilitated and shared by a parent/caregiver.

This mobile unit is open and available to anyone who may be overstimulated by the day's activities. All are welcome! Come and join us on the Sensory Bus!

