

# Evansville Psychiatric Children's Center

## NEWSLETTER

3300 E. Morgan Ave., Evansville | 812-477-6436 | Joint Commission-accredited, Medicaid-certified  
"Helping kids SOAR!" | Vol. 22, Issue 2, Summer 2022

## School is out!

*Time for some summer fun*

EPCC kids finished up the 2021–2022 school year on May 25. Due to inclement weather the end-of-year picnic had to be postponed until June 3, when the kids were treated to a scrumptious picnic, which made it worth the wait. The dietitians outdid themselves serving up a summer feast that included grilled hamburgers, chips, tropical drinks and watermelon. The meal was followed by playtime on the playground, where the kids had a lot of fun and worked off some of their meals. A great time was had by all. The kids work hard for the opportunity to relax and enjoy some summer fun. A special thank you to the food service staff with CURA and to all who helped and participated in this fun-filled day.



Spring fun included a fitness challenge, where the kids had to make their goal of 20,000 sit ups for the month of April (yes, 20,000). They were able to reach their goal and were rewarded with a pizza party as well as certificates and prizes for the top three kiddos! This was a great physical fitness goal and a confidence-booster as well!

The kids have also participated in off-grounds activities since these activities have been able to resume. They have gone ice skating at Swonder Ice Rink, roller skating at Skateworld, fishing at Evansville State Hospital, where some of the kids even caught catfish! They've been to movies at Showplace Cinemas, bowling at ARC Lanes, Gatti Town for games, a scavenger hunt on EPCC grounds, and are planning an upcoming trip to Mesker Park Zoo. The staff does a wonderful job of keeping the kids busy. Truth be told, the staff have as much fun as the kids.





## Therapeutic horseback riding program needs funding

*Stir n Up Hope needs help*

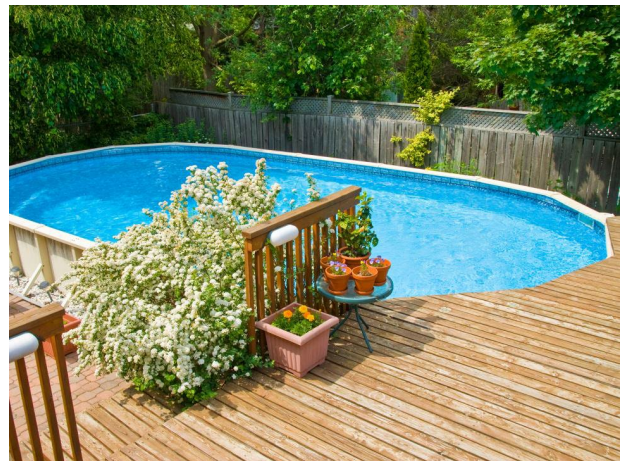
Many of you may know our character-building therapeutic horseback riding program, Stir N Up Hope, a therapeutic horseback program that allows our kids the opportunity to learn the responsibilities of caring for a gentle giant, the horse. For eight weeks in the spring and fall the kids participate in activities involving horses, grooming, exercising, getting to know the horse and, when ready, they ride the horses with a competent instructor leading them. This program is geared around the patient and the horse. It teaches so many things such as: responsibility, work ethic, physical strength, balance, coordination, confidence, riding experience and much more. The kids love this challenge and are better for it. We have great instructors that teach the kids a working understanding of this fine animal. But we are in jeopardy of losing this uplifting program due to funding issues. We are desperately in need of donations for this program to continue helping our kids grow and thrive. If you are able, we are asking you for your contributions in saving this program. We feel that this is an essential part of the kid's advancement and hope that you do too. In order to contribute, please contact our community services director at the number or email listed at the end of the newsletter. Your generosity is greatly appreciated by our staff, patients and families. Thank you for your unending support.

We are also in need of **gift cards** for programs like therapy and costs for taking the kids for off-grounds fun. Not only do the children receive entertainment from these things, they also receive life lessons that they will use for a lifetime. Below is a list of some of the cards that we use.

- Visa
- Walmart
- Target
- Five Below
- Hobby Lobby, Michaels, Joann Fabrics
- Dairy Queen, Sonic, Burger King, McDonald's
- Showplace Cinemas

These are just a sampling of gift cards; we welcome any cards that you would like to donate.

Donations of **flowers** and **plants** for the beautification of our grounds are also needed. We would also like to ask for volunteers to help make our landscape beautiful. EPCC is also in need of a new above-ground pool for the kids. The old pool was 20+ years old and finally gave out. The pool gives many hours of enjoyment and reward to the children, as well as helps with development of motor skills and coordination. The pool also provides a way for the children to get some good exercise in the summer months. The children absolutely love it! Please consider donating for this worthy cause.





*When a flashlight grows dim or quits working, do you throw it away? Of course not, you change the batteries.*

*When a person messes up or finds themselves in a dark place, do you cast them aside?*

*Of course not! You help them change their batteries!*

*Some need AA... attention and affection*

*Some need AAA... Attention, affection and acceptance*

*Some need C... Compassion*

*Some need D... Direction*

*And if they still don't seem to shine, simply sit with them quietly and share your light.*

## Physical education activities

### *To play is to learn*

Physical education is not only a fun time for the kids, it is also a learning experience, even if they do not realize it. Play teaches teamwork, critical thinking skills, listening skills, curiosity, creativity, cooperation and understanding. A few of the activities that have taken place so far this year are the American gladiators, sandwich tag, and slip-and-slide kickball. Sounds like fun, doesn't it? And I'm sure the kids learned a thing or two.



**Sandwich tag** consists of teams of two, who take spots on the gym floor. All but one of the teams lays on their stomachs next to their partner. In the pair left standing up, the two split, with one being the tagger and the other being the one being tagged. So, the person being tagged can attach themselves to any team laying on the floor by laying on the floor next to them causing the farthest person on that team to have to get up and becomes the person getting tagged therefore that person can lay down to another team and the game just keeps going. If a player gets tagged, they switch roles.

**Slip-n-slide kickball** follows the same rules as kickball, but the bases are small kiddie pools with bubbles in them. There are tarps with water and bubbles leading up to the pools the kids slide on into the pools. The kids not only play a game of kickball, they also get wet and bubbly! This is a real crowd-pleaser.



**American gladiators** is a lot like dodgeball, with a twist. There are two teams: one side has one player that has two pins they need to protect, while they are also trying to hit the players on the other side, which has the rest of the players on it, with a dodgeball. The object of the game is for the one player team to throw the ball and get the other team's players out while protecting their pins from being knocked down. The other team's objective is to knock down the pins with their ball. If a player from the second team gets hit by a ball, they are out. The game is over when either both pins are knocked down or all the players on the second team are out.

EPCC children enjoy a variety of activities during the summer months. Once regular school is out, the summer school curriculum includes themed weeks which incorporate academics, visits from related community resources and fun activities.

The purpose of the summer remediation program is to help each child maintain the academic gains made during the previous school year until the fall session begins. Summer school is half-day, so the rest of the day is spent in regular therapy programs and summer fun such as outings, picnics and outdoor play.



## COVID update

### *Our latest news*

The COVID-19 vaccine is now mandatory for ISPHN employees. All staff have been fully vaccinated or submitted an exemption form by May 15, 2022. All fully vaccinated EPCC employees are not required to wear a mask when working in small groups where six-foot distancing can be maintained. Masks are optional when working alone in offices or in meetings where outside members are not present and social distancing can be practiced. Staff are still required to wear masks in patient areas. Children are now allowed to go on therapeutic leaves and limitations on family members for on-grounds visits have been relaxed. We are still seeing a few scattered positive COVID cases among staff. Vaccine boosters are optional for staff currently.

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### **Occupational therapy–Sensational Sensory Day!**

Our occupational therapy department had a Sensational Sensory Day on June 14, which consisted of 30 USI occupational therapy students visiting and touring the campus. The students planned sensory interventions for the kids, such as making water ball stress beads, slime, etc., and worked with them in the gym. The staff were invited to observe the activities. The children, staff and the USI students all had a good time and the children learned some more sensory exercises to add to their tool kits.

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## It's Puppy Play Time!

The Employee Appreciation Committee hosted Puppy Play Time. It was held on June 16. The pup visited Education Day for all those attending and then visited staff in the dorms and in the administration building!

The dog was from the Vanderburgh Humane Society and was up for adoption and helped relieve some stress and had some fun! And Luna found a forever home that day!





**Need to contact us? Call 812-477-6436 (extensions listed below) or email:**

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### **MISSION Resolve Needs–Build Strengths**

*Published periodically for employees and friends of Evansville Psychiatric Children's Center, Indiana Division of Mental Health & Addiction.*