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Congratulations Kids Town Preschool On Your Five Star Rating!

By Kathy Mullen, Director of Education



I am over the moon with pride and joy to share with you our wonderful news!! Kids Town Preschool at VIPS has earned a FIVE STAR rating in Kentucky's newly launched ALL STARS Quality System for preschools and childcare centers! That's the highest level of recognition possible and to reach it on our first attempt is really quite remarkable. We say a huge CONGRATULATIONS and THANK YOU to our coworkers who call Kids Town Preschool home. Without the dedication, expertise, loving spirit, and high energy they bring to VIPS and their students every day, we would not be celebrating this wonderful achievement!

Continued on pg. 2

Stories of Hope & Challenge: Parent Stories For Blindness & Visual Impairment Awareness Month -- 2016



Aria

Our beautiful daughter Aria was born January 2014 and has kept us very busy as any child does. She has the diagnosis of Aicardi Syndrome, a rare disorder that typically only presents in females; the abnormality occurs in the X chromosome. This syndrome causes several eye abnormalities along with a lot of other accommodative diagnoses. We sought out VIPS to start school because of all the positive feedback we had gotten from other families and therapists. We love seeing the progress she has made since being there. Thanks to all the wonderful teachers, assistants, therapists, and anyone else who makes Aria's day when she is at school.

Jackie Morford, Aria's Mom

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Five Star Rating

continued from pg. 1

A special shout out goes to Beth Krebs, Assistant Preschool Director of Kids Town, who is our boots on the ground leadership in Kids Town each day. We are most grateful for her guidance and willingness to serve wherever and however needed at a moment's notice.

While we have known of the quality of our programming in Kids Town all along, it's nice that there is now a recognizable way to share this knowledge with others. It means that VIPS is a program that makes a commitment to continuous quality improvement and provides programs with additional support including training, technical assistance and coaching.



Members of the VIPS Board of Directors Education Committee surprised Kids Town Teacher Ashley Emmons with balloons and a gift card in thanks for her exemplary work.



Left: Assistant Preschool Director Beth Krebs shows off her balloons.



Above: Board member Terri Connolly chats with Twos teacher Juanita Miles.

One of our missions at VIPS is to educate the community on the abilities of individuals who are blind or visually impaired, including current and future educators. What a wonderful way for us to continue with this mission and to emphasize that children with special needs not only deserve good education, they deserve a FIVE STAR quality education.

Thank you again to one and all. Celebrate today. You've earned it!



Another Wonderful VIPS/KSB Family Retreat: A Treat for All

The Family Retreat is an energetic event that has been a mainstay of the programs we offer to encourage and empower parents. This year, VIPS held our second Family Retreat in collaboration with KSB. It was sponsored by the KSB Charitable Foundation, the William E. Barth Foundation, and the Fred B. and Opal S. Woosley Foundation. The Retreat opened on Friday evening, November 4, with greetings from the Commissioner of Education for the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Dr. Stephen Pruitt.

Saturday morning saw the children being dropped off in either camp or respite care where they enjoyed a variety of activities, keeping them busy while their parents participated in learning activities.

During the Saturday opening session of the conference, parents were welcomed by Kathy Mullen, Director of Education at VIPS, and Tristan Parsons, Interim Principal at KSB. Parents then enjoyed three concurrent sessions, each offering a choice of two different presentations. They reconvened as a group at lunch and again when ending the afternoon with an Orientation and Mobility Experience and a Vision Carnival featuring the American Printing

House for the Blind's Bob Belknap's demonstration of their new Braille Tales reading program. Meals included a Cinco de Mayo luncheon and a Thanksgiving dinner, following the overall theme of Holidays.

The parents' sessions included: Dr. Ashima Gupta, ophthalmologist, presenting inspirational, true stories of children who are blind and an overview of how the eyes work; Tim Schladand, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, who discussed Stress Management and Parenting; Mary Harrod, of the Kentucky Office for the Blind, who shared information about their adult education program, Employment Boot Camp and July Transition Camp; Kathy Mullen, VIPS Director of Education, who spoke on how to write a comprehensive plan for a child; KSB teacher Connie Hill, who provided an experience simulating vision



Parents listened with interest as Renee Farrell discussed O&M skills.

loss; Jennifer Stocker, Occupational Therapist at both KSB and VIPS, who presented on how sensory motor development is affected by sensory impairment; and retired KSB Orientation and Mobility (O & M) specialist Renee Farrell and KSB Director of Outreach, Peggy Sinclair-Morris, who discussed Orientation and Mobility for children. All in all, the entire day was a stimulating burst of energy and knowledge for each participant.



These moms attempted to make a peanut butter & jelly sandwich while wearing vision simulation goggles.

As the parents were busy learning from various presentations, the children in camp (ages 3 to 13) benefitted from visitors from the Kentucky Science Center who set up stations where the students could make cloud dough and slime and guess scents presented on balloons. Staff from the Louisville Zoo brought pelts for the children to touch that even included some live animals wearing their



Rick Ricks, Executive Director of the KSB Charitable Foundation, participated in an information fair to tell parents of the good works the Foundation does, one of which is sponsor the Retreat!

pelts! The children enjoyed petting the weasel and chinchilla but the lizard and porcupine, not so much! In keeping with the Holidays theme, there was an Easter Egg Hunt and Trick or Treating. Summer holidays were represented by a craft activity-making a seashell picture frame. Then a dance party with VIPS and KSB graduate and disk jockey, Jamie Weedman, completed the children's busy day.

The younger children who were in respite care (ages 3 and under and/or with unique needs) were also busily occupied with activities similar to the older children. They also sang holiday songs to the guitar provided by Joy Wall (accompanied by her duckling) and played on the playground.

For the first time, VIPS held a breakfast on Sunday for the out-of-town visitors. Parents loved seeing Kosair Charities Kids Town and our sensory room. We had great discussions and many new and wonderful ideas were shared before the families headed back home.



Calon fell asleep while having a snack, he was so tuckered out. His mom said he NEVER takes a nap!

The entire weekend was a time of great discoveries and challenging insights for families. The energy was palpable



as sessions and side discussions opened up many new avenues for the participants to follow -- a wonderful weekend!

Above: Children had tons of fun playing in the gym. Right: VIPS Interventionist Carla Vied snuggled a little one in Respite Care as she napped.



Left: Allison, Stella and Addyson model their beautiful painted faces.

Joys & Challenges

Continued from front page

Ashley and Aaron

We always think it's important to report on VIPS graduates and were thrilled when Mary Ann Reynolds, former VIPS staff member and mother of VIPS graduate, Ashley Reynolds Linson, and mother-in-law of VIPS graduate Aaron Linson, sent along a progress report of Ashley's current life: "She is pursuing a degree in music business at IUS; also enjoys writing songs, playing the piano and violin, singing, and being married. She teaches voice to a class of 10 -15 students once a week at Diane Moore Dance Academy. She also takes dance classes at the studio including clogging and jazz. She is very interested in working with children with disabilities, someday perhaps having a job at VIPS. Ashley has made the journey through school with support from my family, friends, husband, and God."

Mary Ann Reynolds, also sent information on Ashley's husband, Aaron, who will graduate from IUS in the spring of 2017 achieving a BS in music with a concentration in audio production and a minor in communications. He writes, "I am excited about getting ready

to graduate. This means that I'm not a part of the statistic of blind people who just get frustrated by college and don't give it a second chance. I couldn't have done it without all of the awesome teachers at IUS and the support of my family and friends. I plan on finding a job in technology or music. I am also working on getting my recording studio up and running. I want to focus on classy music which I define as music you actually have to know how to play an instrument to be good at. I want to record genres such as blues, jazz, folk, singer/songwriter, bluegrass, southern gospel, any kind of acoustic based or classy based feel. I'd lastly but not least thank my loving wife for letting me do my internship even when she was alone in a big bed a lot of weekends and not knowing when I'd have to go to work."

Mary Ann Reynolds, Ashley's mom



Ashley Reynolds Linson with husband Aaron Linson.

Aziariah

Meet Aziariah. He just turned 1 year old in August 2016. We thought his first diagnoses of infantile spasms and hypotonia

were the only struggles until we took him to the ophthalmologist. We didn't realize he had Cortical Vision Impairment. So far



he's been in First Steps of Indiana getting physical therapy and occupational therapy but he still has a long way to go. We just got VIPS services started. We haven't seen much impact but we're slowly learning about our son. Whether it be a glowing light or black backgrounds for a black light in his room we are finding ways of dealing

with our son. It's a normal way of life for him even though it's like we're in the dark, trying to figure him out. I like to think he was a blessing for us and we're grateful for any way that we get help and research to figure him out better. I look forward to a long journey with VIPS in Louisville, Kentucky to being our backbone and figuring out Azariah's vision needs.

Krystal Saesman, Aziariah's Mom

Caleb

Caleb is a very happy, outgoing, growing baby boy who always has his running shoes on!! He is the sweetest thing ever!!

Ashleigh, Caleb's Mom

Caleb excited to return on the first day of school, 2016.



Elijah

Elijah was first seen by our ophthalmologist in late February/early March of 2013. We noticed that his left eye was turning inward and felt it was necessary to have him evaluated. It was at the first appointment that he was diagnosed with Ocular Albinism, Strabismus (the turning in of his left eye) and Nystagmus. So many things happened so early in his life that it seemed like just another obstacle our beautiful boy was going to have to overcome. As we watched him grow and learn, it started



to become more apparent that he wasn't just overcoming these difficulties but rather exceeding every milestone we were told he may never meet.

To say we have done it alone couldn't be further from the truth. Through his journey we have encountered so many incredible people. We started working with First Steps while Eli was still an infant. He would get a visit at home or daycare, working with him on daily

A handsome superhero!

activities as well as informing us how we could help him thrive. When he was old enough, Elijah phased into the VIPS preschool. Their program has helped prepare him for any hindrances he will face and continues to encourage his ability to do things on his own. Above everything else, we are amazed by the love and support he receives on a daily basis from his teachers, volunteers and other parents in our community.

At this point Elijah is almost 4 years old. His diagnosis has not held him back in the least. Eli is an active, funny, charming and incredibly loving little boy. Most parents will tell you that they want their child to be “just like every other kid.” The reality is that Eli is not. He is stronger. He is more determined. He is set apart from other kids his age not because of what he faces but how he perseveres and will continue to do so. I could keep bragging about our son but the main point of all of this is how special we feel that he is ours and we are his. **Alex Ruidiaz, Elijah’s father**

Isaiah

Isaiah loves playing at Kids Town! He is a hard-working student who takes learning seriously. On this day, he was pretending to be a pilot as he had fun at the VIPS “Donuts with Dad”, 2016.



Josephine



My daughter Josephine is two years old. We recently moved to Kentucky and she is really opening herself up since moving here. Josephine has such a lovable personality and she really draws people in with her smile and when she calls them “sugar.” Josie’s biggest obstacle is her feeling of insecurity and safety when outside. She works with her Occupational Therapist weekly on overcoming her fears and her understanding of her surroundings. Recently we gave her a cane and showed her how it worked.

It was like night and day. Josie turned into Super Woman and walked all the way from our house to the neighborhood pool and back. This is no small feat for Josie. We are constantly amazed at the things Josie has accomplished and we keep setting the bar higher and higher for her. We are so thankful that we’ve moved to Kentucky and really found our home here among VIPS.

Karin Geraci, Josephine’s mother

Louisa Mae

Over 50 years ago words from my grandfather’s heart, etched on paper, formed a poem which inspired my husband and me in our journey to adopt from an orphanage located in China.

My husband Jeff and I are no strangers to raising children, with three grown biological boys and three girls adopted from China, so adding another child seemed completely normal to us. The moment I laid eyes on the face of this sweet little girl who lived in an orphanage in China, I felt that “special” connection knowing all too well what this meant. The fact that she (Louisa Mae) is blind did not hold any bearing on our decision. We knew she needed a family and the security of a home. Our family, friends, local resources, and a great community would offer her encouragement and support, giving Louisa Mae a Braille-enriched life.

We were seeking confirmation on whether to embark on this lifelong opportunity. Through prayer I asked God to show me what Louisa Mae’s character and personality would be like. Within days I received calls from women all across the United States, revealing their experiences with Louisa Mae.

It was during this time our daughter, Lily Mae, had started memorizing her great grandfather’s poem. Jimmie Greenwell’s poem was a reflection of his heart associated with his life without vision. Our daughter had NO IDEA we were considering adoption, especially a blind child. We also had NO IDEA Lily Mae was memorizing the poem. I sat in our home-schooling room one afternoon praying over the picture of Louisa Mae, asking, “God what do you want us to do?” It was at that moment our oldest daughter, Lizy Mae (16), who was adopted three years ago, said, “Mom, do you not get this? Lily Mae is behind me memorizing our great grandfather’s poem, who was blind. And you’re asking God if you all should adopt a blind child, I would say this is a sign!”

When my grandfather was writing his poem he did not realize how his heart and words would impact our decision and change the life of a child 8,000 miles away. The words from my

God Loves Me

*A Poem by Jimmie Greenwell
(Donna Dangler’s grandfather)
October 4, 1963*

*After God created me
He knew that I would go astray
Out of His mercy and love for me,
He gave me a cane to feel my way.*

*But this is not all,
He didn’t stop here,
God gave me my faith
For this valley of tears.*

*I am so unworthy
For His kind of love
I will always be thankful
To my Father above.
For there’s nothing in this world
That can even compare
With the happiness of Heaven,
Which I pray to share.*

*Sp when this life is over
And I am at last free,
I will return to my God
For all eternity.*

*Although I am blind,
It’s a consolation to me
That the face of my Savior
Will be the next face I’ll see.*

grandfather's poem gave us reassurance and confirmation of our perception on life and what really matters. (His poem was written 52 days before I was born, so it is by no coincidence that I was 52 when my husband and I went to China to bring Louisa Mae home!)

My grandfather, Jimmie Greenwell, never let his blindness stop him in succeeding in life. Jimmie and his wife, Mary raised eight children and adopted two girls from St. Joseph's Orphanage while owning one of Louisville's favorite hamburger stands.

We have found this journey to be of great honor filled with joy as we commit to embrace this life-long opportunity. Our children share in this commitment and together as a family we have more than enough love. We will endow her with love, building her security with reassurance as she explores and grows in a Braille enriched life.



Amazing Things at VIPS

By Kathy Mullen, VIPS Director of Education

One of the best things about my duties as Director of Education is giving tours to folks visiting our Louisville campus for the first time. It does not take long for a newcomer to feel the "magic of VIPS." I am proud to tell our new friends that the same feeling of joy shared with our students and families is felt by our VIPS team members in all three offices. There really is a sense of teamwork among those I call coworkers.

One morning last month, this sense of awe was so real that I had to take a moment to write down the "Amazing Things" that happened within our walls before the last bus dropped off the final two students joining Kids Town Preschool for the day. I labeled the list "Amazing Things at VIPS." Not a very original title, but a very, very accurate one. I knew by 9:30 that morning I had come up with an article for the next edition of VisAbility.

This is what I'm talking about:

- I stopped in one of our preschool classrooms to visit the lead teacher. I was just checking in, thanking her for the smooth start to the school year, and letting her know of a new program we would be exploring for some of the students in her classroom. As we were wrapping up the conversation, the teacher presented a proposal to me. She felt that her assistant was so important to the structure of her classroom that she wanted to take a cut in pay in order to pay the assistant more. Who does that?

- I returned to my office to find an email for the advisor of a high school National Honor Society whose officers had visited Kids Town Preschool the day before. One of the seniors remembered me saying that a group of volunteers slated to winterize our sensory garden had to cancel their workday that week. He asked his advisor for my contact information in order to reach out to me to offer his assistance in the garden if the group was unable to come on their scheduled makeup day. This is an offer from an 18-year-old who should be focusing on college applications and Friday night football games!

- I walked down the hall to share that amazing offer with our coordinator of volunteers. Before I could explain the offer, I learned that another member of the National Honor Society group had returned from his car to make a donation in our "Send a Child to VIPS" school bus bank in the lobby. When the bank was emptied that morning, it was discovered the donor had left a ten dollar bill, not the \$1 that had been anticipated. That's a lot of money for an unemployed high school senior!

- VIPS serves children all across Kentucky and Indiana. While we assign providers to regions, sometimes the children needing services fall outside of the boundaries we attempt to honor. Such was the case last month when I had to ask a team member from our Central Kentucky team to travel to Ashland to continue services with a family who had most recently been served by a contractor. Due to changes made in the First Steps contract, this provider could no longer serve on our VIPS contract. Before I could finish the request, the VIPS team member interrupted to say, "It makes much better sense for me to travel to see that child than another provider." Leadership in action!

- Our newest provider in western Kentucky was asked to represent VIPS at a family event co-sponsored by the Kentucky School for the Blind outreach team and the educational cooperative serving that region. The provider needed to travel for this event, meaning a night away from home, not always a highlight for teachers who are known to be homebodies. Again, before the request was made, the provider came out with, "Awesome! I have relatives in that town. I can stay overnight for free and save VIPS money." I promise this provider has relatives everywhere, proving once again that working at VIPS is a family affair.

- One of our students in the pre-kindergarten class has limited use of his right arm and hand. This impacts his independence in learning how to use a braille writer. One of our weekly volunteers, a braille reader herself, suggested we order a single-handled braille for the child. Within a half an hour of the suggestion being made, the classroom teacher and our executive director had contacted the folks at Kentucky School for the Blind's Instructional Media Center to request the braille writer. Done. The special braille is now in the child's classroom.

If you are guessing this was a special morning when the planets were correctly aligned sending positive energy to those who love VIPS, guess again. This is VIPS. This is what we do. Not every morning holds this much magic, but I honestly believe when we take the time to look for it, we can feel the “Amazing Things at VIPS” each and every day.

VIPS Louisville Opens Doors to Distinguished Visitors

by Kathy Mullen, Director of Education

On Monday, October 17, VIPS welcomed two special visitors from the KY Dept. of Education to our Louisville campus. Linda Funke, State Schools Administrator, and Emma Riley, State Schools Liaison, work directly with our partners at Kentucky School for the Blind. In an effort to support seamless services between our two agencies, Linda and Emma, accompanied by her interpreter, wanted to hear firsthand about the programs offered through all three VIPS offices. (Yes, they were interested in Indiana, too. Or perhaps it was VIPS reminding them of our comprehensive services across state lines.)

We explained how through our Early Intervention program, VIPS teachers work with infants and toddlers, 0-3, and their families in their homes, where they are most comfortable and ready to learn. This time is critical for young families facing the unexpected challenge of parenting a child with vision loss. We talked about visiting children in their preschools or childcare centers, coaching caregivers on how to address their needs and celebrate their accomplishments. We let Kids Town Preschool speak for itself. Linda and Emma got to see students in Kids Town, in the classrooms, out on the playground, and having lunch in Kids Town kitchen. We visited the twos class where the students were making a collage of the fall items they had collected from home. We had to pull the visitors out of the sensory room where they were wowed by all the equipment and the sensory garden where they were captivated by the fragrant and tactile plants and babbling water feature.

We are confident that our time spent together was a success and are grateful for the opportunity to share our story with KDE. Linda captured the visit on her camera in order to share the high-lights with coworkers unable to make the appointment. We assured our guests our door would remain open for others to come see us at work. As she left, Linda quietly told our receptionist how impressed she was with our school and with the work we do every day.

Our joy of sharing the mission of VIPS was heightened even more the following morning when we welcomed some fellow VI professionals to Kids Town Preschool; one was a Teacher of the Visually Impaired, and the other, an Occupational Therapist from the same program, serving the same children. And where is that program, you may ask? France. You read that correctly. **FRANCE!** Marc and Marie were on a three-week holiday from their school- and community-based responsibilities and decided to use the time visiting agencies and schools in the US serving the same population. Their travels brought them first to the Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts; Perkins is the oldest school for the blind in the United States. From Massachusetts, the two traveled to Louisville to visit the American Printing House for the Blind and the Louisville campus of Visually Impaired Preschool Services before heading southwest to the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. VIPS is quite proud to be placed in the company of Perkins, APH, and TSBVI!

During their time at VIPS, Marie and Marc visited the preschool classrooms, chilled out in the sensory room, and explored Mobility City and the sensory garden. Their primary focus was to learn more about pre-braille and braille curriculum for young children. The visit ended with lunch and a roundtable discussion with our preschool teachers. VIPS team members filled shopping bags with some materials we could spare, curriculum items we are no longer using, and of course, VIPS Stampede t-shirts. More importantly, our minds were filled with the ideas we pooled together over our group lunch, and our hearts were filled with the joy of new friendships.

How nice that the true essence of VIPS was captured during these two short visits. It has given a whole new meaning to the “open door policy” we enjoy at VIPS!

VIPS Indiana Family Events

Summer Play and Learn

VIPS Indiana welcomed the families we serve to our summer Play and Learn (PAL) on Wednesday, July 13th. We had a lovely mid-morning event that included a sing-a-long, a creative nature-inspired Make & Take, and a training portion that taught parents how to incorporate the natural environment into their child's life to provide sensory input and valuable learning opportunities. We had summer sensory tubs for the little ones to explore and a plant/herb sensory experience station for their parents to try out with sleep shades. We enjoyed bagels courtesy of Bagel Fair Inc. and refreshments thanks to our friends at Meijer. We are so grateful for the families as well as the volunteers who joined us.



Parents explored plants with special sensory features (texture, smell, taste) under sleepshades.

“Spook-tacular” Play and Learn

On Saturday, October 15th, VIPS Indiana hosted a Halloween-inspired Play and Learn (PAL). With over 60 people in attendance (many brand new VIPS families), it was our largest PAL to date! The families were invited to put their kiddos in Halloween costumes for the event and they sure were cute!

The families adapted Halloween buckets with tactile components for their VIPS child during the Make & Take. Afterward, they listened to a training that addressed “Tricky” social skills that little ones with

blindness and low vision should have an opportunity to master. VIPS Indiana’s Orientation and Mobility Specialist/Teacher of Blind and Low Vision, Debby Eades, shared ideas about making holidays such as Halloween more adaptable and enjoyable for children with vision loss. The families then took those tactile buckets and the insight they learned, and Trick-or-Treated for resources from community companies and page 8



Top: Happy boy Zane shares some smiles with his interventionist, Tracy. Below: Interventionist David Sterne took coming in costume seriously.



agencies while their children Trick-or-Treated for sensory-friendly goodies and treats. We’d like to thank those companies and agencies that included About Special Kids, Anna’s Celebration of Life, Indianapolis Alumnae of Delta Gamma, SPOT Services and Visionworks: Dr. Mark Lynn and Associates for hosting a sensory table and donating their valuable time. The families were able to enjoy the most delicious donuts at a reduced price courtesy of Taylor’s Bakery. In addition, we thank all of our volunteers, our board members, our amazing staff and especially our families for spending part of their Saturday with us. It was a fantastic day!

VIPS Louisville Fun

Trunk ‘n’ Treat



VIPS trick or treaters were able to practice their orientation and mobility skills this year in the safe confines of Mobility City. Numerous tables were decked out with all the spooky decorations that we saw in earlier years in the car trunks lining the VIPS parking lot. VIPS staff members and friends greeted each trick-or-treater with delight, rewarding each costumed child with wonderful treats.



Samantha and Ella Johnson, sisters of VIPS graduate Michael Johnson, assisted with crafts, supervising the children as they colored pictures of candy corn. Edible crafts were a big hit as the children made caramel apples and decorated cupcakes.

For refreshments, there were hot dogs and the cupcakes decorated by the children.



Top: Twins Carter & Aubrey came as a dashing pirate and his lady. Middle: What darling girls came calling for candy -- Harper, Maddie & Sarah! Bottom: Baxter and his dad David enjoyed some lunch.

More Family Fun with VIPS Central KY

Horsin' Around in Central Kentucky

By Emily Wiley, VIPS Central Kentucky Parent Coordinator

On Saturday, August 27, the Central Kentucky office held a family event at Camp Horsin' Around in Perryville. Camp Horsin' Around is a 191-acre property located in Kentucky's Boyle and Mercer Counties that provides permanent camping facilities necessary for children whose health is compromised. The site includes cabins, a fully-equipped medical clinic, open air pavilion, a dining hall, and additional activity areas including a pool, rock climbing wall, fishing, boating, basketball court, archery, and accessible swinging bridge. VIPS families had the opportunity to fish, take a kayak or paddleboat for a trip around the pond, swim in the pool and have a snack in the dining hall.

Picking Pumpkins at BiWater Farm & Greenhouse



On Saturday, September 17, the Central Kentucky office held a family event at BiWater Farm & Greenhouse in Georgetown. Families enjoyed going through a spooky farmhouse, petting baby animals in the barnyard, playing on a pirate-themed play area and tricycle track, navigating through a corn maze, and learning all about agriculture and how pumpkins are harvested. Each child was also able to take home a pumpkin.

Little Learners teacher Leslie Lusher with Melissa and daughter Faith.

Spooky, Silly Halloween Fun

By Mary Smyth, VIPS CK Assistant Director

The stage was set for a spooky, yet fun, Halloween party in the cafeteria downstairs from the VIPS office. Little "ghouls" and boys showed up decked out in their favorite costumes to play

games, eat candy, and have fun. They played Bingo with candy corn, had spider races, and paddled a balloon back and forth. They discovered what pumpkin guts felt like as they placed their hands inside of one. Their imaginations took flight as they created various sculptures and animals with the homemade play dough. Many crafts were made and taken home, too. Glitter bottles, painted bats, and candy bags. Willow, the therapy dog, joined the party and made new friends. The highlight of the evening was the costume parade! Tigger, a Stay Puffed Marshmallow man, Elsa, Jack Skellington, a couple of princesses, several Power Rangers, Superman, Spiderman, and every other hero and character gracefully swaggered down the runway to the cheers of family and friends.



Marshall wasn't sure what to think about the giant spider on teacher Dixie's head!

A huge thanks to the Delta Gammas who happily set-up and manned the booths. Several of the ladies were buddies with some of the children and helped them navigate the room and assist them with activities. The Delta Gammas quickly and efficiently broke down and cleaned up after the party, too. Such awesome ladies! Many thanks to Brian and Nina Vail for their tasty homemade cake pops, popcorn bags, and cheeseball. Thanks, also, to Baby Cakes Cupcakes for donating 2 dozen delicious cupcakes to the party.



Malachi and Buddy made a great Super Hero team.

Jubie was very excited about the shaker bottle he made!



VIPS-Central Kentucky Program News

Sensory Room Is Movin' On Up!

Our staff members are excited about the relocation of our Sensory room to the 2nd floor of the Lexington Hearing and Speech Center, just down the hall from VIPS' offices. The new room is larger and better able to accommodate all of our equipment, and the lack of windows makes for a perfectly controlled environment. The updated space contains a cubby hole for children to sit behind a color changing LED fiber optic curtain, a lighted ball pit, a hammock chair, a bubble tower, multiple sensory panels, and a large vibroacoustic therapy body pillow.



VIPS Staff show off new equipment. Above: TVI Dixie Miller in the lounging swing and Regional Director Kelly Easton at lighted wall. Below: Student teacher Rachel Cummins in the lighted ball pit alongside the fiber optic curtain.



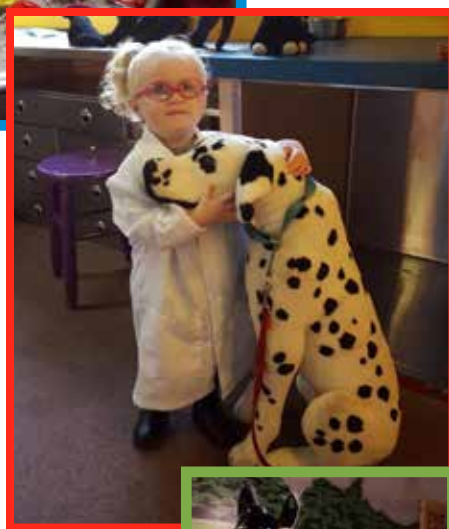
Little Learners

Lots of learning and fun is going on in Little Learners Class. We took our first field trip to the Explorium on Nov. 15. We had three families attend (seven children including siblings). The children created bubbles, both big and small, walked on the moon, saw exotic insects, sat on life sized horses, and enjoyed pretend play as veterinarians and doctors.

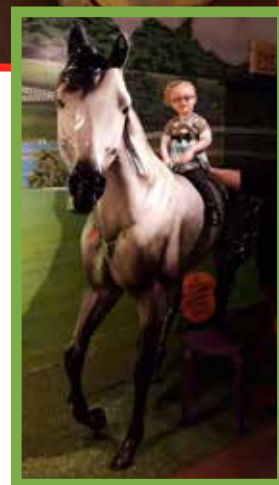
Little Learners have been creating and exploring lots of art (sensory) activities, including "snow," puffy paint, goop, play-doh.



Jaiden, his brother Gunner and Arianna had a great time at the Explorium. Arianna was especially drawn to the animal activities.



The children help measure, pour, and mix the materials. These activities offer good opportunities to work on turn taking and communication. The children are also becoming more interested in using story boxes, exploring the objects as we go through each story. Circle time continues to be a favorite activity as well, and children spend part of it moving their bodies to music as much or little as they wish. As the weather becomes colder outside, we continue to add new activities to keep learning fun and accessible for all the children!



VIPS Louisville Program News

News from the Twos Class

By Juanita Miles, Two Day Twos teacher

The twos have been busy over the last several months. We have been exploring water, sand and corn kernels in the sensory table with measuring cups and spoons. The twos class made a mural with items that they discovered on a nature walk including pine cones, leaves, flowers and twigs. We carved a pumpkin. When the children were asked about what was inside the pumpkin, one child replied by saying "spaghetti and rice" referring to the stringy pulp and the seeds. Another child said that "Mickey Mouse" was inside the pumpkin. We will be exploring other things that have seeds in the coming weeks.

During our morning meeting, we are learning to introduce ourselves by saying our full name and age. We have been singing songs about body parts (chin, elbows and heels) to help children identify them by name and touch. In addition, children have been learning to count by rote and then to give the correct number of objects requested when asked to do so.



Mason loves to swing.

Ring around the rosie!



Saphira explores the playground tactually.



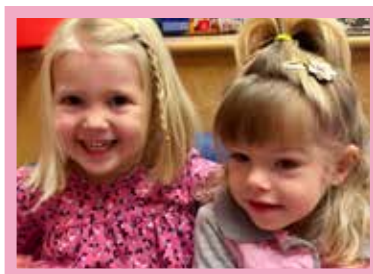
Zach squishes pumpkin guts.



Charlotte and Zach give their babies a bath.



Henley dries his babies.



BFFs Charlotte and Kendall.

Tyler ready for a day of learning and fun!

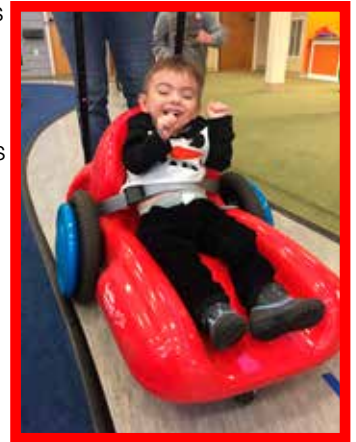


Kids Town Preschool Doings

By Paige Maynard, TVI, Preschool Teacher/Developmental Interventionist

I find that when I write the preschool article for the newsletter, my "go to" phrase to describe what we've been doing in the months that the newsletter covers is some variation of "we've been busy learning." The busyness (and joy) of learning was just as true at the beginning of this school year as it has ever been at VIPS! I hope that at Kids Town Preschool, we will always be able to say that we are busy with the joy of learning!

In August, the preschool classes focused on learning about our school, ourselves and our friends. The red classroom worked on learning the locations of landmarks in the school by participating in a scavenger hunt for a clock, a slide, etc.-- all locations that are necessary to know for successful participation in preschool. The green classroom learned about first letter in each student's name by exploring the shape of its letter in print and braille. The orange classroom explored learning about friends as each of the students was encouraged to participate in activities alongside their peers during free play activities. The preschool would also like to thank drama teacher, Carly Stotts, who visited us to speak about feelings, which are important to know about as each of us learns to interact with others and understand ourselves.



Ian loves riding on the track in Kids Town during free play.

In September, we focused on gross motor skills. Ms. Ashley, the teacher in the green classroom, placed a rope "guide wire" on the playground for her students to practice holding onto while running, in order to help them stay on course. The rest of the preschool classes took advantage of this most welcome addition to our outdoor space as we all prepared for the Bill Roby Track and Field Games at Kentucky School for the Blind. The preschool was also thankful for helpful Trinity High School students who aided our children in practicing the 30-meter run and the standing long jump, in which we competed at the games. This September, gross motor skills were also used as a lens through which to view the expanded core curriculum and the regular preschool curriculum. The orange classroom explored straight and curved lines by making



Caleb tries out a pair of vision simulation goggles that allows him to see how his friends see.

them with their bodies. The red classroom worked on learning body parts and colors by touching their elbow, knee, hand, etc. on red, blue, orange, etc. objects in the room.

In October, also known as Blindness and Visual Impairment Awareness Month in Kentucky, we learned about senses, the eye, and what it means to have a visual impairment. Dr. Ashima Gupta also visited us to talk about what our eye doctors are doing when they examine us at our ophthalmologist appointments. The children's favorite part of her talk was when she let them

explore a model of the eye. The red and orange classrooms would like to thank Ms. Deanna Scoggins for speaking to them about what it is like to be blind,

and how she and her guide dog, Virginia, travel independently. In October, we also began some learning about the fall season. For instance, the students in the green classroom worked on learning to count objects as they counted the number of apple seeds that corresponded with their ages.



Mrs. Scoggins, with guide dog Virginia, talks to the children about being blind.

Pre-K in the Spotlight

By Ashley Emmons, TVI/Coms, Preschool & Pre-K Teacher

The 2016-17 Pre-K program has kicked off to a great start! We have explored many different books this year in both print and braille. We have even explored audio books and tactile storybooks too! Some of the Pre-K favorites have included:

- *The Things I Love About My Friends* by Trace Moroney
- *Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons* by Eric Litwin
- *Dr. Seuss ABC*
- *The Napping House* by Audrey Wood
- *The Day the Crayons Quit* by Drew Daywalt

Our Pre-K students spend at least 20 minutes each afternoon working on math skills. These skills include but are not limited to sorting skills, creating patterns, one-to-one correspondence, understanding number concepts (e.g., give me two), counting skills, dice exploration (tactile and audible), concepts of more/less, etc.

We have incorporated areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) into our daily schedule. Listed below are just a few topics

we have covered so far this school year!

- Recreation & Leisure -- Students have learned to play simple games such as Tic-Tac-Toe, Hot Potato, and Rock, Paper, Scissors.
- Orientation & Mobility -- Students were introduced to the concept of self-familiarization skills by labeling the classroom walls by number and identifying what areas are located on each wall. Students also used textures to label each area of the school (e.g., classrooms, bathrooms, lunchroom, braille room, music room, etc.) and created a tactile map of the school using the same textures.
- Compensatory Skills -- Pre-braille skills such as locating the top/bottom, left/right, and corners of a page were introduced. Students used tactile storybooks to practice tracking vertical and horizontal lines. High contrast computer keyboards were used to locate individual letters and numbers.
- Social Interaction Skills -- We have been working on "greetings." Students learned when they should tell a person "hello" or "goodbye" and practiced this concept through song and pretend play. They also developed four questions that they wanted to ask his/her classmates. This was a great way for the students to identify things they had in common (e.g., "What is your favorite food?").
- Independent Living Skills -- Students used dressing boards to practice using zippers, snaps, buttons, lacing, buckles, etc. We have also spent some time in the loft area of Kids Town learning how make a bed.
- Self Determination -- Each week the students are encouraged to set a goal for the week (i.e., "This week I want to practice counting to 20!").
- Assistive Technology -- Students have learned the parts of the braillewriter and how to load and unload paper. We also labeled the CD player located in the listening center with tactile markers on the play and stop buttons.
- Sensory Efficiency Skills -- We explored the five senses: seeing, hearing, tasting, touching and smelling. One week we had a taste test.



Vance works on compensatory skills by sorting items according to position.



Judah, Baxter and Vance practiced bed making in the Kids Town Loft.

- Career Education – Students have different classroom jobs each week (light helper, attendance helper, shape helper, etc). We have also explored hats and other objects representing different jobs in the community such as doctor, fireman, teacher, etc. Students were asked what they wanted to be when they grow up. One student's response: "When I grow up I want to be an amusement park worker!"



Judah, Baxter, and Anthony wear hats of the occupations they might like to have someday.

Home Visits -- The Mainstay of VIPS Services

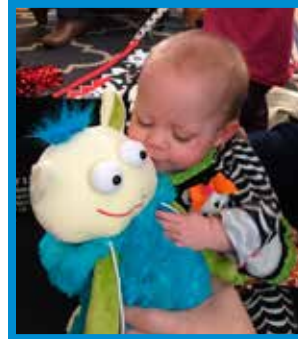
Though there is a lot of news about the preschool programs at VIPS Louisville and VIPS Central Kentucky, home visits by Developmental Interventionists and Teachers of the Visually Impaired are a mainstay of what VIPS does through all three offices. From its inception over 30 years ago, VIPS has seen children and families in their homes where they are most comfortable and ready to learn. VIPS provides home visits to children up to the age of three years.

Seeing Kids in Western KY



This little cutie named Hoyt is seen by DI Carla Vied in Ohio County, KY.

On the Road with VIPS Indiana Interventionists



At a recent initial home visit, Riley snuggles with her Scentsy Buddy.

Krystal loves rhythm instruments and really wants to figure out how this bell makes such a sweet sound.



Maximus loves the sound this bell ball makes when he plays with it!

Lily has this down... first, I see it moving, second, I grasp it, and then I taste it to learn all about it.



When Braden and his Dad had a visit at the IIC, Braden showed off his motor skills as he put poker chips into the slot and heard the sound.



The Expanded Core Curriculum, Pt. 11: Self-Determination

At last we have arrived at my very favorite part of the Expanded Core Curriculum, self-determination! Why is this my favorite part, you ask? Let me start by explaining that self-determination skills include believing in and advocating for yourself, regulating your own behavior, making decisions, communicating your needs, making choices, solving problems and being responsible for your own behavior.

To me, learning to be responsible for one's own actions, materials, possessions and self are, or maybe should be, key

elements of our society. (I wish our politicians, celebrities and other public figures had a stronger background in these areas!) And if we were all highly skilled as problem solvers, we would have far fewer problems with which to cope. In my opinion, self-determining skills are more critical than even basic academic skills because these skills lead learners to being able to figure out HOW and WHAT to learn. Once you know how and what you want to learn, you can lead yourself to the actual learning.

If you find your skills in braille are a little rusty, there's always a way to problem solve how to transcribe the content with which you are struggling. A learner skilled in using technology could search the internet to locate a Braille translation program. Once the program is located and put into use, the content could then be translated into braille. In truth, this is great over-simplification of the self-determination process but having the skills and confidence to find out how to achieve your goal, even a small one, is what I think education is all about.

Learning how to self regulate means learning how to manage your emotions and behaviors. It's being able to put a dimmer switch on how you react to whatever is happening in your environment, perhaps turning it up for moments of joy and turning it down for angry or sad moments. Part of self-regulation is learning when and how to express your strongest emotions and sometimes even to control them until you arrive at a place where you can safely express them.

Self-determining skills also enable the learner with visual difficulties to share with relevant others what it takes for her to be able to complete a task, perform a function and do a job. I consider this an absolutely vital skill set for individuals with visual difficulties. Being able to share with instructors, teachers, professors and/or bosses which specific modifications are needed for the student or applicant who is blind or visually impaired to be successful is the cornerstone to being able to actually complete the task. If you have a job applicant with visual challenges who has given no consideration to how she would complete the job in question and who cannot specify what adaptations she would need, then you have an unsuccessful applicant! Potential employers cannot determine how to help someone who doesn't herself know what would actually help!



Dr. Maddie will see you now.

A number of years ago, the Kentucky School for the Blind required each student to complete a vision portfolio. Each student researched and included in this portfolio information about her eye condition(s) along with how that condition affected clear vision, near and distant. The next step was for the student

to then determine and list exactly what accommodations would be needed for her to complete tasks. And the student had to be able to relay all of this information to adults whether those adults were teachers, potential employers, bus drivers or anyone else, familiar or unfamiliar, that might be involved in the student's life. This skill set was the perfect tool for life for a student graduating from high school.

The perfect tool for life -- that sums up why I think these skills are absolutely imperative for all students with visual impairments. Each of the self-determination sub-skills gives the learner the ability to achieve her life's goals as a confident, capable adult.

News of the VIPS Family

Emily Wiley

We are sad to say that Emily Wiley has resigned as Family Services Coordinator for VIPS Central KY. She has decided to focus all of her attentions of her family, including VIPS kid Rory and new baby Reid. We will miss Emily's talents and enthusiasm. Stay tuned for news of a new VIPS CK Family Services Coordinator in the very near future.

VIPS Founder & Alumnus Inducted Into Atherton HS Hall of Fame

On October 13th, two VIPS alums were inducted into the Atherton High School Hall of Fame. During a special ceremony at The Galt House, *Sharon Bensinger* (class of '60) and *Patrick Henry Hughes* (class of '06) joined a distinguished list of senators, authors, entrepreneurs and more!

Sharon was recognized for her contributions in helping to start VIPS in 1985 and driving the agency to become a nationally recognized and accredited leader in the field of early intervention for the visually impaired. Patrick, one of VIPS' most famous graduates, was honored for inspiring people across 42 states and four continents with his "Can Do" spirit.

Congratulations, Sharon and Patrick – you have made VIPS so very proud!



And the Winner Is!

Congratulations to *Kristin Horlander*, mother of VIPS preschooler Madi, whose name was drawn for the prize awarded to families who returned the parent survey on time.



New Arrivals

VIPS is pleased to welcome these new additions to the VIPS family:

Alexander -- 7 months, Gray, KY
 Annabell -- 2 years, Beattyville, KY
 Annalise -- 13 months, Indianapolis, IN
 Annelyse -- 21 months, Indianapolis, IN
 Aubree -- 14 months, Louisville, KY
 Aziariah -- 16 months, Charlestown, IN
 Benjamin -- 2 years, Indianapolis, IN
 Benjamin -- 16 months, Sellersburg, IN
 Braden -- 2 years, Columbia City, IN
 Bradley -- 19 months, Charlestown, IN
 Bradley -- 2 years, Frankfort, KY
 Bridget -- 17 months, Lexington, KY
 Brylee -- 9 months, Somerset, KY
 Burnyce -- 2 years, Terre Haute, IN
 Camren -- 18 months, Indianapolis, IN
 Cash -- 16 months, Bristol, IN
 Cooper -- 7 months, Owensboro, KY
 Dahlila -- 2 years, Indianapolis, IN
 Daphne -- 10 months, Elkhart, IN
 Donovan -- 21 months, Indianapolis, IN
 Doug -- 2 years, Huntington, IN

Edna "Edie" -- 2 years, Rumsey, KY
 Eli -- 17 months, Indianapolis, IN
 Elizabeth -- 8 months, Georgetown, KY
 Elizabeth -- 3 years, Lancaster, KY
 Elom -- 14 months, Louisville, KY
 Evelyn -- 18 months, Fishers, IN
 Gabriel -- 20 months, Louisville, KY
 Hailey -- 2 years, Chaplin, KY
 Hannah -- 2 years, Elizabeth, KY
 Hannah -- 2 years, Lexington, KY
 Ivan -- 4 months, Erlanger, KY
 Jackson -- 2 years, Ladoga, IN
 Jaclynn -- 12 months, Fisherville, KY
 Jaiden -- 3 years, Somerset, KY
 Jansen -- 2 years, Owensboro, KY
 Jaxon -- 15 months, LaPorte, IN
 Jazmine -- 9 months, Jamestown, KY
 Josephine -- 8 months, Georgetown, KY
 Kristal -- 2 years, Indianapolis, IN
 Kylie -- 12 months, Nicholasville, KY
 Lily -- 16 months, Angola, IN
 Lucille "Lucie" -- 23 months, Brownsburg, IN

Luke -- 8 months, Indianapolis, IN
 Madelyn -- 15 months, North Vernon, IN
 Maximus -- 17 months, Anderson, IN
 Oakley -- 2 years, Elizabethtown, KY
 Oakley -- 13 months, Louisville, KY
 Omari -- 7 months, Lebanon, KY
 Olivia -- 8 months, Frankfort, KY
 Petra -- 5 months, Indianapolis, IN
 Remy -- 2 years, Indianapolis, IN
 Ruby -- 10 months, Edinburgh, IN
 Ryan -- 19 months, Indianapolis, IN
 Savannah -- 15 months, Brownsburg, IN
 Schneider -- 2 years, Indianapolis, IN
 Sonny -- 2 years, Booneville, KY
 Tommie -- 5 months, Liberty, KY
 Waylon -- 13 months, New Albany, IN
 Zaharion -- 13 months, Indianapolis, IN
 Zander -- 13 months, Kendallville, IN
 Zane -- 22 months, Indianapolis, IN
 Zayden -- 2 years, Franklin, IN
 Zoey -- 21 months, Indianapolis, IN

Third Annual Eye Opening Symposium

By Kelly Easton, Regional Director, VIPS Central KY

Members of the Blind Services Coalition of Kentucky (BSCK) along with other local agencies presented the Third Annual Eye Opening Symposium on October 6th at the Fayette County Extension Office. A wide variety of participants attended, from students of social work and medical practitioners, to those who were visually impaired or who were caring for visually impaired loved ones. The various speakers presented on topics such as glaucoma, assistive technology, retinal treatments, macular degeneration, coping with vision loss early in life as well as later in life, and Non-24 sleep-wake disorder.

Our very own *Kathy Mullen*, VIPS Director of Education, shared with participants how VIPS came to be and how we work with Kentucky's Early Intervention System (aka the First Steps program) and local school districts to provide services for children and their families. Not only did she paint a picture of how VIPS helps children in their earliest years of life, she shared inspiring stories and photos of former VIPS children who have grown

up to accomplish great things. *Sarah Borders*, parent of a former VIPS-CKY child, spoke about how early intervention visits from Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI) *Dixie Miller* taught her vital skills that she could use at home in everyday life with her daughter Harper. She shared how participation in the Little Learners classroom with Developmental Interventionist (DI) *Lesley Lusher* laid the foundation for Harper's success in preschool, giving her the peace of mind every parent wants when her child enters school for the first time. Sarah also expressed how thankful she was for the focus that VIPS puts on family events, because it not only gave her the opportunity to connect with other families, but allowed her son to see that there are many other children who have siblings with special needs similar to his sister's.

Mary Smyth, Assistant Director for Central Kentucky, worked on behalf of VIPS to help plan this wonderful event, along with representatives from other agencies including *Blinded Veterans Association Lexington Chapter*, *Bluegrass Council of the Blind*, *Fayette County Extension Office*, *ITNBluegrass*, *Kentucky Office for the Blind*, *Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Division of Aging and Disability Services*, *National Federation of the Blind Lexington Chapter*, *Radio Eye*, *University of Kentucky-Teacher of the Visually Impaired Certification Program*, and *the Veterans' Administration Medical Center*. This event was free and open to the public, thanks to the generosity of *Retina Associates of KY* and *Vanda Pharmaceuticals*.

Notes of Interest



To **download braille stickers** for use with your apps, go to:
<http://www.wonderbaby.org/articles/braille-stickers-ios>.

The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) recently announced that its popular **VisionConnect™ app is now available for Android as well as iOS devices**. It can be downloaded from both the GooglePlay Store or the Apple App Store. The VisionConnect™ app can help adults who might be losing their vision and families with a child with vision loss to:

- find services and support in their community through the searchable AFB Directory of Services;
- find helpful resources and tips for living independently with a visual impairment;
- research information about low vision products and technology;
- find inspiration and motivation from personal stories and employment advice;
- learn how to talk to family members about how they can be supportive.

The app is free and completely accessible. For more information, go to: www.afb.org/visionconnect.

VIPS graduate Shane Lowe, a 16 year old student at the Kentucky School for the Blind, is one of seven teen authors featured in **"I Can Hear You Just Fine: Clarifications from the Kentucky School for the Blind," a non-fiction anthology published by the Louisville Story Program (LSP)**. All the teen authors were students at KSB who worked with Joe Manning, the deputy director of the LSP, in after school workshops to produce this collection of memoirs and oral histories. The LSP is a non-profit with the goal of highlighting under-represented voices in the community through media and art. The book includes subjects such as family turmoil, bullying, teen pregnancy, drugs, isolation and medical trauma. It is available in print at local bookstores and in braille and large print from the American Printing House for the Blind.

For an interesting **article on the lasting value of preschool and pre-K**, assuming they are of high quality (like VIPS' programs), check out: "A Lesson For Preschools: When It's Done Right, The Benefits Last" at <http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/11/17/502299963/a-lesson-for-preschools-when-its-done-right-the-benefits-last>.

It's Time to Apply for the Bret Dahmke Memorial Scholarship Fund

The Bret Dahmke Memorial Scholarship Fund was started in March 2015 when Bret's family decided to turn the tragic situation of his death at a young age into a beacon of hope for the future, by supporting other families whose children have visual impairment or blindness. Bret's parents Carol and Mitch Dahmke, along with his siblings Chris and Ashley, and Bret's widow Jessica, requested memorial gifts to VIPS in Bret's name to set up the fund.

To apply for the \$250 scholarship, families need to:

1. Have a child(ren) with a visual impairment, birth through high school age;
2. Reside in Kentucky;
3. Write a narrative explaining the desired support/learning opportunity and how this scholarship could help;
4. List the conference they would like to attend;
5. Be willing to share the knowledge they gain at the conference with other parents. (For example: write a story/provide photographs for the VIPS and/or KSB newsletter(s), speak with other parents at the VIPS/KSB Family Conference, etc.);
6. Include their name and the name of the child with visual impairment, child's age, school or agency from which child is receiving VI services (e.g., VIPS, Kentucky School for the Blind, etc.), your mailing address and phone number; and
7. Have applications post-marked by March 6, 2017.



The award winner will be announced on March 25, 2017.

Letters of application should be sent to: Carol & Mitch Dahmke, c/o Visually Impaired Preschool Services, 1906 Goldsmith Lane, Louisville, KY 40218.

No applications will be taken by phone, but for additional information, please call Carol Dahmke at 502-498-2921.

See VIPS Mom Ashley May's article on pg. 22 about using her scholarship to attend the of the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) International Conference in Florida this past summer!

Kind Gifts of Time, Talent & Treasure

VIPS Louisville

We treasure our regular classroom volunteers, *Fran Woodward* in the Twos classroom, and *Deanna Scoggins*, our wonderful volunteer braille teacher, for their invaluable assistance.

For the wonderful help during the Stampede for VIPS, we say a hearty thanks to: *Rory Atkins, Shelby Birchler, Missy Browning, Patty Burkland, Jack Canady, Kathleen Cooper, Kelsey Corso, Linda Cox, Carol Dahmke, Mitch Dahmke, Jon Daniels, LaRhonda Daniels, Michael Daniels, Trent Damron, Garrett Duque, Ashley Emmons, Ashley Erwin, Jake Erwin, Robbie Erwin, Ryan Hack, Beth Krebs, Audrey Lentz, Mary Lesousky, Judi Masry, Ashley May, Staci Maynard, Shiann Miller, Kathy Mullen, Morgan Murphy, Marie O'Neil, Bradley Osborne, Beth Owens and children, Joan Pashea, Shay Price, Jaime Roth, James Shepherd, Tara Stachewicz and Tracy Webb.*

Led by teacher *Jim Schindler*, 3rd graders from Collegiate donated pumpkins for the Kids Town Preschool pumpkin patch. They also cleaned toys from the summer program. Thanks to Jim and the students for their thoughtfulness in thinking of us!

Thanks to *Trinity High* teachers *Emily Boyle and Betsy deGolian* and their students who assisted our students in practicing for the Bill Roby Games: *Austin Bond, Sam Lasley and Jacob Steele.*

Sincere thanks to *Erika Lewis*, of *J.C. Penney in the Mall St. Matthews*, who recommended VIPS for a community project award, resulting in VIPS receiving a cash bonus of twenty \$50 Penney's gift cards! Erika's team, including *Chris Cassada, Stephanie Ferreri, Krissy Freeman, Lisha Kunker and LeAnn Olson*, volunteered by preparing binders and putting together goody bags for upcoming events. When Erika told *Jill Woosley, Manager of the J.C. Penney in Clarksville*, her store donated another \$500 in gift cards. These will be used to benefit families.

We greatly appreciate *Missy Browning*, mother of VIPS preschool *Eli*, who donated silk flowers and various beads for craft activities, sensory bottles and fine motor activities.

Thanks to *Librarian Terry King of the Newburg Branch of the Louisville Free Public Library* who came to read to the kids earlier this year and gave each child a backpack filled with books! Thank you so much for helping our students become more literate!

We appreciate *Donna, Lily and Lucy Dangler's* very consistent assistance in the library and office.

We are grateful to *Kassani Wilson* for his help in the preschool.

Working at VIPS is a family affair as family members of VIPS Staff often serve as volunteers. We are especially grateful to *Jon Daniels of Barrett Middle and Michael Daniels of Louisville Male High Schools*, both sons of *LaRhonda Daniels*, for their work in the classrooms. *St. Xavier student Ryan Hack*, son of *Martha Hack*, is another very familiar volunteer who again helped us with office work. We sincerely thank all of these young men!

Lowe's has been a fabulous help to us under the leadership of *Kenny Lanham*. Several volunteers pressure washed the playground. We greatly appreciate the hard work of

Patrick Casada, Chris Choate, Jim Merkle and Brian Murckson.



A second group from *Lowe's*, also led by *Kenny Lanham*, came from *Lowe's* corporate offices in several states including Tennessee, Michigan and Ohio. They not only donated shelving but also helped organize the garage. They weeded and winterized the sensory garden and washed windows. Their volunteer group consisted of: *Scot Baldwin, Andy Beard, David Chisolm, Patrick Casada, Michelle Diggs, Joe Eades, Jim Farmer, Tom Farmer, Joe Garrison, Matt Hall, Dale Johnson, Justin Kitner, Kevin Meade, Christian Redman, Chris Rogers, Allen Williams and Leroy Woodard*. We are so very thankful for all the help they provided -- their hard work as well as their donated items!

Carly Stotts is another very welcome friend who has volunteered her drama skills with our students for several years. She is an employee of *Down Syndrome of Louisville*. Through *Carly*, a group from *Down Syndrome of Louisville* got together for their annual ThanksGIVE party to make tactual books to give to VIPS kids. They included: *David DeSanctis, Michael Donze, Joe Fenwick, David Loetz, Corey Morgan, Jessica Pierce, Sara Ryan, Scotty Shaheen, Beth Stevens, Marissa Stogsdill, and Amber Taylor.*



DSL Volunteers and their books. Above: Amber Taylor. Left: (l-r) Beth Stevens, David Loetz, Marissa Stogsdill, Corey Morgan, and Joe Fenwick.

Many thanks to VIPS graduate *Christian Greenwell* who donated some of his braille books back to his old preschool!

VIPS/KSB Family Retreat

We greatly appreciate the time and expertise shared by speakers at the VIPS/KSB Family Retreat, helping to empower parents with knowledge. Thanks to *Bob Belknap; Renee Farrell; Dr. Ashima Gupta; Mary Harrod; Connie Hill; Kathy Mullen; Tim Schlandand; Peggy Sinclair-Morris; Jennifer Stocker; and staff from the Kentucky Science Center and the Louisville Zoo.*

VIPS staff members showed up in force to work with the children attending camp and respite. Thanks to *Ria Baker, Shelby Birchler, Kelly Easton, Ashley Emmons, Marchelle Hampton, Beth Krebs, Mary Lesousky, Lesley Lusher, Ashley May, Staci Maynard, Juanita Miles, Dixie Miller, Beth Owens, Mary Smyth, Carla Vied, Tracy Webb and student teacher Elizabeth Underwood.* VIPS staff's family members and friends who helped included *Audrey Lentz, Alli Lesousky, Vicki May, Clara Mudd, Diana Thalacker, Michele Vories, Joy Wall and Jamie Weedman.* Additional wonderful volunteers included: *Carson Blue, Amanda Coomer, Noah Cummings, Katherine Curtis, Thomas Dougherty, Graham Foshee, Alec Francois, Lauren Garrett, Melissa Gatewood, Katie Huffman, Katie Keynton, Evvie Lancione, Mallory McCarty, Phebe McGaha, Adam McIntyre, Whitley Martin, Caleb Mattingly, Hayley Miller, Jasamyn Nichols, Nicole Porter, Adam Prys, Caitlin Thompson, Cameron Travis, Gabrielle Vincent, Elizabeth Walker, Sarah Watson, Jackie Williams and Lindsay Wright.*

VIPS Indiana

Chili for Children has been an event supporting VIPS Indiana from our earliest days. We'd like to thank *former Advisory*



Board Member, Julia Slaymaker, for helping in the kitchen; current Advisory Board Member, Tana Hellwig, for manning the Bake Sale; and husband-extraordinaire, Phil Hughes, for serving chili!

Thanks to the Indianapolis *Alumnae of Delta Gamma* for making Texture Bottles that we placed into Welcome Bags and used during initial visits over the last couple of months.

Thanks to *Vicki Bussard*, grandmother of Daphne, a VIPS child in Elkhart, IN. Vicki arranged for VIPS to be a recipient of the *Old National Bank Michiana Region Jean Day* on Friday, September 23. VIPS received a check for \$125 as a result of Jean Day and benefitted from the boost in awareness, thanks to Vicki!

Many thanks to *Rebecca Terbrock* for donating a light box and materials to be used with the children we serve.

Thank you *Kim Borges of Regions Bank* for collecting supplies that will be used at upcoming events!

We'd like to express our gratitude to *Lori Williams* who donated vision enhancing technology in honor of her father.

Children Giving to Children

They are our youngest philanthropists! *Veronica Mackin* (daughter of Katy & Mike Mackin) and *Cooper Novak* (son of Lauren & Kyle Novak) generously asked that gifts to their joint birthday party be in the form of donations to VIPS. These amazing children came to present their check in the amount of \$1,620. Our VIPS Kids Town preschoolers sang Happy Birthday to Veronica and Cooper with grateful hearts.



(l-r) Vance, Baxter, Veronica, Cooper, Isaiah, Lena, Pyper & Anthony.

On the Go with VIPS Indiana!

The Indiana VIPS office has been busy providing presentations and trainings over the past several months for a variety of audiences to spread the word about the children VIPS serves and their specialized needs.

On July 19, we spent part of our morning teaching children from the *Watch Club Camp* about vision loss and blindness. They watched a PowerPoint made especially for them; participated in activities under sleep shades including music,

puzzles and sorting; made tactile scratch mats for the babies and toddlers we serve; learned about braille and asked lots of wonderful questions. We know they had fun because they asked if VIPS could come back!

Children from the Watch Club Camp practice fine motor skills with sleep shades.



On September 14, Annie Hughes provided a training for all the preschool teachers in Madison County, IN at the Southview Preschool Center of Anderson Community Schools.

David Sterne provided a training for *Feeding Friends* on September 21. Also, on September 21, Annie Hughes provided a PowerPoint training for *Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)* students, and from that training, VIPS was able to welcome two Service Learning Students from IUPUI.



Lauren Wherry and Ellen Webb, Service Learning Students from IUPUI, finished their donated time with VIPS in Indiana by making tactile scratch mats for the children who are just beginning to explore tactually.

On October 19, Annie Hughes provided training for *First Steps Service Point of Entry Cluster J Staff* at their office in Columbus, IN, then the next day, October 20, drove to Anderson, IN to provide training for *First Steps Service Point of Entry Cluster H Staff* at their office.

Grants, Donations, and Fund Raisings

VIPS Central Kentucky

Our sincere gratitude goes to the **Karston A. & Ethelyn O. Osmondson Charitable Fund** for their donation of \$15,000 for direct services.

VIPS Central Kentucky is a lucky recipient of a 2016 grant provided by the **Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels**. This \$10,038 grant will provide for a shade canopy and Kiddie Korral activity center to be placed in the shared playground area at the Lexington Hearing and Speech Center (LHSC). We are most grateful to the Colonels for their thoughtful grant.

The Lexington Hearing and Speech Center also received funding from the Colonels to install a sidewalk leading from the parking lot to the playground and wheelchair ramp access into each play area. These combined efforts will lead to a more accessible playground for all VIPS and LHSC children, thanks to the Kentucky Colonels.

Thank you to the **Lexington Lions Club** for their very generous \$10,000 donation to support Early Intervention services.



VIPS CK Regional Director Kelly Easton accepts the KY Colonels check from Kevin Doyle.



Thank you to the **Blue Grass Community Foundation** for their generous donation of \$5,000 for early intervention services for children.

VIPS Indiana

Cookout for the Crusade

VIPS Indiana's inaugural "Cookout for the Crusade," held Tuesday, October 18, was a hit! The wonderful aroma of the grilling, the sound of the music coming from the Indiana Interchurch Center dining room, and knowledge that all of the money was going to a fantastic cause, brought out a good crowd. VIPS Indiana hosted the event in honor of **WHAS Crusade for Children**

as a way to express our gratitude for their generosity of the last few years. The Crusade is helping change the lives of Indiana's youngest children with vision loss by providing the children with vision-specific early intervention services and comprehensive support to their families. Thank you, WHAS Crusade for Children! We would also like to thank our board member, *Eric Bruun*, for his generosity in purchasing food and supplies for this event and board member, *John Wykes*, for lending his grill for the cause. Finally, we have to thank our grill master,



Grillmaster Steve with a hungry customer.

Steve DeVore, who happens to be Assistant Director, Meredith Howell's very special step-dad.

Operation: Chili for Children

On Saturday, October 21, VIPS staff and *past and present Advisory Board members from Bloomington* participated in a fundraiser called Operation: Chili for Children at the National Guard Armory in Bloomington, IN sponsored by the **Bloomington Kiwanis Club and the Bloomington area National Guard**. For \$6.00, those in attendance ate wonderful chili, cornbread, slaw, hot dogs, pizza, and beverages. This is the fifth year for this event, and VIPS Indiana would like to thank the **Kiwanis Club of Bloomington** for allowing VIPS Indiana to be the recipient of a portion of the fundraising from this special event.

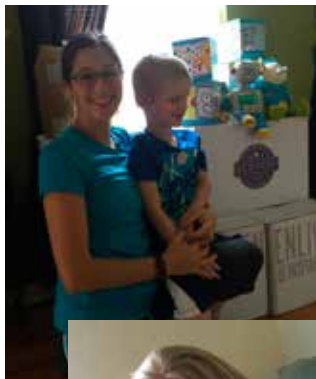


Miss Annie and husband Phil make up a batch of cornbread.

The Pangles are "Scent-sensational"

VIPS Indiana parents, **Austin and Jill Pangle**, wanted to do something to thank the nonprofit that has done so much for their two children, Jason and Aubrianna. They surprised VIPS by holding a private fundraiser to collect funds to purchase 60 Scentsy Buddies as we had recently run out. We first began giving Scentsy Buddies to the children we serve when another VIPS family donated them to us in honor of their daughter, Aria.

Above: Jill and son Jason with the huge shipment of Scentsy buddies. Right: Miss Annie snuggles with Arianna as she enjoys her Scentsy Buddy.



Jill knew other children would love and benefit from the Scentsy Buddies so she took on the challenge to replenish our stock. Once again, when a child is referred to VIPS, thanks to the Pangle family, that child receives a "Scent-Sensational" gift! We are so grateful for your thoughtfulness, *Pangle family and friends including Misty Allen, Nan Corn, Joanna Creduer, Mel and Linda Helmerick, Jeanine Kirby, Brandy and Troy Kruger, Sandra Linser, Jannell and Ryan Mulligan, Ken Pangle, the Rhoda family and Karla Wood!*

Visionworks Cares

On Thursday, September 1, VIPS Indiana staff joined managers from **Dr. Mark Lynn & Associates** at Bankers Life Fieldhouse

in Indianapolis during the Indiana Fever women's basketball game. Those attending the game had their photos taken with Visionworks marketing materials and if they posted on social media, Dr. Mark Lynn pledged to donate \$1 to VIPS Indiana. We were unsure how many photos were actually posted, but we were certainly thrilled to open an envelope with a check enclosed for \$1,000 shortly after the event. After years of supporting VIPS in Kentucky, Dr. Mark Lynn's philanthropy has now crossed the Ohio River -- he has begun to support Indiana's youngest children with vision loss with the expansion of Visionworks stores into Indiana. Thank you, Dr. Mark Lynn!

Generous Grants

Our gratitude extends to the following for helping further our mission:

Community Foundation of Elkhart County: \$9,450 through the Good Neighbor Grant to support critical early intervention services to infants and toddlers with blindness or low vision in Elkhart County.

The Haddad Foundation: \$7,000 for early intervention services in Central Indiana.

Indiana Members Foundation: \$2,500 through the Joan Wolfe Legacy Grant that will go toward the Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Program which includes O&M instruction, pre-cane devices and long canes.

All of these awarded grants are first time funding opportunities for VIPS Indiana and we are deeply honored by these community partnerships.

VIPS Louisville

Give Local Louisville

\$4.1 million reasons to give thanks! Thank you to everyone who made our **Give Local Louisville** campaign so successful on Sept. 15! Here are the results:

- With a \$10,000 match from the **Louisville Downtown Lions Club**, VIPS raised \$24,592 in just 24 hours!
- 114 donors chose to make a gift to VIPS, a 35% increase over last year!
- Out of 600+ nonprofits participating, VIPS was 34th overall in the # of donations made throughout the day!
- Overall, 21,156 gifts were made, totaling an astounding \$4,145,583 for local nonprofit organizations!!!
- Because we had more than 75 donors, we will receive additional prize money!
- The **Swope Family Foundation** is donating \$160,000 to the Community Foundation (host of GLL) to cover credit card fees!

Again, thank you. It was a great day for VIPS!

Stampede for VIPS

A gorgeous October day greeted this year's Stampeders on Saturday, October 15, at the Mark & Cindy Lynn Soccer Stadium. Approximately 400 participants ran and walked this year's course, which wound through Papa John's Cardinal Stadium before finishing in front of the soccer stadium. This year's course included a 1-mile family walk with trick-or-treat stops along the way, each one commemorating White Cane Day. Children then sprinted across the soccer field in the Kids Fun Run and enjoyed face painting, balloon animals and games. The event concluded with an awards ceremony where top finishers were recognized, including those who competed in the Blind/Visually Impaired division.



Team Maddie's Minions

Special thanks to our Title Sponsor, **Dr. Mark Lynn & Associates**, and our additional sponsors including **Texas Roadhouse, Papa John's, Ford, Louisville Downtown Lions Club, Print Tex, Kentucky School for the Blind Charitable Foundation and American Printing House for the Blind**. We also greatly appreciate all of our generous in-kind supporters, volunteers and family teams!



Most Fashionable Philanthropist

Anyone who has been to our Tennis Ball has probably noticed **Jay Hatcher** (*Tennis Tournament Chair and former VIPS Board President*) and his fashion statements. Now his eclectic closet has turned into a large donation for VIPS! Jay was nominated as one of the Most Fashionable Philanthropists, an annual fundraiser hosted by the Younger Woman's Club of Louisville. He raised more than \$12,000 in votes (each donation towards the event counted as a vote), of which VIPS would receive a percentage because we



Jay rocks the runway!

were his charity of choice. At the conclusion of a fashion show VIPS was presented with a \$7,100 donation! Way to go, Jay!

How Your Giving Helps

Most of VIPS funding comes from individual donors like you and from grants from organizations and foundations. Thanks to our generous supporters, we are able to offer high-quality early intervention services for children facing extra challenges. Please spread the word about how giving to VIPS can help a young child and family deal successfully with visual impairment.

Here's how can we put your gift to good use:

- In-home early intervention services with a Teacher of the Visually Impaired or Developmental Interventionist;
- Educational tools for the classrooms; including magnifiers, books, toys and puzzles;
- Orientation & Mobility services; and
- Classroom technology; including iPads, touch screen monitors and braille writers.

Planned Giving

Are you 70 ½ years old or older with an individual retirement account? If yes, you are permitted to make a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA directly to a qualifying charity such as VIPS, without declaring the distribution as income. You may roll over up to \$100,000 in any one year from your IRA without incurring any taxable income, per the Pension Protection Act of 2006, which became permanent last December. If you would like to take advantage of this great tax savings opportunity, contact Heather Benson, VIPS Director of Development, at 502-498-2933.

1985 Society

Things that happened in 1985:

- Nintendo was released in the United States
- Coca-Cola introduced "New Coke"
- VIPS opened its doors

That's right, it's been nearly 32 years since VIPS began providing critical services to children in Kentucky and Indiana. We are commemorating that with the 1985 Society, a donor "club" for those who pledge \$1,985 to VIPS! 1985 Society members have the option to give monthly, yearly or all at once – whatever works best for your situation. They will be recognized annually in this newsletter, receive special discounts to VIPS fundraising events and will be receiving a commemorative pin! If you're interested in joining the 1985 Society, contact Heather Benson at 502-498-2933 or hbenson@vips.org.

Recent Grants & Donations

We greatly appreciate the following grants:

Fraternal Order of Eagles: \$5,000 for Kids Town Preschool

Paradis Foundation: Two-year grant of \$10,000 total for a revamped VIPS Video Series project.

Karston A. & Ethelyn O. Osmondson Charitable Fund: \$35,000
(Louisville) for Family Services

VIPS Receives 2016 Annual Tennis Award

The *United States Tennis Association (USTA) Southern* announced that VIPS will be one of the recipients of its 2016 awards, given for outstanding achievements in tennis both on and off the court. VIPS won the Special Tennis Event of the Year for the VIPS Tennis Ball & Tournament held in May, 2016.

"The VIPS Tennis Tournament began in 2005 as a one-day fundraiser ancillary to the annual VIPS Golf Tournament. At that time, the teams mainly consisted of wives whose husbands were playing in the golf tournament. There were no corporate sponsors of the event, and the event only raised a few thousand dollars. Since then, the event moved to the Louisville Boat Club, the premier tennis facility in Kentucky. The number of teams that participate in the VIPS Tennis Tournament has grown 345 percent. The quality and depth of the event have improved dramatically over the years. The entry fee provides for lunch, a player gift bag including a pair of top-of-the-line Prince Tennis shoes, and a cocktail party and hors d'oeuvres that are served during the Division Finals. In 2011 the event won the USTA Kentucky award as Charity Event of the Year."

Along with VIPS, 26 other winners will be recognized during the USTA Southern Annual Meeting in Atlanta in January, 2017. We are delighted that our Tennis Ball and Tournament has garnered such positive attention! Thanks to the USTA Southern for this honor!

A Life Changing Experience

By Ashley May, VIPS Mom & Kids Town Preschool Instructional Assistant

In July I had the honor of attending the Association for the Education & Rehabilitation of the Blind & Visually Impaired (AER) international conference in Jacksonville Florida with Kathy Mullen. We had the privilege of hearing motivational speakers such as Vera Jones, who shared the story of her son who is blind.

There were many sessions that were beneficial to me as an educator as well as a parent. Some of my favorites were how to better implement the expanded core curriculum and how to adapt physical education for children who are blind or visually impaired.

I had the wonderful opportunity of attending this conference only because I was honored to receive the very first Bret Dahmke scholarship that was awarded by Bret's Family. I want to say thank you to the Dahmke family for making this possible. As a parent of a visually impaired child I encourage all of you to apply for the Bret Dahmke scholarship in 2017. My attendance at AER was a life changing experience for me.

In Memoriam

Our sympathies and prayers extend to the family of Dani Harper, VIPS Louisville receptionist. Dani's godfather and greatly loved Uncle Steve (Molter) passed away on October 24. Uncle Steve was already a VIPS contributor, but he made it his goal his last few months to raise money for VIPS, totaling around \$13,000! Whenever any of his friends, family and co-workers asked what they could do for him throughout his challenges with cancer, he suggested donations to VIPS. What a generous, caring man! We are so grateful to the Molter/Harper family and extend our deepest sympathies.



VIPS Wish List

VIPS Central Kentucky

Powdered tempera paint
Clorox wipes
Various colors of cardstock
Baby wipes
Copier paper
Playdough
Art supplies (foam shapes and stickers, glitter stickers, textured materials)
Liquid glue and gluesticks

VIPS Indiana

Empty individual-sized water bottles to make shaker bottles for Welcome Bags
Reams of Copier paper
Grocery store gift cards for supplies for Play and Learn sessions
Office supply store gift cards

VIPS Louisville

Boys & girls pants: 3T, 4T, 5T
(these will be used for active learning boards)
Binding rings from office section – all sizes please!!
Shuttlecocks (birdies) – from the sporting goods section
Small plastic bangle bracelets – usually found with party favors
Elastic String
Door hinges
Small wooden letters sold in the craft section
Whisks
Measuring spoons
Fingernail brushes
Very small cosmetic bags with closures
Measuring cups – the kind that are connected with a ring
Basting brushes

Thanks to Our Donors

Thanks to the kind individuals and organizations that have supported VIPS so generously over the past few months.

VIPS Central Kentucky

Bates Security, LLC
Combined Federal Campaign
Kroger Community Rewards
Mr. & Mrs. Brian Lane
Lexington Legends
Ms. Maxine Littrell
Ms. Dixie Miller
Mr. & Mrs. Andy Placido
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Smyth
United Way of the Bluegrass
WHAS Crusade for Children, Inc.

VIPS Indiana

Ms. Rosemary Adams
Mr. & Mrs. Aaron Barnes
Mr. Dave Bussard
Community Foundation of Elkhart County
Ms. Connie Crannell
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Devoe
Mr. & Mrs. David Gallahue
The Haddad Foundation
Mr. & Mrs. Phil Hughes
Indiana Members Foundation
Mr. John Lasley
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Luczkowski
Mr. Brian Petraits
Mr. Robert Reid
Mr. & Mrs. Barry Schaar
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Singleton
Mr. Lewis Turner
United Way of Bartholomew County
Washington Township Lions Club
WHAS Crusade for Children, Inc.

VIPS Louisville

Mr. & Mrs. Mark Abel
American Printing House for the Blind
Mr. & Mrs. Saul Anhouse
Dr. Joe F. Arterberry, F.A.C.S.
Bagel Fair Inc.
Ms. Tricia Barrett
BBQ Cowboy
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Ms. Charlotte Fletcher
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WHAS Crusade for Children, Inc.
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Mr. Timothy R. Winters, Architect
Dr. & Mrs. Richard Wolf
Mr. & Mrs. Tyler Yeager
Mr. and Mrs. Gene Younger
Mr. & Mrs. Craig York
YUM! Brands Foundation, Inc.
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Zink



Visually Impaired
Preschool Services

1906 Goldsmith Lane
Louisville, KY 40218

Change Service Requested



ViSability is made possible through grants from the Linda Neville Foundation and the Fred B. and Opal S. Woosley Foundation.



Upcoming Events

VIPS Louisville

Thursday, February 9

A VIPS-only evening will once again be offered at The Kentucky Science Center, 727 W. Main St., Louisville. Join us for all the fun. For more information, contact Martha Hack (mhack@vips.org or 502-498-2926).

Saturday, March 11

APH will offer a private tour for VIPS families, 9:30 a.m.. More info to follow.

Saturday, April 15

The Annual Easter Party will be held at VIPS Louisville. Enjoy breakfast and a festive Easter egg hunt, complete with beeping eggs, with VIPS families. For more information, contact Martha Hack (mhack@vips.org or 502-498-2926).

Wednesday, April 19

We will host Doughnuts with Dad at VIPS Louisville, 7:30 - 9 a.m. Enjoy breakfast with your dad/grandfather/uncle/mom before school. For information, contact Martha Hack (mhack@vips.org or 502-498-2926).

Friday, April 21

VIPS Kids Town Preschool will be closed although child care will be available.

Wednesday, May 10

Celebrate Mother's Day by having Muffins with Mom from 7:30 - 9:00 a.m. at VIPS Louisville. Join us for breakfast with your mom/grandmother/aunt/dad before school. For more information, contact Martha Hack (mhack@vips.org or 502-498-2926).

VIPS Indiana

Saturday, January 28

We will hold a Play and Learn Session, 10 a.m. at the ICC Thursday, 1100 42nd. St. in Indianapolis.

Friday, February 3

Trivia Night, sponsored by Delta Gamma, with proceeds going to VIPS, will be held at 6:30 p.m., at the Marquette Manor Clubhouse, 8140 Township Line Road in Indianapolis. Watch for details!

March 9

Join us for Opening Night of the ReVision Art Exhibit, 6 - 8 p.m., in the art gallery at Indiana Interchurch Center, 1100 W. 42nd St., Indianapolis. Encouraging "Touch the Art," this exhibit is specifically geared toward individuals with blindness and low vision, but is a delight for the sighted as well. Each touchable piece is described in large print, braille and with auditory information from the artist. The exhibit continues through April. Free parking is available on-site. For more information, contact Meredith Howell (mhowell@vips.org).

"No School" Days at Kids Town Preschool

- Monday, Jan. 16 -- No school and no childcare available.
- Friday, Feb. 24 -- No school but childcare is available.
- Monday, Feb. 27* -- No school but childcare available.
- Monday, Mar. 13* -- No school but childcare available.
- Thursday & Friday, Mar. 30 & 31* -- No school but childcare available.

*Possible snow make-up day.

visability is a quarterly publication of Visually Impaired Preschool Services, Jan Moseley, Editor.

VIPS Louisville

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Kathy Mullen, Director of Education
Heather Benson, Development Director
Deepti Advani, Human Resources
Ria Baker, Developmental Interventionist
Shelby Birchler, Preschool Instructional Assistant/
After School Care
Brittany Clarkson, Development Assistant
Sarah Cocanougher, After School Care
Carol Dahmke, Office Manager
LaRhonda Daniels, Preschool Instructional Assistant
Ashley Emmons, O&M/TVI/Preschool Teacher
Pauletta Feldman, Administrative Support
Greta Gillmeister, Music Therapist
Erika Glenn, JCPS Instructional Assistant
Martha Hack, Event Coordinator/Family Services
Coordinator
Marchelle Hampton, Preschool Instructional Assistant
Dani Harper, Receptionist
Beth Krebs, Preschool Asst. Director/Instructional Asst.
Mary Lesousky, TVI/Developmental Interventionist
Ashley May, Preschool Instructional Assistant
Paige Maynard, TVI (in training)/Preschool Teacher
Staci Maynard, TVI (in training)/Preschool Teacher
Juanita Miles, Two Day Twos Teacher
Jan Moseley, Visual Impairment Specialist
Kathy Moulden, Preschool Instructional Assistant
Becky Owens, After School Care
Beth Owens, Preschool Instructional Assistant
Kim Shippey, Controller
Carla Vied, Developmental Interventionist
Tracy Webb, Developmental Interventionist
Maury Weedman, O&M Specialist/Facilities Manager

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