

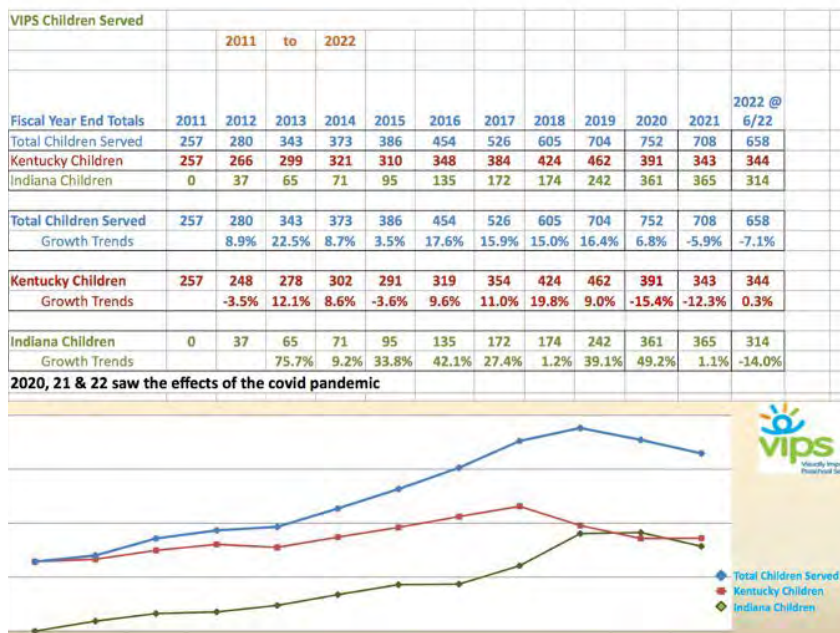
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Mission Focused

VIPS ended Fiscal Year 2021- 2022 with optimism! Even though the year had been unique and unpredictable due to the continuation of Covid, there were exciting opportunities for VIPS to shine because of our resilience and mission focus.

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What a Summer It Was!

VIPS-CKY Summer Sensations Camp

Over a dozen VIPS children and their siblings came to the Central KY location for a July morning full of fun summer time activities at our Summer Sensations camp. Campers explored the theme of transportation and they played with planes, trains, trucks, boats and automobiles. VIPS children also had the opportunity to work with their VIPS teachers on Orientation and Mobility skills and activities based on their individual goals.



Above: JP giggles as he is rocked in the blow-up canoe. Middle: Macie touches the braille triangles that fit neatly into the floor mat. Right: Kason uses a paint dobber to create a masterpiece to take home.



[Continued on page 2](#)

Mission Statement

VIPS empowers families by providing educational excellence to young children with visual impairments in order to build a strong foundation for reaching their highest potential.

Mission Focused

Continued from front

Some of the highlights of the year include:

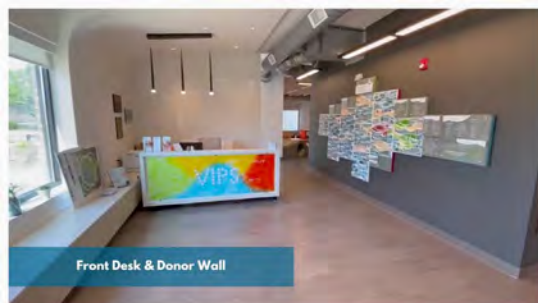
- VIPS celebrated the grand opening of the Simon and Estelle Knoble VIPS Indiana Family Resource Center in Indianapolis;
- VIPS Kids Town Preschool opened for its 11th year;
- VIPS collaborated with the University of Colorado at Denver on building platforms for the VIPS Preschool and PE Curricula;
- VIPS was represented during the Council of Schools for the Blind Leadership Conference and the American Printing House for the Blind Annual Meeting;
- VIPS was honored for excellence in non-profit management by Guidestar and the Better Business Bureau;
- VIPS launched the Feeling This Life podcast;
- The KY Department of Education increased VIPS funding to \$500,000 per year for the biennial budget;
- VIPS educational staff participated in training by staff from the Anchor Center for the Blind in Denver, assessing different aspects of visual functioning in newborns; and
- VIPS was given funding for a new car, bringing our fleet to 5 cars for teachers to use while traveling throughout KY and IN to visit children and families.

VIPS looks forward to focusing on strategic goals that the Board has identified for the 2022-23 year:

1. Grow resources through the lens of sustainability (fundraising, earned-income, endowment);
2. Increase Board engagement;
3. Pursue continued excellence in best practice (workforce and professional development, succession planning, diversity/equity/inclusion);
4. Maximize program accessibility; and
5. Strive for operational excellence.

Take a Virtual Tour

VIPS Indiana Family Resource Center



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gu-QloIWcbE>

What a Summer!

Continued from front

VIPS-Louisville Summer Camp

Little minds and hands were kept busy during the summer vacation as Kids Town Preschool held almost eight weeks of summer programming. The focus shifted toward summer fun activities while still emphasizing expanded core curriculum, literacy and math and science skills.



Above: Jake shows off his astronaut costume he designed. Left: Creating stamped flowers was a popular art project.



Left: Mckenna & Kingston create a zoo animal traffic jam. Above: Wells lands on his feet coming off the slide.

Staci Maynard and Julia Sleder were the TVIs who planned four fun days each week at VIPS and a Friday VIPS playground event. Themes ranged from robots to space and from farms to camping. The warm weather encouraged days with water play, neatly fitting into the ocean and water themes. Both teachers sent home weekly newsletters which outlined classroom and outdoor themes, included announcements and suggested activities that families could do at home to reinforce learning and share in the fun.

Throughout the summer, there were also four Park Pals sessions planned, allowing families to meet VIPS staff at some really cool playgrounds. One session was held at the VIPS playground, where parents and children could try out the Mobility City offerings.

Summer interventions in children's homes and childcare centers continued at the same time, ensuring that children in

VIPS programs were kept actively learning. This also made for shorter “remind-me-what-I-learned-last-year” time as classes following school calendars resumed in August



Zyh'mir and his mom, DeErica use the talking crosswalk in Mobility City.

Back to School at VIPS Kids Town Preschool

Many people would expect schools to be peacefully calm and blissfully quiet once school dismisses for summer vacation. But VIPS remained a hub of activity, even after the Kids Town Preschool summer session ended.



Maelynn tries out the braille.

and other classroom, lunchroom, and Kids Town objects was completed. Materials and new labels were developed, prepared and transcribed into braille and large type. Daily schedules were designed, changed and finally displayed in the classrooms. Additional staff members were interviewed and hired while sad goodbyes said to those staff members who left.



Saniyah arrives on the bus.

Instructional materials were re-organized in the classrooms, books were replaced on bookshelves, and supply closets were straightened and necessary supplies re-ordered to re-stock the labeled shelves. A general, overall cleaning of furniture, floors, rugs, materials, toys

And then there were preparations for actually teaching the eager youngsters soon to scamper into the building. Each individual's challenges, goals, Individual Education Programs (IEPs) and health information were reviewed and lesson plans were made to address each child's individualized needs.



London and her doll sing up a storm during music.



Christian washes his hands after an activity.

Every family of 2022-2023 Kids Town Preschool student was invited to a “meet and greet,” to tour the classrooms and additional instructional and play areas and to meet the staff working with their child. True individualized attention at VIPS doesn't end with only the child!

The calendar moved closer to the re-opening date and tension mounted while last minute details were addressed. A busy buzzing seemed to almost fill the air as the excitement of a new school year steadily increased. All of the advance preparations were completed awaiting the arrival of the first school bus.

On Wednesday, August 24, the happy voices of the youngsters once again filled the halls and the hearts of the VIPS staff as another school year was underway!

Making Music at VIPS Indiana

We had an awesome time with [The Music Playhouse Carmel](#) as they lead a FREE music demonstration class at the Family Resource Center on June 8! The Music Playhouse has a new program called POWER PUPS! that supports children with learning challenges, including physical/motor, visual, sensory, emotional, cognitive, body awareness, and self-regulation difficulties. It is a playful and fun-filled musical experience. Check out their site for class offerings!



Raleigh (left) and Silas (right) choose instruments.

A Special Visitor to Preschool

An exciting 4-legged visitor recently made several new friends in the KidsTown Preschool classrooms. Fleurdelis, a Leader Dog for the Blind from Rochester Hills, Michigan, has recently completed her training and came to visit the preschoolers. The children's reactions ranged from delighted snuggling to tentative pats, as the well-trained dog -- out of harness so she could behave as just a dog -- greeted each child.

When in her harness, Fleurdelis is all business and, in fact, she has just returned to Michigan to meet her new owner. Both will be trained how to function as a team, as Fleur leads her owner safely through the Rochester Hills community before learning the owner's home community.

Fleur was trained by Michigan transplant, Natalie Cousin, the Assistant Director in Academic and Support Services for Bellarmine Student-Athletes. Because of her previous experience training Leader Dogs, she was allowed to bring Fleur to Kentucky.



Maelynn got a kiss from Fleur.

MAKE PLANS NOW!! VIPS Family Retreat, Nov. 4 – 5



The entire family will have a great time at Camp VIPS -- the VIPS Family Retreat -- November 4-5, 2022 in Louisville, KY!

Camp will start on Friday evening with a dessert social for the entire family.

On Saturday, children up to age 10 will attend Kid's Camp at VIPS Louisville in the Kids Town Preschool classrooms. A fun day is planned with lots of activities including a lesson and crafts. Meals and snacks will be provided.

The adults will be across the street at Sullivan University's Gardiner Point Residence Hall (4004 Gardiner Point Dr. Louisville, KY 40213). Sessions will include a parent panel, an orientation and mobility session and a few surprises along the way!

Please RSVP by October 1st at

<https://bit.ly/2022FamilyRetreat>

- Cost is \$25.00 per family.
- Overnight rooms are available for \$25 for families traveling more than 50 miles.
- Financial assistance is available for families in need.

Please contact jcastenir@vips.org with questions or to receive additional information.

Feeling This Life Podcast: Season 2!

Get ready for the widely anticipated season 2 of the acclaimed podcasts, Feeling This Life, offering topics of special interest to parents of children with visual challenges. Listen to these 20-35 minute gems on any of your usual platforms: Apple Podcasts, Castbox, Google Podcasts, RadioPublic or Sticher.



Topics for 2022-2023 include:

My child's vision stumps me! with Carrie Garnett

Release Date: September 5

Jenny interviews Carrie Garnett, her daughter Hannah's teacher of the visually impaired. They discuss their experiences around confusion when a child is able to see something they "shouldn't" be able to, and when a child struggles with seeing something they



“should” be able to both at home and at school. Paige, Dr. Cathy, and Jenny reflect about the factors that influence a child’s functional vision. Jenny shares how her feelings of need for control have been impacted by being “stumped”.

One of the things we can observe in young (and not so young) children is the presence of “visual fatigue”. It is just one more hidden visual condition that affects individuals with visual impairment in their daily lives. As we learn more about how the brain works, scientists are starting to unravel the mystery of visual fatigue. Here is a link for understanding that research better: <https://www.perkins.org/the-science-behind-visual-fatigue-and-cvi/>

Will orientation and mobility help my child? with Dr. Phangia Dewald

Release Date: October 3

Dr. Cathy interviews Dr. Phangia “Nana” Dewald, an orientation and mobility specialist. Cathy and Nana talk about the importance of orientation and mobility in a child’s early years and the impact that service can have on a child’s development. Jenny reflects on her experience advocating for orientation and mobility services for her daughter, and how she felt as she spoke up. Cathy, Jenny, and Paige then share their thoughts about how orientation and mobility, grief, and advocacy intersect.

“For The Benefit of Those Who See” Book Talk

Release Date: December 5

Jenny, Dr. Cathy, and Paige reflect on reading “For the Benefit of Those Who See,” by Rosemary Mahoney. Topics that come up include learning about the world using all of our senses and blind content creators. Jenny touches on how the students at Braille Without Borders (the school where Mahoney teaches) validate her experiences.

Purchase and learn more about “For the Benefit of Those Who See” book at: <https://www.rosemarymahoney.net/>

What happens when your vision changes? with Juanita Miles

Release Date: January 9

Juanita Miles, preschool director at VIPS, shares the story of how her vision has changed as she lost, gained, and then lost her sight. She shares insights she gained along the way and opens up about how it felt to lose vision and how she accomplished her goals when she wasn’t sure she could. Jenny, Paige, and Dr. Cathy reflect about Juanita’s resilience.

Link to Juanita’s life hacks: [Juanita’s Life Hacks.png](#)

Please share your feedback in our survey at:

https://educationutah.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_39OmBvMih6MlgNw

Marvelous Milestones

Because of the variety of visual impairments and other disabilities that VIPS children experience, their milestones may look a bit different. The milestones below, which are the result of much hard work on the part of the children and their families and caregivers, are truly cause for celebration.

Edison is a graduate of the VIPS Indiana early intervention program who just graduated from preschool this spring. He



was awarded the honor of “Most likely to become a scientist.” His VIPS teacher, Ms. Amy, said, “I would agree 100% with this award. Edison is very inquisitive. I remember him being very interested in figuring out how things worked. He also showed a great love for learning about dinosaurs, spiders, frogs, and other living things.” Congratulations, Edison. We are so very proud of you!

Before switching to the Keto diet, **Ezra** was struggling with several seizures a day which negatively impacted his mood, alertness, and overall development. Ezra is now celebrating being one-month seizure free! Shelia, Ezra’s mom, is already noticing improvement in Ezra’s overall alertness and visual attention since his seizures have decreased! Congrats to Ezra and his family!



Haven’s family has been having some construction work completed on their home, and Haven has been afraid of the drill-when she heard it, she would cry. Ms. Paige chatted with the family about why Haven might be struggling, and how her vision doesn’t allow her to locate the source of the sound that scares



her. And she lacked the concept of what the drill is and what it does. At a recent home visit, Haven practiced exploring the drill. Once she was comfortable, her mom pressed the button with her so that she could hear its sound and build an understanding of the drill. By the end of the visit, Haven was no longer bothered by the sound of the drill and happily played with her toys! She is growing her skills!

JP has a goal of keeping his glasses on because typically he pulls them off as soon as they are put on his face. He recently attended a Disney Princess concert, courtesy of the United Way of the Bluegrass, and he kept his glasses on the entire time! Not only that, but he loved the show and was mesmerized by the sounds and sights!



Jake attends VIPS Kids Town Preschool where he made progress this year in using his hands to interact with different toys and materials. He helped with holding his utensil and his cup! Jake has also done well with moving objects and reaching for them. He has been using Big Mack switches for two objects to make choices! Great work this school year, Jake!

Jayce and his dad, Robbie, are practicing joint attention and imitation. Jayce wanted to learn how to take the dust buster off the toy vacuum, so Dad modeled pressing the button, then waited for Jayce to imitate what he did. When Jayce did, he looked at Robbie for a response, and Robbie and Ms. Paige cheered for him! Way to go, Jayce and Robbie!



In this video, **Kaylee** is using a switch to learn cause and effect by operating her bubble machine. This was one of the first times she really demonstrated that she understands that when she presses the button, something happens-- she can make bubbles! Her brother, Gunnar, is popping bubbles as she blows them, which is also great for social skills development. Way to go, Kaylee! <https://www.facebook.com/VisuallyImpairedPreschoolServices/videos/700354084394015>

Look at **Levi** go! In this video, you can see Levi is clapping, which is a midline skill! Midline skills are those that involve the left and right sides of the body coming together at midline. The more

practice a child gets with midline skills, the better body awareness they develop. This is so important for children with visual impairments as they build a foundation for more complex midline skills, like using scissors, drawing/coloring/writing, zipping a jacket, and spreading jam on toast! Way to go Levi! <https://www.facebook.com/VisuallyImpairedPreschoolServices/videos/577056963770489>



Lucas has made so much progress lately! He is now rolling, staying up on his elbows and knees, demonstrating better head and trunk control, playing with toys more appropriately, definitely seeing better, demonstrating less eye crossing, and sleeping for solid stretches of time. WOW! We can't wait to see what Lucas does next!

MarJani, a VIPS graduate, started with VIPS when she was just a few months old and has grown into a determined, hardworking, confident, independent young girl. She just started Kindergarten this month and we are excited to see all that she accomplishes in school. We are grateful to have played a role in MarJani's journey! Keep up the good work, MarJani!



Rena was suffering from many seizures a day. In the process of switching to a Keto diet and changing her meds to be Keto-friendly, her seizures stopped. Her skills are growing rapidly now that her seizures have stopped. Keep up the great work, Rena!

In this video, **Sage** is playing independently and entertaining himself happily. He is using his hands to play the piano, kicking his feet to the tune, singing along, smiling! We are so proud of you, Sage! <https://www.facebook.com/VisuallyImpairedPreschoolServices/videos/81277661655413>





New Arrivals

VIPS is pleased to welcome the following new children and their families into the VIPS Program.


Aliza - 1 year old, Union City, IN
 Analeigha - 1 year, Warsaw, IN
 Angel - 2 years, Ft. Wayne, IN
 Aniya - 2 years, Madisonville, KY
 Asher - 2 years, Depauw, IN
 Atley - 7 months, West Lafayette, IN
 Beau - 5 months old, Anderson, IN
 Brooklynn - 2 years, Indianapolis, IN
 Cannon - 1 year, Frankfort, IN
 Carley - 1 year, Terre Haute, IN
 Charleston - 10 months, Whitesburg, KY
 Christopher - 1 year, Louisville, KY
 Clara - 1 year, Warsaw, IN
 Colton - 2 years, Greenwood, IN
 Erison - 8 months, Providence, KY
 Finegan - 1 year, Louisville, KY
 Frankee - 2 years, Indianapolis, IN

Frankie - 1 year, Fredonia, KY
 Hattie - 1 year, Muncie, IN
 Heavenlee - 8 months, Independence, KY
 Hudson - 2 years, Ft. Wayne, IN
 Jace - 2 years, West Liberty, KY
 Jai'Zion - 8 months, Indianapolis, IN
 Karmalee - 8 months, Florence, KY
 Kason - 2 years, Lexington, KY
 Kenai - 2 years, Goshen, IN
 Killian - 2 years, Frankfort, KY
 Korbyn - 2 years, Georgetown, KY
 Krisaya - 8 months, Hebron, KY
 Lainey - 8 months, Covington, KY
 Lettie - 11 months, Owensboro, KY
 Levi - 2 years, Frankfort, KY
 Liam - 1 year, Georgetown, KY
 Lucah - 1 year, Anderson, IN
 Lyla - 1 year, Warsaw, IN

Marleigh - 1 year, Lexington, KY
 Mishka - 1 year, Indianapolis, IN
 Murphy - 2 years, Brownsburg, IN
 Oakley - 10 months, Russellville, KY
 Olivia - 1 year, Pendleton, IN
 Owen - 11 months, Chesterton, IN
 Paisleigh - 2 years, Crawfordsville, IN
 Persephanie - 7 months, Fishers, IN
 Preciana - 11 months, Florence, KY
 Rowan - 1 year, Lexington, KY
 Summer - 8 months, Vanlear, KY
 Violet - 1 year, Louisville, KY
 Wade - 1 year, Dry Ridge, KY
 William - 3 years, Nicholasville, KY
 Wyatt - 4 months, Winchester, IN
 Yuvraj - 2 years, Noblesville, IN
 Zoey - 1 year, Ashland, KY

VIPS Parent Recommendation

This parent recommendation came from **Stephanie**, Felicity's mom, who found this sensory fidget toy at Target. It features the braille alphabet on one side with the print alphabet on the reverse. Children delight in pushing the "bubbles", much like popping bubble wrap, while learning braille letters! It cost her \$9.99 at Target.

Notes of Interest

ScripTalk is a FREE, easy-to-use service available at thousands of pharmacies throughout the United States and Canada that will read all your medication information out loud. Talking prescription labels can be crucial to ensuring medication safety and adherence.

A pharmacist programs and places on your medication a small electronic label with all your prescription information, including drug name, dosage, instructions, warnings, pharmacy information, doctor name, prescription number, date and more.

The tag relies on RFID and text-to-speech technology. The free mobile app, ScripTalk, will read all the information out loud. The app is available from the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#).

We Want Your Stories!!!

Please share your child's and/or your family's story! October is Blindness and Visual Impairment Awareness month, and we are looking for parent stories to share during the month that tell of both the challenges and triumphs of raising a child with a visual impairment. And be sure to share some pictures! Mail all to aross@vips.org by October 7.

Multisensory Public Art Project

Recognizing that almost all public artwork fails to consider that many viewers are excluded because of blindness and visual impairments, Liz Richter, a former teacher at the Kentucky School for the Blind, has re-imagined how public art works - for everyone. A large-scale art project that is accessible to blind and visually impaired people, among others, is planned for the Clifton area of Louisville where Liz and many individuals with blindness/visual impairments reside.

Two listening sessions of stakeholders, from both the Clifton and visually impaired communities, were held to gather suggestions, resources, collaborators and funding sources. A priority is to include not only artists, but especially artists with visual impairments already at work in the community. The project may include audio description, textured surfaces that make 2D imagery tactile, sound- and music-producing components integrated into the design, high-contrast visuals for those with some vision, kinetic interaction, and even elements that generate pleasant aromas.

The Multisensory Public Art for Clifton is beginning construction with Liz as Lead Artist, due to her experience creating community-based, large-scale murals. A curved wall with multiple tactile and other sensory components is being constructed in Bank Commons Park across from the Kentucky School for the Blind and the American Printing House for the Blind. The community is encouraged to contribute decorated stones to the rock garden in progress.

Funding sources include the Kentucky School for the Blind Charitable Foundation, Louisville Visual Art, Louisville Metro Government, The National Endowment for the Arts, South Arts, Louisville Fund for the Arts, The Louisville Gas & Electric Company and Kentucky Utilities Company Foundation, Inc. and Oxmoor Auto Group. Additional information, input and volunteers are encouraged at the multisensoryart.org website.

In Memoriam

This issue of *ViSability* is dedicated to the memory of
Dallas Dean King
son of Nathan King and Caiman Proctor of Louisville, KY,
who passed away on April 30, 2022
at the age of one year.

Our hearts go out to all of those who loved Dallas.

VIPS Staff News

VIPS Indiana

We like to call **Rita DeVore** our Indiana air traffic controller, but the reality is, she has taken on an official new title in addition to her administrative assistant position. She is now our volunteer coordinator as well and she has certainly been busy!

Laurie Smiley is a new part-time Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired for the Indiana office who lives in Bloomington, IN. Originally from Martinsville, Laurie has worked as a Developmental Interventionist/Preschool Teacher in the US and internationally. Married to a military man, she even worked in Japan! Laurie graduated from Ball State then went on to receive her TVI from Indiana State University. She has three sons and enjoys sewing clothing for her grandchildren.



Laurie, center, is shown with her son and daughter-in-law.

VIPS Louisville

The new school year brings surprises, some positive and some not-so-much. In the not-so-much column is the departure of TVI **Brittany Williamson** who accepted the position of Itinerant Teacher of the Visually Impaired with Jefferson County Schools. We wish Brittany much success and know she will likely meet up again with VIPS graduates as they move into the local schools.

More surprises on the positive side are new teacher assistants to work in the Kids Town preschool.

Malinda Vogel writes, "I was born and raised in Minneapolis, MN and graduated from the College of St. Catherine with a Bachelor of Arts in Art and Writing. (They let me create a Writing major since they didn't have one yet.)" She has previously worked in education, mostly in art, kindergarten and preschool classes.

Malinda home-schooled her son, now 31 years old, who is "still a gifted researcher and self-educator." She worked as a special education teacher assistant in JCPS, at Johnson Traditional Middle School and Churchill Park School and loved them both. She especially enjoyed the pace at Churchill Park, and even after retiring, she felt the call to service once more and applied to VIPS. She has written a book of poetry, "Dark to Light."



Continuing on a positive note, **Charlene Flores** will work part-time as a substitute in the Kids Town Preschool and will also volunteer in the preschool as her four-year old son, Avron, begins classes there. Charlene has a degree

in Criminal Justice Administration from the University of Louisville. She is now attending the Teacher of the Visually Impaired training program at the University of Kentucky.

A Louisville native, Charlene graduated from Presentation Academy where she worked in the Development office after graduation. She is married and also has a nine-year old son. In her "spare time" she enjoys gardening, sewing and hand quilting.

Thanks to Our Volunteers for Their Gifts of Time

VIPS Indiana

We send a huge thank you to a group of over **20 volunteers** who participated in **United Way of Central Indiana's #GoAllIN day** on June 24th. We hosted volunteers from **Edna Martin Christian Center, Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana, Amazon.com, and Eli Lilly and Company**. Thank you to UWCI for organizing this amazing day of volunteerism

and for granting us funds to purchase supplies for volunteers to braille cards, make birthday cards and welcome bag materials, etc. Check out



Search

this awesome video featuring the various organizations that hosted volunteers. You can see our very own Volunteer Coordinator, Rita DeVore, chatting about



Go All IN Day 2022

VIPS! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=haYwWnGQQY8>

A special thank you goes to **Azucena**, a 23-year-old young lady, with the Edna Martin Christian Center. Azucena first volunteered with us through the UWCI #GoAllIN day, and has since become a regular volunteer! Azucena is also visually impaired and received her BA in Social Work in August of this year! She helped with our Summer O&M Camp and has brailled many of our Spanish books as Spanish is her first language! Thank you, Azucena, for supporting VIPS!

We give a shout out to our amazing volunteers from **The Blended Church** who visited our Family Resource Center last weekend to make birthday cards to be sent to VIPS kiddos! We are grateful to them for taking time to learn more about the families we serve. Ms. Rita even taught them how to braille on the braille writer!



VIPS Louisville

Kayleigh Herbert is our new intern from Holy Cross High School. Kayleigh is a cheerleader, works on the yearbook and has done an amazing amount of service work with a variety of non-profits. We are excited to have her with us weekly.

Cookouts Galore!!! We greatly appreciate the **UPS volunteers** who sweltered in the extreme heat to help with the Cookout for the Crusade on June 2. Thank you, **Corey Brunner, Jessica**

Dessart, Jim Jury, Rachel Osborn and Yolanda Pate-Savage. Additional volunteers from UPS helped out at the VIPS Cookout on July 1 included **Kelly Keets** and her co-worker for along with the VIPS Louisville team. Despite the extreme heat, we raised almost \$1,000 for the Early Childhood Intervention Program. Assumption student **Amy Huerta** was a big help in the preschool classrooms this summer. She also helped with the VIPS Cookout on July 13. We thank her for her time and energy!



We again thank the indomitable **Fran Woodward** for her help in the 2s classroom. She has become indispensable in dealing with our youngest children!

Thanks are due **Robin Mullin and her granddaughter, Nora Diehl**, both from St. Martha's, who helped with administrative tasks, relabeling file cabinets and setting up files. We appreciate your time spent helping us serve children with blindness.

We are very grateful to these Pickleball volunteers: **Chrissy Haywood, Lauren Morris, and Josee Patenaude**, who made our committee planning possible; and **Ron Spaulding**, who has previously volunteered with us for 5K runs; and **Edith Wright**, who works for Ford and has also helped with other events. Thanks so much for sharing your time and energy with VIPS.

VIPS Central KY

We are so thankful for our VIPS staff who came to support the Cupcake Classic and volunteers **Mac and Cynthia Ferguson** from the Lexington Lions Club, **Jennifer Holland, Karly Jackson, Kera Smyth, Chuck Marz, Olivia Marz, Tinley Easton, Todd Easton, and Shelby Easton**, our cupcake mascot.



Recent Grants and Donations

VIPS Kentucky

\$2,641.85 -

Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels to upgrade and add cameras to the VIPS Louisville campus and Kids Town Preschool in support of the safety of our staff and students.



\$5,000 - an **anonymous donor** for Kids Town Preschool

\$10,000 - **United Way of the Bluegrass** for the Early Childhood Intervention program in Central KY

\$30,000 - **Etscorn Foundation** for another fleet vehicle, the sixth provided by this very generous foundation

\$46,000 - **WHAS Crusade for Children** to VIPS Central KY for the Early Childhood Intervention program

\$85,000 - **WHAS Crusade for Children** to the Louisville campus for Kids Town and the Early Childhood Intervention Program

\$100,000 - **Kosair Charities** for Kids Town Preschool and the Early Childhood Intervention program. We are so very grateful for all they have done and continue to do for our children.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to the **Brann family!** Ashlyn and Jacob with the support of their parents, Jessica and Phillip, hosted their 2nd annual Lemonade & Plant Stand to raise funds for VIPS. Ashlyn and Jacob, as well as neighbors, looked forward to the event this year with many friends inquiring about the sale weeks before the event. Ashlyn and Jacob's stand included tomato plants the family had raised from seeds and fresh lemonade. The Branns were able to raise \$633.35 from the sale along with generous donations from friends and family.

The Brann family has experienced firsthand the challenges of having a child with a visual impairment and the benefits of

receiving VIPS early intervention services. Their desire to give back has not only benefited VIPS, but the entire community, as they've been able to witness the generous hearts of this family. We are extremely grateful for this amazing family!



Gifts of Treasure

We were very pleased to receive a phone call from an organization called **Delivering Good** based in New York City. This non-profit's purpose is to "unite retailers, manufacturers, foundations and individuals to support people affected by poverty and tragedy. It is the charity of choice for new product donations made by hundreds of companies in the fashion, home and children's industries. Donating new merchandise provides these companies with a simple and effective way to help people in need. More than 98% of its revenue is dedicated to Delivering Good's charitable program of distributing apparel, accessories, shoes, home furnishings, toys, books and other useful items."

Delivering Good invited VIPS to participate in its Carter's retail program! Every few weeks, VIPS receives a phone call to come to one of two local Carter's stores to pick up donated children's clothing which our teachers then distribute to children who need them. We are so incredibly thrilled with both organizations, Delivering Good and Carter's, and so very grateful for helping us fill a need in our communities. The first load was picked up by two VIPS teachers heading to visit students in the recently flooded counties of eastern Kentucky where the clothing was quickly distributed. A whopping big thank you goes to both Carter's and Delivering Good!

Brittany Clarkson, former VIPS employee and mother of VIPS graduate, Addie, recently donated some much appreciated children's books. Our teachers selected a few of the books for their classroom libraries and the rest were placed in the VIPS library for parents and others to check out. Thanks so much, Clarksons!

VIPS Indiana

We are pleased to announce the following grants and to thank these grantors for their faith in the work VIPS Indiana does:

\$5,000 - **Haddad Foundation** in support of our work in Indiana.

\$9,300 - **The Thomas P. and Sondra D. Sheehan Charitable Foundation**, a partner of Hamilton County, IN Community Foundation for services to VIPS children in Hamilton County

\$12,610 - **The Community Foundation of Elkhart County** for services to VIPS children in Elkhart County, IN

\$42,000 - **The WHAS Crusade for Children** for teachers/interventionists to provide services to young Indiana children with blindness

\$75,000 - **United Way of Central Indiana** in support of our work in Central Indiana. We are excited to be 1 of the 29 organizations to receive the Family Opportunity Fund from the **United Way of Central Indiana**! The granted \$75,000 will make a tremendous difference in the lives of children who are blind or visually impaired, and their families, in Central Indiana. Thank you, UWCII! <https://www.insideindianabusiness.com/.../united-way...>



We were honored to present to **SCI Kiwanis Club** to share more about the children and families we serve. They generously gifted us \$500 along with black towels and handmade shaker tubes to use during home visits! Thank you to the Kiwanis for investing in our mission.

Fundraising News

Bourbon Raffle

Drawing, September 30 at noon!

Purchase tickets here: <https://secure.vips.org/np/clients/vips/product.jsp?product=45&>



The drawing will be done via Facebook LIVE right here on the VIPS page on September 30th at 12pm. **Tickets are available for \$50 each for a chance to win ALL 5 bottles of bourbon.** All proceeds will go towards providing early intervention to children who are blind or visually impaired in Indiana and Kentucky.

Prize:

2021 Pappy Van Winkle 12 Year

2021 Thomas H Handy 12 Year

2021 Old Forester Birthday Bourbon

W.L. Weller 12 Year

2021 Woodford Masters Collection Batch Proof

The VIPS Cupcake Classic 3k

The annual VIPS Cupcake Classic 3k, held in Lexington in August, was once again a success, with almost 200 participants coming out to support VIPS. Runners joined from all over Kentucky, as well as visitors from Indiana, New York and Texas! All participants enjoyed



VIPS parent Jade Parson and friends running for Team Macie.



a post race cupcake from BabyCakes Cupcakes, as well as frozen treats courtesy of the Forcht Bank Ice Cream Machine.

VIPS Grad Addison Evers shows her guide dog, Dorie, to Dmitri.

Both former and current VIPS children and their families came out to show their support, as well as members of the Lexington Lions Club.

Top: RaceRise Director Bob Baney presents a check to Kelly Easton, VIPS CKY Regional Director.



Largest team award went to Sponsor Dr. Jitander Dudee and staff from Medical Vision Institute.



We are so thankful for our VIPS staff who came to support, and volunteers Mac and Cynthia Ferguson from the Lexington Lions Club, Jennifer Holland, Karly Jackson, Kera Smyth, Chuck Marz, Olivia Marz, Tinley Easton, Todd Easton, and Shelby Easton as our cupcake mascot.

This event wouldn't be possible without our generous sponsors and in-kind partners: **BabyCakes Cupcakes, Forcht Bank, the Lexington Lions Club, Medical Vision Institute, NFL Flag Football, RaceRise, UK Healthcare Advanced Eye Care and Wilson Pediatric Therapy and Learning Center.**

The VIPS Pickleball Classic

The Pickleball community is such a wonderful group of people! VIPS had more than 130 participants this year at our Pickleball Classic Tournament in Louisville; when compared to the less

than 50 participants last year, it really shows that this sport is growing in popularity. We raised roughly \$6,000 during our two day tournament! It was a great weekend, educating people about the services we provide at VIPS. Thanks to **Rhawn Enterprises and Derby City Pickleball** for their sponsorships.



Next year's Pickleball Classic is set for August 19 – 20, 2023. We are strategizing for more sponsors, and hope to increase attendance! The VIPS staff has grown personal interest in the sport and we are planning to start practicing and maybe participate next year. If you are new to Pickleball, or just thinking about playing, it's not too late to get involved and join us next year!

Give For Good Louisville!

It is overwhelming, that given the terrible financial news of late, over 100 people contributed to help us raise over \$30,000 in just 24-hours – including our own staff members. The economy has greatly impacted the ability of so very many individuals, businesses and foundations to give as they have in the past. Yet, our supporters and our matching pledge donors stepped up once again to make sure that we had a very successful day! We thank the **Louisville Downtown Lions Club** who provided matching funds in the amount of \$10,000, the **Bonnie Bizer Foundation** who provided \$5,000 in matching dollars and **Steve and Jeanie Deeley** who gifted us with \$1,500 in additional matching funds. Their support allowed us to meet 75% of our goal. Because we had 101 donors we qualified for three additional pools of dollars and will be awarded part of the total \$154,500 in prizes.

VIPS Wish Lists

VIPS Louisville

Black bath towels

Slinkies

Push lights - small round lights that you push the center to activate

Mini metal LED flashlights w/on/off button on end and with short lanyard

AA & AAA batteries

Disposable abthroom cups

Facial tissue

Sandwich size and gallon size zip bags

Needed for making bead curtains:

- Velcro brand 30-ft. sticky back hook & loop fastener available from: https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000GRBEK2/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o01_s00?ie=UTF8&th=1
- Red and/or gold Mardi Gras beads- long strings of metallic beads (available at dollar stores or party stores)

Needed for classroom clean-ups:

- Swiffer replacement pads: https://www.amazon.com/Sweeper-Mopping-Refills-Floor-Window/dp/B07Y5G6D6K/ref=sr_1_8?crid=CF5LN8W3P4BV&keywords=swiffer+wet+pads&qid=1658947773&prefix=swiffer%2Caps%2C91&sr=8-8
- Paper towels
- Unscented diaper wipes
- Disinfectant wipes

VIPS – Indiana

We are in need of many items for our new Family Resource Center!

Amazon Wish List: <http://a.co/aeRar2N>

Here are a few non-Amazon items that we would like:

- Leo Learns By Doing DVD: <https://www.good-lite.com/products/790000>
- Basic Spanish for Orientation and Mobility: A Phrase Book and Dictionary: <https://www.apf.org/product/basic-spanish-for-orientation-and-mobility-a-phrase-book-and-dictionary/>

We Now Accept

We are so excited to announce that VIPS now has a Venmo account so that donations, race fees and other payments can more easily be made using our Quick Response (QR) code (see below). Accessing cash apps such as Venmo makes processing these activities quickly and safely and in a much more timely fashion from a donor's/participant's cell phone. If you prefer to not scan the QR code, you can simply type in **Visually Impaired Preschool** (you will see our logo and @VisuallyImpairedPreschool/Svcs). Or you can use our convenient [QR code](#).



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Louisville, KY 40218

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Preschool Services

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



Upcoming Events

Monday, October 3

The VIPS YUM! Brands Corporate Cup Golf Tournament. This annual tournament and fund-raiser will be held at Audubon Country Club in Louisville. Contact keaston@vips.org for more info.

Saturday, October 15, 5:30 p.m.

VIPS night at the Science Center for Halloween. Come in costume!! For details, contact Jenny Castenir, Family Services Coordinator at jcastenir@vips.org or 502-498-2939.

Friday, Oct. 21, 10 a.m.

White Cane Awareness Day will be held at the KY State Capitol in Frankfort. There will be a White Cane Awareness Walk, Tour of the Capitol, and Proclamation for White Cane Day. Contact: jasamyn.degrant@clark.kyschools.us.

Saturday, October 22, 10 a.m.

Trick or Treat at the Family Resource Center in Indianapolis. Local organizations will set up booths to pass out information and resources that will benefit your family. Dress up for a day of trick or treating for resources and goodies at VIPS. Staff and volunteers available to tend to children while parents/caregivers chat with each other and the organizations present. RSVP at <https://secure.vips.org/eventReg.jsp?event=1323&>.

Saturday, October 29, 10:30 a.m.

Trunk 'N Treat at the VIPS Central KY Office. Come in costume and have a safe trick-or-treating experience and get lots of treats! Register at: <https://secure.vips.org/event.jsp?event+1325&>. Contact keaston@vips.org for more info.

Friday-Saturday, November 4-5,

VIPS Family Retreat. For details, contact Jenny Castenir, Family Services Coordinator at jcastenir@vips.org. See details on pg. 4.

Tuesday November 29

Save the date! VIPS will participate in #GivingTuesday, the largest online giving day, the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, November 29! Help VIPS by creating a Facebook Fundraiser to help us raise funds to meet our goal! All donations go towards supporting families in need of VIPS services. Watch for more info!

Saturday, December 10,

VIPS Louisville Holiday Party. Contact Jenny Castenir, Family Services Coordinator at jcastenir@vips.org.

VIPS Non-Discrimination Policy

VIPS does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law in policies or practices related to: children and/or families served; employment, contractors, or volunteers; and membership on the VIPS Board of Directors or advisory boards.

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

VIPS-Louisville

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Christina Frasher, Controller
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Jenny Castenir, Family Services Coordinator
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Ashley Emmons, TV/COMS/Preschool Classroom Teacher
Pauletta Feldman, Special Projects
Ashley Ford, Event Coordinator
Charlene Flores, Preschool Classroom Assistant (Sub)
Marchelle Hampton, Preschool Classroom Assistant
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Pam Holladay, TV/DI
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Sarah Potter, Preschool Classroom Assistant
Laney Reed, DI/Preschool Classroom Teacher
Kirsten Schmidt, Guest Relations & Support
Julia Sleder, TV/Preschool Classroom Teacher
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