



All-in!

NEWSLETTER

Executive Director's Report
November 2021

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Our Mission

CAIU provides innovative support and services in partnership with schools, families, and communities to build capacity and model courageous leadership to help them be great. #BeGreat

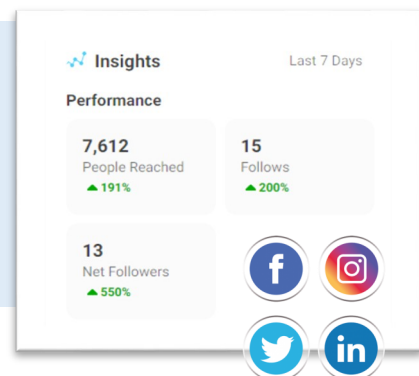
Our Vision

Recognized as a trusted and influential partner in achieving life-changing outcomes in the Capital Area. #ChangingLive

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Share your stories, student successes, and #changinglives moment!
Email All-In! Newsletter or social media content to communications@caiu.org.



All-in!
NEWSLETTER

Executive Director Report

All-In! Newsletter
November 2021
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From the Executive Director's Desk



"What pronouns do you prefer?"

Such a simple question, and yet the topic is foreign to many of us. Maybe you are wondering why you should ask this question. As you read on I hope you feel that ensuring the use of a person's proper pronouns is critical to our efforts to bridge to belonging for all.

Going way back for some of us, we were taught that "boys" use the pronouns he/him/his, and "girls" use the pronouns she/her/hers. Remember my favorite phrase, know better do better? Now is the time. Our collective social understanding of gender has grown, and now so must our practices.

Our name and pronouns are facets of our identity. We use people's names and pronouns regularly in referring to them. It is so common to call someone by their name, or refer to them by a pronoun, that it is quite personal, and therefore incredibly important. From this perspective, it is perhaps more understandable that calling someone by the wrong name, or misgendering them by using the wrong pronoun is disrespectful, and in some ways can even be dangerous to that person in the wrong setting or context. It is also hurtful, regardless of intention, because misgendering signals to that person that their gender, their feelings, and their experiences are somehow not valid.

Why might someone identify with pronouns beyond He/Him/His or She/Her/Hers? These pronouns come with specific set of expectations about how someone should express their identity, how they are expected to relate to the world, and how the world is expected to relate to them. We all tend to make assumptions based on appearance, sorting people into the category of man or woman, male or female. For some, this binary system does not fit who they are. They simply do not identify within the male only or female only limitations.

So let's talk about non-gendered pronouns. You may find it surprising that gender-neutral pronouns have been around for centuries. Gender-neutral pronouns don't assume a gender for the person or persons being discussed, and perhaps more importantly, they can be validating for anyone who lives beyond the binary. The most common gender-neutral pronoun used by genderqueer and gender nonconforming people is "they/them/their," but know that a person does not have to be genderqueer or non-conforming to feel that a neutral pronoun fits best. You might be thinking but "they" is a plural pronoun, how can a person be properly represented with a plural pronoun? "They" has long been recognized as a singular, grammatically correct pronoun as well. To make it a bit more challenging, "they" is not the only gender-neutral pronoun. Some people choose to use the gender-neutral pronouns "ze/hir/hirs" (pronounced "zee/here/heres") or "ey/em/eir" (pronounced "ay/em/airs"), among others.

Let's address the fear you may have of making a mistake. What do you do if you misgender another? We all make mistakes, particularly when learning something new. Briefly apologize, correct yourself, and continue your conversation.

What can you do to help bridge to belonging for people that identify outside the binary of he/she? If you are uncomfortable asking, start by announcing your pronouns when you introduce yourself. Add your pronouns to your correspondence, email, zoom title, etc. By sharing your own, you demonstrate your desire to offer everyone a safe space to be themselves – a place where they belong.

Dr. Andria Saia (she/her/hers)
Executive Director

Sensory Walk

Explore with All Your Senses!

Article by: Janice Susi, OTR/L, Occupational Therapist

A sensory walk is a colorful, creative, and playful way for kids to build connections in the brain that are responsible for sight, touch, taste, hearing, body position and movement. All of these senses help children build motor skills, language, and self-regulation skills. The CAIU sensory walk, located in a hallway of the Enola office, was a product of the teamwork of Occupational Therapists, Educational Paraprofessionals, and the assistance of the maintenance department to pull it all together. Some of the activities for the sensory walk were purchased and others were the creation of the team members.

#Dedication # Partnership #Innovation

Sensory walks are part of a concept called sensory play, which is exactly what it sounds like: play designed to stimulate and improve one or multiple senses. The students that attend classes at our Enola building as well as students that come to the building for individual therapy sessions can take advantage of the sensory experiences.

Sensory walks assist those that need to increase their energy and arousal levels as well as those who need to calm and organize

their bodies. Added benefits include increased focus and attention for academics, including socialization and communication skills. All team members in the building can utilize the sensory walk. Teachers utilize the sensory walk for working on cognitive skills including memory and following directions. Speech Therapists work on language and socialization skills with peers. Occupational and Physical Therapists can work on fine, visual, and gross motor skills. All team members can work on waiting, taking turns, and facilitating exploration and creativity.

#Expertise #Leadership

The great thing about sensory play/sensory walks is that they can be placed virtually anywhere and made out of nearly anything. For instance, a path could be made out of regular everyday household items, indoors or outdoors.

Living our mission. Communicating our vision.

Each month, our team shares stories of how CAIU's vision, mission, and values are being incorporated into every day services and practices. Staff can submit articles and ideas to communications@caiu.org.



ABOVE: The team who created the Sensory Walk are Janice Susi, OTR/L; Karin Topping, OTR/L; Tracey Knauss, OTR/L; Erin Niedzwiecki, COTA and Alison Ruello, EPP

LEFT: Thank you to our facility maintenance team for installation!

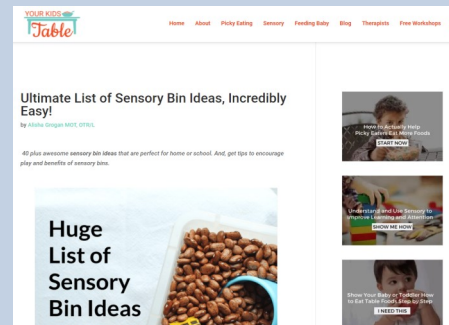


Families can create their own sensory walk and play areas!

Touch

Create bins of rice, noodles, shaving cream, leaves, or mud.

More ideas at: yourkidstable.com/ultimate-list-of-sensory-bin-ideas



Taste

Have trials of different food or drink items.

More ideas at: <https://team-cartwright.com/taste-safe-sensory-play/>



Visual

Try "I spy" activities, eyes follow along lines, shapes, or puzzles.

More ideas at: www.theotttoolbox.com/visual-sensory-processing-backyard/



Smell

Smell essential oils or candles.

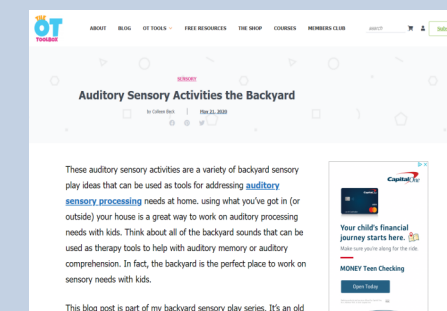
More ideas at: www.fantasticfunandlearning.com/fun-ideas-for-exploring-the-sense-of-smell.html



Hear

Listen to different sounds and try to identify different musical instruments.

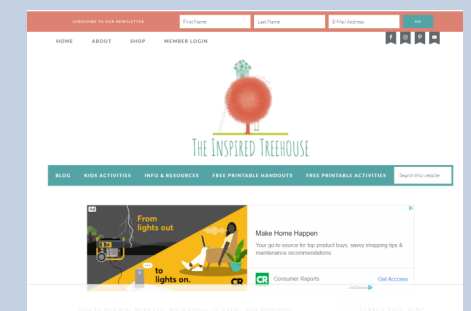
More ideas at: www.theotttoolbox.com/auditory-processing-backyard-sensory/



Move

Jump, walk heel to toe on a line, and cross arms or legs across the body.

More ideas at: playtivities.com/obstacle-courses-for-kids/



Self-regulation

Visuals for breathing exercises.

More ideas at: yourkidstable.com/ultimate-list-of-sensory-bin-ideas



Choosing activities for sensory walk or play area is easy. Let your children help you pick things that they want to explore and let go!





children's Grief Awareness Day



Thursday, November 18, 2021

Article by: Christie Esworthy, Kerry Campbell, and Cheryl Fisher, Aid to Non-Public School team

An international observance created in 2008 by the Highmark Caring Place, Children's Grief Awareness Day (CGAD) is observed every year on the third Thursday in November (the Thursday before the U.S. holiday of Thanksgiving). This time of year is a particularly appropriate time to support grieving children because the holiday season is often an especially difficult time after a death. While observance of this day is important each year, 2021 is a year when CGAD is especially meaningful, with so many children having lost loved ones due to the pandemic.

It provides an opportunity for all of us to raise awareness of the painful impact that the death of a loved one has in the life of a child and an opportunity to make sure that these children receive the support they need.

Children's Grief Awareness Day seeks to bring attention to the fact that often support can make all the difference in the life of a grieving child. It provides an opportunity for all of us to raise awareness of the painful impact that the death of a loved one has in the life of a child and an opportunity to make sure that these children receive the support they need.

In 2021, Children's Grief Awareness Day is Thursday, November 18. Counselors from the CAIU's Aid to Nonpublic Schools department will be organizing activities within many of the nonpublic schools in honor this special day. The ways that each nonpublic school observes the day vary from school to school, but some of the many activities occurring will include: wearing blue on CGAD, classroom-door decorating contests, creating memory walls or other places to write messages of support to grieving friends, sharing materials from the Highmark Caring Place with students and families, and sharing of information through classroom meetings and morning announcements.

More information about Children's Grief Awareness Day is available at: www.childrengriefawarenessday.org

Your EAP More than Counseling Services

Wellness Committee Report

Article by: Wellness Committee member Rennie Gibson

What is EAP? The EAP is an employer-sponsored benefit that provides free counseling services and other resources to employees, as well as, eligible household/family members for things such as: **marital/family issues, emotional distress, time management, job stress, drug/alcohol addiction, and more.** CAIU's EAP is **Mazzitti & Sullivan.**

What is the cost? The EAP services are free to employees, as well as, eligible household/family members. Each member receives four free sessions every two months and up to twelve sessions per year.

How does it work? It's easy – just call! When you call, they will get some basic information and then will give you some options based on your specific situation. They will make sure the counselor has your EAP authorization paperwork, and you can set up the appointment with them directly to pick a time and date that works best for you.

These sessions can be done face-to-face with a local provider, by telephone, or virtually through a secure online interface. The counselor will bill EAP (Mazzitti & Sullivan) directly, and they will pay them directly, so there's no charge to you when you go through the EAP. If you like the counselor and wish to go beyond your free sessions, you may stay with the same counselor and just switch over to your health insurance at that time. They work with thousands of providers, and have their own provider network. Our EAP benefit is also renewable, so it can be used more than once. Please call or email Mazzitti & Sullivan for more details!

Confidential? The EAP is strictly confidential. Eligible employees and their dependents are protected under state and federal confidentiality laws, such as HIPAA, and employers will never receive any information about who has used the program unless that person signs a written release form. There are a few rare cases when they are allowed to break confidentiality without a release, such as if they receive a report of child abuse or if someone's life is in danger.

It is more than just counseling! The EAP offers referrals to outside agencies as well as other community resources. These resources may include: **elder care information and referral, financial, legal, housing, self-help groups, community and religious based assistance, government assistance, and local/family support services.**

The EAP also **offers great resources on their website.** Go to www.mseap.com. Be sure to log in (contact your supervisor or HR for your staff log-in) to get access to many great resources, trainings, webinars, assessments and so much more.

Contact Mazzitti & Sullivan EAP Services: call 1-800-543-5080, email info@mseap.com, or visit www.mseap.com. The EAP service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. EAP staff are in the office from 7:30am to 4:30pm (Eastern Time), Monday through Friday. Any afterhours calls will be taken by an answering service, with Master's level counselors available to help those in immediate need.

Check out the CAIU "I'm fine" Art display at the Enola Middle Lobby on exhibit Nov. 17 through Dec. 17.

Visit the Wellness Committee webpage [HERE](#) for wellness resources, program, and events!

Noteworthy

#BeGreat #ChangingLives

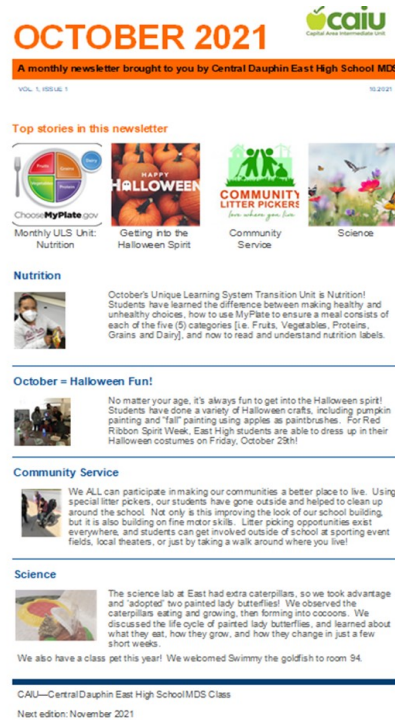


Diakon: Community-Based Program of the Year!

Congratulations to Diakon - Center Point, who has been selected as the Juvenile Court Judges Commission Community-Based Program of the Year, in recognition of outstanding service to the Pennsylvania Juvenile System. An award ceremony was held virtually on November 4 and Diakon hosted a staff celebration at Allenberry on November 5.

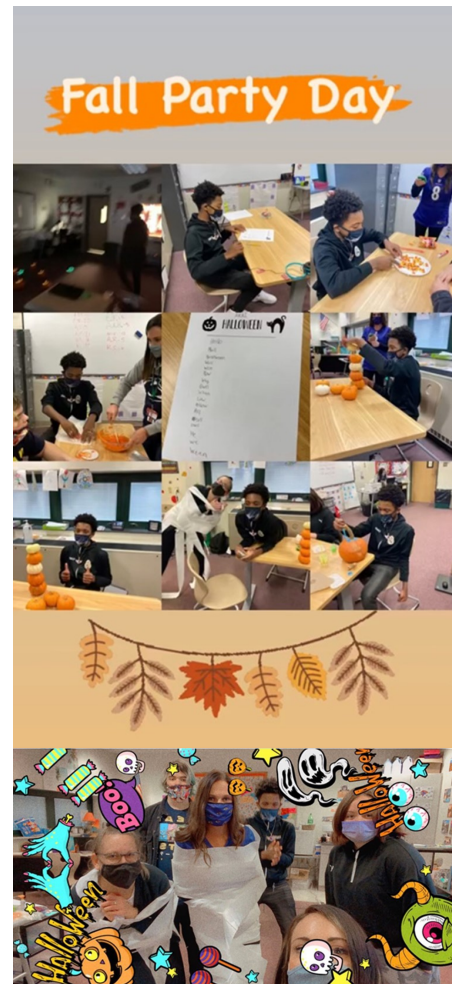
SHOUT OUT to the CAIU staff who work in classrooms and in partnership with Diakon - Center Point. We are very proud of you!

Images from
Fall Fest 2021 on
the last page!



Making a Difference in the School Community

Mrs. Danielle Morra, teacher, and the staff at Central Dauphin East High School Multiple Disabilities Services program, published their first monthly edition of a newsletter. The newsletter provides a fun insight into activities and learning that is happening in the classroom for families and staff across the CAIU. This newsletter details the tremendous collaboration and support with Central Dauphin East High School. We are grateful to have the opportunity to be part of the school community! Our students and staff did their part this month to support making a difference in the school community. #begreat #changinglives



FALL PARTY DAY

Susquehanna Township Middle School CAMhP class had a Fall Party Day. Students worked very hard to earn the activities! They did glow in the dark pumpkin ring toss, pumpkin stacking, a mummy game, and a few fun word games! They had awesome crafts like candy corn play-doh and pumpkin painting and enjoyed a pizza party along with a fun movie too – a great day!



Loysville YDC Building Skills

Students enrolled in the building trades class at Loysville YDC have been busy producing some very comfortable Adirondack chairs. Under the direction of their teacher, Mr. Keith Strickler, students learned the necessary skills to successfully make Adirondack chairs.

These skills include learning about angles, using a jigsaw, sanders, drills, and reading a tape measure. To help raise money for a charity, some of the chairs will be on sale during CAIU's All-Staff Day in January.

CAIU Lends Expertise for Communication Boards at Community Parks

Declan Fledderjohn, son of Mary Jane Fledderjohn, CAIU Speech and Language Pathologist, has been working this fall on his Eagle Scout project to beautify five parks in Lower Paxton Township. Declan's work is in preparation for the installation of 13 signs containing the playground augmentative or alternative communication (AAC) board. He created these boards with support from various CAIU Preschool Speech and Language Pathologists and input from parents of students in our preschool program.

What is an AAC board? A communication board is a device that displays photos, symbols, or illustrations to help people with limited language skills express themselves. The user can gesture, point to, or blink at images to communicate with others. Communication boards are one type of augmentative or alternative communication (AAC) device.

Several CAIU volunteers also supported Declan's endeavors by painting the accessible Possibility Place playground on Sunday, September 26. The 13 signs were installed on October 23, including this communication board, which was used by an elementary aged little girl nearly immediately after its installation by the scouts! #changinglives

NOVEMBER is National Homeless Youth Awareness Month!

National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) estimates about 1.38 MILLION students experienced homelessness in the 2018-19 school year.

To help spread awareness and show support, **wear red on Friday, November 19**, and use the hashtag **#IWillBeYourVoice**. More information from PA's Education for Homeless Children is available on our website [HERE](#).



October New Hires:

Jaclyn Ford

is a Program Assistant at the Enola office. She worked at the Baltimore Aquarium for 2 years.



Jackie Horst

is a Custodian at the Enola office. She likes the outdoors.



Rachel Millard

is a Part-time ESL Teacher. She found 44 four leaf clovers (and a few five leaf) in 2019.



Erin Minick

is an Educational Consultant at the Enola office. She's a fan of Walt Disney World.



Kristin Pancoast

is a Part-time Head Cook at Hill Top Academy.



Jamie Popp

is a Teacher at Carroll Elementary. She has a pet potbelly pig named Moose.



Trevor Saylor

is an Educational Consultant at the Enola office. He is a Star Wars and Harry Potter fan.



CAIU Compliments is a Capital Area Intermediate Unit initiative that allows CAIU staff the opportunity to share words of thanks, tout successes, or tell a story about what makes us great as an organization; our people. Submit a CAIU Compliment [here](#).

Emily Swanic: #Service Emily started working at the CAIU in June 2019. We have had the pleasure of working with her since then. Each morning she comes to our office and helps us with copying and file work. She is always happy to assist us with any other miscellaneous tasks we ask of her. Emily has become an integral part of our SBAP operation. We could not get our work done as quickly or efficiently as we do

without her help. Thank you for all you do for us Emily! Submitted by Rose Braught, Leslie Barnes, Vania Jaroch, SBAP Team

Connie Derk: #Expertise Connie has been a wealth of knowledge and an invaluable resource as I navigated the first two weeks of my employment with the CAIU at Carroll Elementary School. Connie has spent hours helping me through the many questions that I have had and has always been responsive and willing to provide resources and support. Submitted by Jamie Popp, Autism Support Teacher

opportunities to do good

Log into [Frontline](#) for the complete list of upcoming Professional Development Opportunities.

Upcoming Professional Growth Sessions

[A Historic View of the American Automobile](#)
[CAOLA Advisor Training 2021-2022 \(Ends 6/1/22\)](#)
[CAOLA Teacher Training 2021-2022 \(Ends 6/1/22\)](#)
[CAOLA Admin Training 2021-2022 \(Ends 6/1/22\)](#)
[History Untold: Racism in America- November 30, 2021- December 2, 2021](#)

[Early Intervention Articulation Assessment Tools/ Other Assessment Tools/RRs/Monitor- Dismissal Process](#) - 12/6/21

[CSinPA K-8 Pathway](#) - 12/1/21 - 5/16/22

[Equity Network](#) - 12/7/21

[CAIU Math Network](#) - 12/14/21

[High Impact Strategies Training \(Virtual\)](#) - 12/15/21

[CAIU Reading Network - AM Session](#) - 12/16/21

[CAIU Reading Network - PM Session](#) - 12/16/21

Upcoming Service Projects (For CAIU Staff

[ALL STAFF DAY - Wreaths Across America](#)

12/18/21

CAIU Staff doing service!

No-sew blankets, Kindness ROCKS!, and Possibility Place Playground painting!



CAIU Champions for Children Annual Giving Tree Project

It's that time of year to begin the process of our Annual Giving Tree Event. Each year, we are overwhelmed with the generosity of our CAIU staff. Thank you for supporting the CAIU Giving Tree for more than 25 years!

Click the link below or follow the QR code to learn more about this year's Giving Tree Project.

[2021 CAIU Annual Giving Tree](#)



Questions? Please email Judy Zemanek at jzemanek@caiu.org

Fall fest



All Proceeds benefited: Champions for Children, Imagination Library, and Operation Warm.