

Northland

EARLY EDUCATION CENTER



*Leading the way in
Early Intervention
and Education*

2014 ANNUAL REPORT



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Kansas City, Missouri 64155
816.420.9005

For more
information,
visit our website:
www.nееckids.org



LEADING THE WAY IN EARLY INTERVENTION AND EDUCATION

Mission

Northland Early Education Center (NEEC) provides early education and therapy services for children who have special needs as well as early education for children who have typical needs, in a fully inclusive classroom environment in order for them to reach their full potential.

History

NEEC was founded in 1981 by a group of concerned parents of children with physical and mental disabilities along with parents of children whose household incomes were low to moderate. These parents envisioned an early education center that would serve all children, regardless of their developmental level or socioeconomic status. The school began in a basement of a church north of Excelsior Springs, Missouri with a class of only six children. From then, the school continued to grow and as the need for fully-inclusive early education and therapeutic intervention for children with special needs continued to increase, it became evident that the school was in need of a larger building to ensure that services were available for all children with special needs residing in the Northland. In 1998, with funding from the Clay County Developmental Disabilities Resource Board, NEEC was able to move into a larger building in Kansas City, Missouri that was more spacious and inviting. The new facility provided, and continues to provide, an environment where children's classrooms are separated by age, not developmental level, allowing them to learn not only from their teachers but from one another as well. Since its inception NEEC has grown from a preschool serving six children to a nationally accredited early education center providing early education and therapy services for over 200 children annually.

Before and After School/Summer Program

In order to fulfill a growing need recognized in our community, NEEC provides a before and after school program for children ages six to 14 with special needs. This program, which meets before and after public school and during the summer months, has its own teaching staff that incorporate each child's Individual Education Plan goals into the classroom's daily activities and lesson plans. Knowing that the fully-inclusive environment is the most appropriate for all children, this program is seeking to incorporate typically developing peer models. However, space for this program is limited and children with special needs still remain the number one priority for this continued learning program at NEEC.

Licensing and Accreditation

The Northland Early Education Center is proud to be accredited through both the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Additionally, NEEC is a licensed private agency with the Missouri Department of Health and holds certification through the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. These accreditations, licensures and certifications ensure that NEEC's program standards are among the highest in the nation.

Service Area

NEEC serves children age's birth to five who have special needs and typical needs, as well as children who have special needs ages 6 to 14 predominately in Clay and Platte counties, as well as surrounding counties in the Kansas City Metropolitan area.

Early Education and Therapeutic Intervention Program

NEEC provides early education and therapy services for children who have special needs and early education for children who have typical needs age's birth to five. NEEC also provides a before and after school/summer program for children ages 6 to 14 who have special needs. NEEC's eight early education classrooms are staffed by dedicated childcare professionals, including a lead teacher with a Bachelor's degree in special education, early childhood education or a related field. All lead teachers prepare weekly lesson plans that fully utilize and incorporate the principles of the Project Construct curriculum framework. In a Project Construct classroom, children build their own knowledge, at their own pace and development level, through play and interactions in a well-facilitated educational environment. As a result, children become critical thinkers and creative problem-solvers while developing a love of learning.

Children are screened upon entry into the program and continually assessed each day; milestones are recorded in each child's individual portfolio and discussed at bi-annual parent-teacher conferences. Success for a child, either with special needs or typical needs, in a NEEC classroom is demonstrated by the child's ability to think critically and creatively, problem solve, and cooperate with other children in a learning environment. At NEEC children attain these skills in a fully-inclusive classroom environment, meaning that children are separated by age, not developmental level.

In addition to high quality, fully-inclusive early education, NEEC offers therapy services for children with special needs who qualify. NEEC's therapy department consists of four therapists specializing in physical and occupational therapies, speech and language pathology and special instruction. The therapists work collaboratively in a teaming model to ensure the whole family's needs are being met. Primarily, the NEEC therapy program collaborates with Missouri's First Steps program to determine the appropriate level of therapeutic intervention for children from birth to age three. NEEC therapists also work with families and children through Medicaid, and private pay. Each child that receives therapy services through NEEC has some form of individualized goals and a plan on which the therapy services are based. Predominately this plan takes the form of either an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individualized Education Program (IEP). An IFSP guides the therapy process for children (aged birth – three) with special needs based upon the family needs and goals. An IEP is for children three and older and consists of a written plan developed by a team to help an individual child with educational goals. All therapy service plans at NEEC include a statement of the child's present levels of educational and/or developmental performance, measurable annual goals, and outlines the specific services that will be offered to help the child meet these goals. Success for a child receiving therapy services through NEEC is as individualized as the child.

The families of NEEC have entrusted their most cherished loved ones with the staff and teachers at the Center, their children. In order to ensure that our program is continually improving, NEEC utilizes an Outcomes Measurement format for evaluating annual goals. The Outcomes Measurement serve as a motivating and tracking tool, allowing us to better qualify the impact that our programs have on the children and families we serve. The NEEC Board of Directors, administration, and staff believe that the well-organized, thoughtful, and honest program evaluation the Outcomes Measurement provides is imperative to furthering our mission to provide early education and therapy services for children who have special needs as well as early education for children who have typical needs, in a fully inclusive classroom environment in order for them to reach their full potential.

- NEEC provided a total of 5,926 units (1,482 hours) of physical/occupational therapy, speech/language pathology and special instruction
- 95% of children with special needs receiving services from NEEC made progress on at least 75% of their IFSP/IEP/classroom goals
- 4% of children who have special needs receiving in-home therapy services transitioned to the on-site early education program
- On average, 38% of children enrolled on-site at NEEC were children with special needs
- 59% of children receiving services from NEEC, both in-home and on-site, were children with special needs
- NEEC provided early education and/or therapy services for a total of 195 children in 2014
- 73% of staff had been employed at NEEC for at least one year

2015 Action Plan

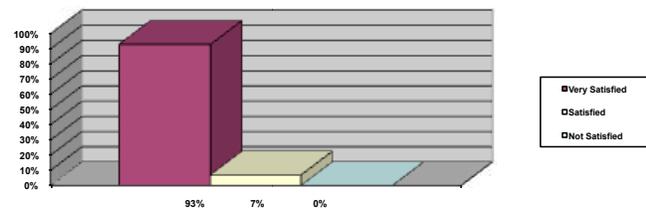
The long-term goal for NEEC is an on-site consistent enrollment of 50 percent children with special needs and 50 percent children who have typical needs. In 2015, NEEC's goal is to continue to work to ensure our on-site enrollment is consistently at least 43 percent children with special needs to 57 percent children who have typical needs. On average in 2014, 38 percent of the children served on-site had special needs.

In order to expand NEEC's 2015 goals, the NEEC Quality Improvement Committee has established the following action items:

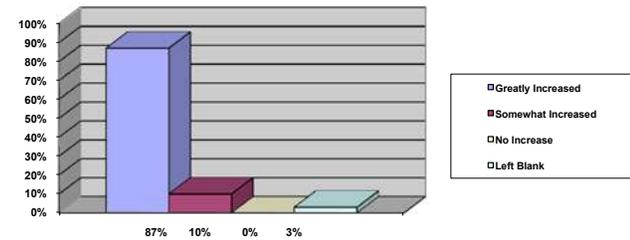
1. The Executive Director, Program Director and Development Director will increase community outreach and awareness through newsletters, presentations, social media outlets, strengthening relationships with area hospitals and advocacy groups, and through special events with the specific purpose of growing a constituency of community members.
2. The Program Director will ensure that several spots on-site are left available for children birth – two years of age with special needs requesting placement at NEEC.
3. The Executive Director and the Development Director will research additional funding opportunities for the scholarship program, making every effort to ensure that all children with special needs seeking placement at the school can find scholarship opportunities.
4. The Executive Director, Program Director, Development Director, and the Board of Directors will continue the action steps needed to potentially expand the program as outlined in the 2015-2017 Strategic Plan.

2014 Family Satisfaction Survey

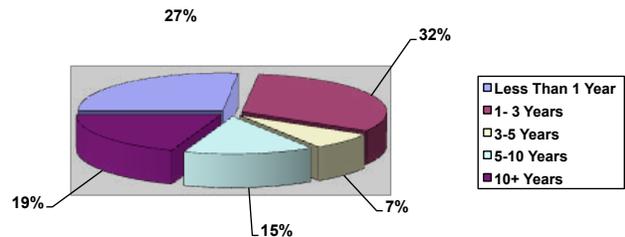
Are you satisfied with the services provided for your child by NEEC?



How would you rate your child's improvements since he/she began attending NEEC?



2014 Staff Retention





2015 Calendar of Events

January 1	NEEC Closed - New Year's Day Observation
February 16	NEEC Closed – President's Day Observation (teacher in-service)
April 12-18	Week of the Young Child™
April 18	Free NEEC Community Carnival
May	Family/Teacher Conferences
May 25	NEEC Closed - Memorial Day Observation
May 30	Pioneer Run at English Landing Park
June	Day of Caring
July 4	NEEC Closed - Independence Day Observation
July 9	Graduation
August	Enrollment
September	Community Helper's Month
September 7	NEEC Closed - Labor Day Observation
September 19	14th Annual Diamond K Ranch Party and Auction
October 12	NEEC Closed - Columbus Day Observation (teacher in-service)
November	Family/Teacher Conferences
November 26	NEEC Closed - Thanksgiving Day Observation
November 27	NEEC Closed - Day after Thanksgiving
December 24	NEEC Closed - Christmas Eve Observation
December 25	NEEC Closed - Christmas Day Observation



*You can access our calendar all year with updated events on our website:
www.nееckids.org*

CURRENT STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Sylvia Burton



"She'll just need a little occupational therapy."

Those words, said by a nurse minutes after our daughter was born in June 2012, were the first real indication we had that all was not well with our sweet Sylvia.

The nurse spoke nonchalantly, showing us how Sylvia's wrists flexed awkwardly to the side. But I saw the grim looks passed between the nurses while none made eye contact with us. We spent the next hour snuggling our new baby girl while I tried to push down the fears that something was really wrong.

Sylvia went to the nursery for her bath while I was transferred from labor and delivery. Later, two nurses from NICU carried her back to us and explained that Sylvia had several markers indicating a genetic anomaly.

Sylvia spent nine days in the NICU. Before she was discharged, her genetic testing came back with no answers, and our adventures in the world of "undiagnosed" began. Shortly after we settled home, the marathon of specialist appointments commenced. To date, Sylvia is being followed by orthopedics, ENT, neurology, audiology, ophthalmology, immunology, genetics, pulmonology, cardiology, developmental pediatrics, gastroenterology, plastic surgery, and the cleft palate clinic.

When she was five weeks old, she had her first surgery, and then began monthly hospitalizations for chronic pneumonia. At seven months old, a g-tube and fundoplication were placed because our tiny, already underweight baby was losing ounces. Developmental milestones were being missed despite early intervention services.

We recognized we needed to move from our home in Springfield, Missouri to the KC Northland area in order to be closer to our families and a children's hospital. In November of 2013, after hearing high praises from multiple sources, we enrolled Sylvia at the Northland Early Education Center.

Our decision to send Sylvia to the NEEC turned out to be one of the best we have made. She receives physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and special instruction from the early intervention therapists at NEEC. A teacher from the Children's Center for the Visually Impaired (CCVI) comes to work with her as well. We cannot sing the praises of Sylvia's therapy team loud enough. She has flourished under their guidance. It is obvious that helping children in development is more than just a job for each of these women. They truly care about our daughter and she absolutely adores them. It is remarkable how seamlessly they work together in their treatment of Sylvia.



We are also continuously impressed by the sense of community at the NEEC. In the mornings when Sylvia arrives, each staff member we see says good morning to her and calls her by name. When she was just beginning to walk on her own, there were teachers cheering her on from every room as she made the long trek down the hall to the yellow room. Sylvia's needs have been varied and plentiful, but they are always met with care and concern.

Sylvia is a spirited and happy girl. Pizza is her favorite food, and she can now use a fork to eat. She no longer needs her feeding tube. Her favorite pastime is looking at picture cards or books. Just recently, she has begun saying a few words and using some signs to communicate. She loves music and singing, especially The Wheels on The Bus. She can walk where she wants to go, and is becoming better at moving her body all the time. She is beginning to enjoy pretend play, so the animal toys at our house are always roaring. What a delight it is to watch her grow and learn!

Sylvia has taught us many lessons. Perhaps the most important is mindfulness. Our lives are not at all what we envisioned when we decided to have a child. What lies in her future is a mystery yet to unfold. There is certainty in the now, though. Right now, we have a beautiful girl who brings us indescribable joy. We treasure every moment with our Sylvia.

Sarah and Matt Burton



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT Kristin Johnston



Kristin Johnston attended the NEEC (called the Lighthouse Preschool back then) when she was one year old. Now at age 22, she attends My Day at Immacolata Manor in Liberty. It was not apparent to us when Kristin was born that she had any sort of health issues or a chromosome abnormality. She was a preemie, just weighing 4 lbs at birth. During her first year it was discovered she had very small ear canals, which caused hearing loss so she was fitted for hearing aids. She also had low muscle tone and was unable to even sit up by herself on her first birthday. It was then that we were sent to see a developmental pediatrician at Children's Mercy. Physical therapy was started and testing to give us an answer to her delays. Nothing "jumped out" as an obvious diagnosis to the doctors and they said they were surprised when her chromosome test revealed that she had an extra number 18 chromosome, which is also called trisomy 18 or Edwards Syndrome. Also her 18 chromosome appears in a mosaic pattern so she is even more unique! We then learned of the Missouri First Steps program and The Lighthouse Preschool and quickly started getting Kristin all the therapy she needed.

We felt very lucky to learn that such a place existed here in the Northland. With physical therapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy, Kristin quickly began to get stronger and learn many things. One of the first things she learned was some simple sign language. Her granddad built her some handrails to support her so she could learn to walk. Those hand rails have been used by several families in their homes and now have been donated to NEEC so more children can use them if needed.

When Kristin turned 3 she started attending preschool in Pleasant Valley in the morning and rode a school bus back to the NEEC for the afternoon. When she reached school age she attended Fox Hill, Antioch and graduated from NKC High School when she turned 21. During her school years she participated in Special Olympics swimming and bowling. She has always loved swimming and music.

Kristin's low muscle tone caused her to develop scoliosis and kyphosis. At age 16 she underwent a major back surgery to correct the curves in her spine. It was quite an ordeal for her, as she had to spend six weeks in the hospital, five weeks in a halo screwed into her skull connected to traction and then a 12-hour surgery to place rods and screws in her spine. It was worth all the pain because she gained three inches once her spine was straight and now all of her internal organs aren't compromised.

Kristin has always had a pleasant demeanor with sense of humor. She is known for her stylish sunglasses and her many bracelets that she wears every day. At the My Day program she enjoys choir every morning and gets to volunteer in the community such as delivering meals on wheels, making cookies at the NKC Hospice House, and helping at a thrift store. There are lots of activities and fun at My Day and we feel very lucky to have found such a wonderful place. Kristin also loves attending her church class at St. Charles Borromeo Parish along with her older sister, Jenny, who is a catechist for the class.



There are so many people who have helped Kristin throughout her life but the early intervention that NEEC provided was critical in the successes she continues to achieve today.

Marty and Tim Johnston

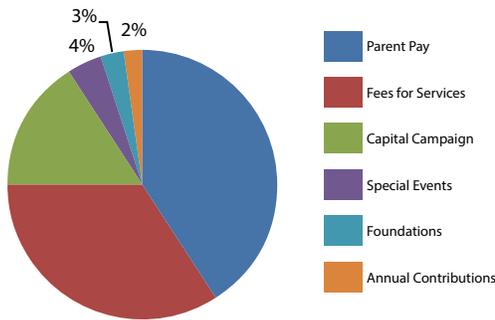
2014 SUPPORTERS

•THANKYOU•THANKYOU•THANKYOU•THANKYOU•



As a 501(c)3 not for profit organization, NEEC must rely on the generosity of community members, foundations and corporations for nearly 20 percent of its annual budget. Forty percent of NEEC's operating income is derived from parent paid tuition and the other

2014 Revenue



40 percent comes from fees for services through contracts it has with the Missouri First Steps program, Clay County Developmental Disabilities Resource Board, Platte County Board of Services and other local and state governmental entities. Each year NEEC strives to diversify its funding pool and form relationships with new community members and donors. Our goal is not necessarily to receive funding from every new person we meet; we simply want to convey the message of how important quality, fully-inclusive early education and intervention services are for all young children. The Board of Directors, children, families and staff of NEEC would like to thank the following corporations, foundations and individuals, as well as the businesses and individuals who provided items or services for, and attended our annual Pioneer Run and 13th annual Diamond K Ranch Party and Auction. We are grateful for their benevolent support in 2014. Thanks to the charitable spirit of our donors, NEEC is able to further our vision of shaping the future of children through quality early education and therapeutic intervention while teaching compassion for diversity.

Foundations, Corporations, Service Groups & Individuals

\$15,000 - \$25,000

Kenneth & Roswitha Schaffer

\$14,999 - \$10,000

Irven E. and NeVada P. Linscomb Foundation

\$9,999 - \$5,000

Nordstrom, Inc.
PNC Foundation
The Harvest Ball Society

\$4,999 - \$1,000

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C&C Group
Harry Arnote Charitable Foundation
The Arc of Clay & Platte Counties, Inc.
Cobalt Astra Group
Mark & Lorry Kelly
Patricia Hopkins Foundation
Jeff & Michelle Marriott

\$999 - \$500

Soroptimist International of Liberty Missouri
David & Mary Sallee
Kansas City Southern
Lou Rockford's Catering
Dobbe & Mary Alice Dobberstine
Deloitte, Inc.
Craig & Mickie Kuckelman

\$499 - \$100

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Walmart Foundation
Kent & Kathy Froman
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9Round Fitness & Kickboxing in Kearney
9Round Fitness & Kickboxing in Liberty
Abuelos
Al's Bar and Grill
Andy Williams Moon River Theatre
Antioch Printing
Baldknobbers Jamboree Music Show
Barry Pointe Family Care
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BRGR Kitchen+Bar
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Carolyn's Country Cousins Pumpkin Patch
Casey's General Store
Christian Brothers Automotive
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Cosentino's Price Chopper in Liberty
Coterie Theatre
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Crown Center
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Hair Lines
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Hooters
Hotel Grand Victorian
Houlihans
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InterContinental Kansas City at the Plaza
Jill A. Bartlett
Joe's Crab Shack
Jos. A. Bank
Kansas City Repertory Theatre
Kansas City Surgical Arts
Kansas City Theater League
Kansas City Transportation Group, KC Gangster Tour
Kansas City Zoo
Kona Grill
L & L Distributing
La Tienda Chiquita
Lowe's
Mary Kay Basket
Massage Envy Spa
Maysy's Nail & Spa
McKeever's Price Chopper
Meierotto's Midwest Jewelry
Minsky's Pizza
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Morning Day
Mofley Cakes
Nate & Andrea McKown
National WWI Museum at Liberty Memorial
NEEC Board of Directors
NEEC's Blue Room
NEEC's Brown Room
NEEC's Gold Room
NEEC's Green Room
NEEC's Orange Room
NEEC's Pink Room
NEEC's Purple Room
NEEC's Red Room
NEEC's Yellow Room
Nick & Jake's
Nigro Law Firm, Elizabeth Hurley, Attorney at Law
Olive Garden
Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo
Panera Bread
Paradise Park
Parkville Coffeehouse
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Quotations - A Fashion Statement

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Red X
Rio Salon & Spa
Rock and Run Brewery
Room 39
Royals
Salt & Light Photography
Sam's Club
Sarah-Anne Photography
Seasons 52
Serenity on the Square in Liberty
Shoal Creek Dental Care
Shoal Creek Golf Club
Shutterfly Package
Silver Dollar City
Six Flags
Skin Tech Day Spa
Sorella's
Sports Authority
Starbucks
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Stone Canyon
Target
Terri Tegtmeyer
The Beer Kitchen
The Home Depot
The Kick Theater
The Lewis Family
The McCoy's Public House
The Midland by AMC
The Running Well Store
The Track Family Fun Parks
Tiffany Greens Golf Club
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Tom & Shelly Gifford
Union Station - Kansas City
Veterinary Center of Liberty
Welcome Mat Training Center
Whiteside Jewelry
Wicklund CarStar
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XO Nail
Zona Rosa

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Butler Family
Craig & Heather Roeder Family Fund
Echo Fund
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Hall Family Foundation
Jeff & Brea Connett
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