

advantage

for Speech-Language Pathologists & Audiologists

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Nation

eric autism from across the country. The network uses technology that provides real-time videoconferencing and allows individuals outside the school to view high-quality video from St. Mary's.

"When we can consult with experts during the training process rather than after the fact, we provide the best possible care for our residents," said Coor. "The network allows our staff to spend more time learning from leaders in the fields of autism research and training."

St. Mary's Residential Training School is home to 186 children and young adults with developmental disabilities and autism. The private, nonprofit residential center is located on a 55-acre campus that features three dorms, eight group homes, a school, a clinic and a gym.

MICHIGAN

Autism Camp Focuses on Arts

MOUNT PLEASANT—Children with Asperger syndrome and similar autism disorders gathered for lessons in the arts during a new two-week camp at Central Michigan University (CMU) that ended June 22. Max's Place for Social and Emotional Growth engaged children ages 7-13 in hands-on activities in visual arts, creative writing and music.

The 15 children who took part in the camp had a strong command of language and were able to function in the public domain. Instructors at the week-day camp were faculty members, students and alumni from several CMU academic programs, including the art department, music school, and counseling and special education department.

The camp was founded in cooperation with VSA Arts of Michigan, which promotes arts, education and creative expression in children and adults with disabilities to strengthen their spirit and improve their quality of life.

The camp also served as an observational learning laboratory for CMU students pursuing careers in special education



PEODY BRIDGEMAN PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING

and music education. In addition, Max's Place is the focus of research conducted by Patricia Kopetz, EdD, a professor of counseling and special education at CMU.

"Via questionnaires, the parents, counselors and campers, we are assessing campers' acceptance and enjoyment of camp activities, as well as socialization opportunities, which are hugely significant for individuals with autism and Asperger syndrome," Dr. Kopetz said.

The data collection will enable camp personnel to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the pilot program and plan for future summer camp programs, she said. "Such research enables faculty researchers to compare the perceptions of the camp offered by parents, counselors and campers to the findings reported in published literature focused on camps for individuals with autism and Asperger syndrome."

MISSOURI

Protecting Brains of Premies

ST. LOUIS—A study of how the brain of a premature infant responds to injury found vulnerabilities similar to those in the mature brain, but researchers at Washington University School of Medicine identified at least one significant difference, suggesting that different treatments are needed to prevent brain injury in premies (*Journal of Neuroscience*, April 11, 2007).

The scientists showed for the first time that parts of the developing brain are vulnerable to damage from glutamate, a nervous system messenger compound. While glutamate already is well known for its links to injury in the mature brain, the study found damage in the developing brain that could not be linked to it.

More than 2 percent of babies are born before the completion of their eighth month of gestation, and up to half of these infants suffer brain injury.

Unlike adults, premature infants receive the most damage in the white matter, the portions of the brain that connect different brain regions.

"These injuries can lead to behavioral problems, developmental delay, cognitive impairment or cerebral palsy," said senior author Mark



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