

Bridging the Gaps



Frankie's: A world where kids can be kids

Student Interns:

Sprikena Nako, Drexel University College of Medicine

Alex Potinteu, Drexel University College of Nursing and Health Professions, Creative Arts in Therapy

Lauren Wells, Drexel University College of Medicine

Academic Preceptor: Dr. Kelley White, MD, Frankie's World

Community Preceptor: Conny Lockwood, Frankie's World

COMMUNITY PARTNER

Frankie's World

Frankie's World is a non-profit medical daycare and preschool for children with special and medical needs in Philadelphia. At Frankie's, a staff of skilled nurses and teachers provides comprehensive care and early-childhood education to encourage physical, social, and educational development. As a safe, accepting place for children from all walks of life, Frankie's serves its community as a place to play, learn, and grow together. More information on Frankie's World can be found at <https://www.frankiesworld.com/>

CONTEXT

While children in this community are fortunate that Frankie's exists, the case is not the same for children with similar needs outside of Philadelphia. Places with the same setting and goals are not common. Care is not accessible. We hope that the future can speak to these needs and ameliorate the challenges that disabled children and their families face.



OUR EXPERIENCE

The Bridging the Gaps student intern group assisted Frankie's World in planning and leading a summer camp for current Frankie's members and graduated students. Further, we aided in lesson planning and execution, craft time, and play with students aged 0-12. Recreational and therapeutic dance was also incorporated to inspire movement and strength for all ages. From 1:1 attention to group activities, we shared fun, kid-friendly techniques to promote comprehensive physical and mental wellness within the Frankie's World community.

JOYS ACCOMPLISHMENTS CHALLENGES

- Seeing kids progress from day one to the end of summer
- Reading books to/with the kids; making animal sounds!
- Magicians, drummers, and the science center!
- Building relationships with staff and kids



- Seeing health inequities up close and personal
- Short staffing, insurance inconsistencies
- What happens when they leave Frankie's? The world is much less kind and accessible

REFLECTION

"Frankie's is a place to connect with children of all abilities and backgrounds. We see them for all their talents and strengths across a wide, unique range of medical needs." In learning about accessibility in healthcare, Sprikena Nako states she's gained new skills to incorporate into her practice as a future physician and will hopefully serve patients just like the kids at Frankie's. She notes that people with different abilities are often hidden by society, but places like Frankie's World make them feel seen, heard, and loved.

As medical students, she and Lauren Wells agree that resources providing care for this particular community are often limited. ***"The support and welcoming arms that Frankie's shows to every child, no matter what they need, plays such an integral role in the lives of so many Philadelphia families"*** writes Lauren.

From a perspective of wellness through movement, Alex Potinteu says that ***"the kids' excitement and creativity through dancing really brought them together. Even on a hard day, moving our bodies and finding energy together brought a light to our summer at Frankie's."*** With goals of working with kids just like those at Frankie's World, Alex was able to apply strategies from her degree program to prepare for a career in serving others.