

# Bridging the Gaps



## Frankie's World Summer Day Camp

### Student Interns:

Reilly Callahan, Drexel University College of Medicine;  
Mark Cameron, Drexel University College of Medicine;  
Irene Schaible, Drexel University College of Medicine

**Academic Preceptor:** Kelley White, MD, Frankie's World  
**Community Preceptor:** Conny Lockwood, Frankie's World

### COMMUNITY PARTNER



Frankie's World is a nonprofit medical day care and preschool for children with special and medical needs in the Philadelphia area. At Frankie's World, 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 World serves its community as a place to play, learn, and grow together. At Frankie's World, everyone has a friend. (<https://www.frankiesworld.com/>)

### BACKGROUND

Millions of people in the United States live in a childcare desert. This disparity is exacerbated for families of children with medical needs as comprehensive childcare options are even less abundant. Daycare and summer camp locations with similar educational, social, and medical goals as Frankie's World are rare and treasured, leading some children to commute over an hour each day to North Philly. While access to such options remains a societal issue, Frankie's World is making a large splash in the realm of comprehensive medical day care.

### TEAM'S EXPERIENCE

The Bridging the Gaps student interns assisted Frankie's World in planning, organizing, and leading a summer camp. Daily the students planned and led educational lessons, craft activities and group games for children aged five to ten. These activities promoted gross and fine motor skills and social and emotional development. Using fun, kid-friendly techniques, the students fostered physical and mental wellness within the camp. They also created a resource guide full of additional activities and lessons for the staff to utilize in the remaining month of summer camp after the BTG program's conclusion.

### CHALLENGES & JOYS

- Modifying activities and games to meet the needs of children with different levels of ability, interest, and energy
- Working with the kids to learn new skills and/or increase their confidence in executing tasks independently
- Building relationships with the children and staff

### REFLECTION

Frankie's World seamlessly integrates all aspects of care for children. Care here goes beyond merely providing healthcare, as it merges educational, physical, and emotional learning for patients. The staff intentionally bridge gaps between the patients' healthcare providers and their families. At Frankie's World, every child has opportunities to simply be a kid as they learn, play, and socialize. Regardless of any physical challenges, such as visual impairment or medical needs like feeding tubes or blood sugar monitoring, every child is welcomed, and the skilled staff ensures their needs are met. The children at Frankie's World offer a unique glimpse into their world, expressing themselves with remarkable honesty and authenticity. They openly share their experiences, challenges, and interactions with the world, using their own forms of communication. Spending time with these children has been a rewarding experience, providing valuable insights into their perspective and the holistic care provided by the staff. The impact of Frankie's World on the physical and mental well-being of these children, as well as their families, is profound, and the students are grateful for the time they were able to spend here.



*BTG students (L to R: Irene Schaible, Reilly Callahan, Mark Cameron) standing in front of a bulletin board that reads "Summer Camp" and is decorated with a rainbow, a pot of gold, handprints of the campers, and a collection of crafts made throughout the summer.*