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A few words from Executive Director, Kathi Wells, MD

There was much to celebrate at the Kempe Center during State Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023) as this was a time of expanding our reach, achieving multiple significant accomplishments, finalizing our organizational structure for our work moving forward and moving into our “next 50 years” as a Center. We remain committed to our vision of a world without abuse. At our core, led by Director of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI), Assistant Professor Michelle Davis, is a commitment to ensuring the integration of JEDI are in all areas of our work by way of discovery, leadership, action, accountability, evaluation, and transformation.

By hiring Dr. Gwyn Barley as the Director of Educational Innovation and Advancement (training and education), the leadership team is now fully in place for our five Core areas: clinical services, research, education/training, advocacy, and JEDI. We believe this makes us unique in the field and that the synergy from these Core areas working together can be transformational to the field.

There were too many accomplishments by our faculty and staff to list, so I’ll highlight a few. This past year our research team, led by Director of Transformative Research, Dr. Sue Kerns, hosted the first annual IGNITE event, which highlights research produced at the Center in short presentations that are available in-person as well as broadcast over the internet. Our Kempe Center colleagues published 31 peer reviewed articles in this timeframe among numerous other publications and research presentations! Dr. Sue Kerns took a leadership role in the development of the first ever I-CEPS (International Conference on Evidence-based Parenting) conference and our One-Kempe partner, the Kempe Foundation provided generous sponsorship for the event.

Our Annual Call-to-Action to Change Child Welfare virtual conference, held in October each year, was the most successful yet. Led by Associate Professor Lisa Merkel-Holguin, the conference had 2,200 attendees from 20+ countries and featured 527 presenters from 5 major countries. The conference continues to focus on ways to improve responses to child abuse and neglect and reform systems that serve children and their families.

The contract for the Child Welfare Training System (CWTS), a program led by Dr. Ida Drury and Krystal Grint, was awarded to the Center for the next five years, allowing us to continue to provide training to Colorado’s child welfare workforce. During this past year CWTS provided over 128,000 learner hours to the workforce, training thousands of workers and supervisors.

Our experts oversee numerous evidence-based programs as intermediaries and implementors: Fostering Healthy Futures, MST, PCIT, and SafeCare™. Our Trauma-Response Implementation and Practice program (TRIP), led by Drs. Evelin Gomez and Angelé Fauchier, reached new communities and our clinical team, which is second to none, led by Director of Integrated Healthcare, Dr. Antonia Chiesa, served hundreds of children and provided hundreds of consultations on complex cases. The KICS clinic (Kids In Care Settings), a medical home for children in foster care, began serving children after being skillfully planned by Dr. Bird Gilmartin. The CARE Network, a network of medical and behavioral health providers trained in child abuse and neglect, trained enough new providers to almost double the number of providers. Our complex case consultation service was renamed KIDS (Kempe Inter-Disciplinary Staffing) and, for the first time, incorporated parental voice and was reconstructed to include JEDI principals. Led by Director of Advocacy, Professor Warren Binford, we continued with our traditional advocacy work while also installing the first mural on the CU Anschutz campus in May 2023 and producing and co-sponsoring an art exhibit in the Fulginiti Pavilion, which opened in June 2023.

The annual Kempe Center retreat was expertly planned by Center colleagues, focused on many strategic plan areas, and was very well received by those in attendance. With input from our colleagues, we developed a new and “living” strategic plan that will allow the Center to expand our reach, help our faculty and staff work to the scope of their expertise, create a safe and supportive culture, and have a clear organizational identity known by Center colleagues and our partner agencies.

Together we will prevent child abuse and neglect whenever possible, and effectively treat the children and families impacted by child abuse and neglect.

“We embrace the challenging work that lies ahead and look forward to partnering with people with lived experience and the many organizations with which we work.” -Kathi Wells, MD
ABOUT US

Founded in 1972 by C. Henry Kempe, MD, the Kempe Center was the first of its kind, providing research, training, education, and innovative program development to prevent and treat all forms of child abuse, neglect, and trauma.

In 2022, we celebrated our 50th anniversary. Our work is prominent in advocating for children and youth’s rights, their health and well-being by strengthening families and supporting the diverse communities that serve them. In addition, we provide research, training, education, and innovative program development to prevent and treat all forms of child abuse, neglect, and trauma. Watch the video on the journey to our 50th anniversary on our YouTube channel here.

The Center continues to be one of the longest-running academic centers in the country devoted to child abuse prevention and treatment. We lead in the field of providing evidence-informed services, transformative research, effective advocacy, learner centered education and clinical services. For a description of Kempe’s work and programs, visit our website at www.kempecenter.org to learn more about our Impact Areas.

OUR MISSION

We address child maltreatment by improving the well-being of children and families, strengthening their communities, and enhancing the systems serving them through evidence-informed services, transformative research, learner-centered education, and effective advocacy, all through an equity lens.

KEMPE IMPACT AREAS

- CLINICAL SERVICES
- EVIDENCE BASED AND RESEARCH INFORMED APPROACHES
- TRANSFORMATIVE RESEARCH
- ADVOCACY (PEDIATRIC LAW, ETHICS & POLICY)
- JEDI (JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION)
- WORKFORCE TRAINING & INNOVATION
- CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITIES
ONE TEAM: ONE VISION

Over 70 Kempe faculty and staff are dedicated to ensuring children, youth and families have the opportunity to develop and grow in a healthy, safe and nurturing environment. We promote children's health and their safety, and advocate for their needs and rights by developing programs and trainings that support families and the communities that serve them.

Our work includes integrated health care, expert consultation, professional training, institutional education, transformative research, and pediatric law, policy, and ethics, all combined within a framework of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. The integration of these disciplines connects child-and-family-serving professionals with information and best practices to translate knowledge into action. Meet our team of experts and professionals at our new website www.kempecenter.org. The Kempe Center wishes to thank our Communications and Marketing Coordinator, Lasy Phanthalangsy-Johnson for all her persevering work to bring the new website to life.

Our leadership in advocacy, research, education, and clinical work drives innovative strategies that transform the field. We are a catalyst, connecting people, information, and best practices to translate knowledge into action.
CORE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Our multi-disciplinary team combines our expertise in medicine, social work, law, psychology, sociology and education to deliver comprehensive, high quality services and partner with communities to meet their needs. Meet Kempe’s Core leadership team who are dedicated to honoring and recognizing the Kempe vision.

Kathi Wells, MD  
Executive Director

Ron Mitchell, MSW  
Deputy Director

Antonia Chiesa, MD  
Director of Integrated Healthcare Services

Michelle Davis, MS, LPC  
Director of Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Suzanne Kerns, PhD  
Director of Transformative Research

Warren Binford, JD, EdM  
Advocacy Director and W.H. Lea for Justice Endowed Chair for Pediatric Law, Policy & Ethics

Gwyn E. Barley, PhD  
Director of Educational Innovation and Advancement

Rob Murchison, MEPM  
Business Service Manager

Maya Landau Bajayo  
Outreach Coordinator
HONORS, AWARDS & PROMOTIONS

Kathi Wells, MD
- Children’s Trust Fund Alliance Ray E. Helfer Award

Antonia Chiesa, MD
- 2022 Outstanding CME (Continuing Medical Education) Collaboration Activity Award CARE Network
- Honoree for the Kempe Foundation Professional Award

Warren Binford, JD, EdM
- Top 50 Women Leaders in Oregon Awardee
- Gary B. Melton Award, Global Alliance Behavioral Health & Social Justice
- Awarded Tenure
- HERS Higher Education Leadership Institute Graduate (2023)

Denise Abdoo, PhD, CPNP, MSN
- Inaugural recipient of University of Colorado SOM Clinician Award

Suzanne Kerns, PhD
- Appointed to Professor of Pediatrics

Heather Allan, MSW
- Promoted to Assistant Professor of Pediatrics

Kendall Marlowe, MA, JD
- Promoted to Assistant Professor of Pediatrics
The Clinical Services team provides comprehensive medical evaluations in our weekly outpatient clinic and through inpatient and emergency department consultations at Children's Hospital Colorado. Our department’s physicians are among the first in the country, and among the only ones in Colorado, to be board certified in the field of Child Abuse Pediatrics by the American Board of Pediatrics. Family and child evaluation for suspected maltreatment includes family support and education about the behavioral and emotional impact of child maltreatment. Best practice care and treatment is offered in the most sensitive and family centered manner.

TRANSFORMATIVE RESEARCH

Kempe integrates an innovative and active applied research program that contributes to the improvement of services for children and families affected by child maltreatment in Colorado, nationally, and around the globe. Over the years, many publications have been contributed to by individuals associated with Dr. Kempe and the Center he founded on the etiology, diagnosis, evaluation, treatment, management and prevention of physical and sexual child abuse and child neglect.

Publications including 31 journal articles

Kempe Colleagues made 57 presentations at international conferences, for research, and some at our A Call-to-Action Conference.
IMPACT SNAPSHOT

Non-Profit Boards: 10
External Workgroups & Committees: 96
Volunteer Services: 27
The Kempe Center has a long history of leadership in the field of child maltreatment through the multidisciplinary education of students and professionals working with survivors of child abuse. We contribute to the academic educational mission by teaching and training students, graduates and post-graduates of all levels and across various disciplines at CU Anschutz Medical campus and in partnership with our affiliated teaching hospitals. Our community-based education is broad in scope and reaches thousands of professionals annually across the Rocky Mountain Region and at both national and international conferences.

Since 2018, the Center has hosted an annual Kempe Interdisciplinary Research Institute. The team has increased participation from across the country and expanded the pool of scholars trained to conduct child maltreatment research, increasing knowledge and the evidence base. In August 2022, two one-week, in-person intensive courses were offered that featured in-depth teaching and dedicated mentoring by national and international experts. The goal was to support the 40 students that attended to draft a complete research proposal suitable for completion as a scholarly project for child abuse fellows, early faculty, or as a master’s or doctoral thesis.
As a university center, we contribute to the academic educational mission by teaching and learning alongside learners and professionals of all levels and across many disciplines in partnership with communities, state and local agencies, and health care institutions.

The Colorado Department of Human Services selected the Kempe Center to serve as the central management organization for Colorado’s Child Welfare Training System (CWTS). CWTS has demonstrated success working toward its mission to meet the learning and professional development needs of Colorado’s caseworkers, supervisors, case aides, resource caregivers, and other child-and-family-serving professionals. Through an array of dynamic learning experiences, coaching, resource sharing, and community building, CWTS is supporting a diverse and ever-changing workforce.

Our educational endeavors are broad in scope and reach thousands of professionals and local leaders across Colorado and the country and at national and international meetings. Continuing education and life-long learning for medical and nursing students, child welfare caseworkers, law enforcement, legal professions, etc. are a core of our work.

For a list of programs that highlight our Workforce Education and Innovation, visit www.kempecenter.org.

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GLOBAL IMPACT

**RADIO KEMPE** was launched in 2021 to connect people with the information they need to tackle current issues. We feature renowned experts and individuals with lived experience into the space to talk about challenging topics. They help us test assumptions that disrupt traditional ways of thinking. Come curious, tune in and join us on the journey to prevent child abuse and neglect every month of the year!

Listen to our 50th anniversary podcast with guest speakers, Kathi Wells, MD, Donald Ross, PhD, JD, Richard Krugman, MD, Allison Kempe, MD and Annie Kempe [here](radiokempe.buzzsprout.com).

In October 2022, the Kempe Center hosted the Third Annual International Virtual Conference: A Call-to-Action to Change Child Welfare. There were 2,200 change makers, which included 527 presenters from 20+ countries, that attended this groundbreaking event to address issues of justice, social inequality, race equity, family leadership, and oppression in the child welfare and allied systems. Participants discussed, learned, debated, and proposed solutions that individual and community changemakers can implement to fundamentally alter child welfare.

A nimble, strategic planning team of Kempe faculty and staff organized the highly ambitious conference agenda: 230 sessions over four days that spanned 16 hours each day, creating the opportunity for international dialogue, solution-building and widespread access. The conference emphasized that children, family, and community must be the driving force in changing child welfare systems.

The Kempe Center looks forward to reconvening and intends to hold this conference annually, typically in early October, growing this international community and inspiring real change in 2023 and beyond. Learn more about the conference at [www.kempeconference.org](http://www.kempeconference.org).

**2,100+ PODCAST DOWNLOADS ON RADIO KEMPE**
The Kempe Center Impact Report

The Center partners with multiple communities in numerous ways including convenings, conferences, site visits, and consultations. Our focus is to also support diverse communities and those that belong to marginalized groups. We collaborate with biological families, family-serving agencies, and governmental entities such as child welfare professionals, healthcare providers, mental health administrators, caregivers, foster families, legal professionals, law enforcement, those with lived experience, medical students, and more.

We work collectively to strengthen our individual capacity so that we can in turn support our service partners and the communities they serve. Our team strives to promote justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) across all levels of the organization. We endeavor to co-create a world where every child and family thrives.

ALL STATES ARE REACHED

COUNTRIES WITH CENTER WORK

- Canada
- Estonia
- Israel
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Territory of the U.S. Puerto Rico
- United States
KEMPE CENTER IGNITE

To launch the Kempe Center into another 50 years of innovation and dedicated service, a Special Issue dedicated to the research activities of the Kempe Center was published in the International Journal of Child Maltreatment: Research, Policy, and Practice. Associated with the completion of the special issue, the Kempe Center and Kempe Foundation hosted an Ignite Presentation event in January 2023. Participants learned about the innovative research conducted by Kempe faculty who discussed the most important aspects of their work and how Kempe aims to support children, youth, and families through rigorous and transformative research. Watch the Ignite Presentation on our YouTube channel here.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and Kempe colleagues wore blue to show their support! Throughout the month, we shared photos, videos and stories of how our dedicated colleagues were raising awareness. On April 3, 2023, we partnered with the Kempe Foundation and joined Illuminate Colorado to raise awareness for Child Abuse Prevention Month at the Colorado State Capitol for the Pinwheels at the Chamber event. Kempe was honored to be a part of the Child Abuse Prevention Month rally on the west steps of the capitol.

Many inspiring stories from individuals and organizations were shared as they highlighted the importance of supporting the well-being of children and families. Learn more about National Child Abuse Prevention Month at Child Welfare Information Gateway at www.childwelfare.gov.
On May 7-8, 2023, the 4th Annual CARE Network Conference was held at the The Hythe Hotel in Vail, Colorado. Our goal was to provide a central location that was convenient for the majority of our providers, most of whom do not live in the Front Range, metro-Denver area. Providers from the Southwest part of the state, such as Montrose County, traveled the furthest making the five hour drive to join the group. There were 30 returning providers who attended the one-day portion for returning providers, and 29 new providers attended the two-day training portion. The conference helps build professional networking and relationships among providers.

Learn more about the CARE Network www.kempecarenetwork.org.

The vibrant mural represents the first exterior mural at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus and enhances the west side of the Fulginiti Pavilion. Juls Mendoza, a local artist designed the mural, symbolizing the plight of every migrant child. “This kid is on his way to a new and unknown destination, flying over dahlias, which represent change and strength on this new journey,” says Mendoza. On June 12, 2023, the Center for Bioethics and Humanities hosted an opening night discussion with international children’s rights scholar, lawyer, and advocate Warren Binford, JD, Ed.M, AHEC Mural Program Manager, Frank Garza, artist Juls Mendoza, and curator Sara Fischer. The Center for Bioethics and Humanities and the Kempe Center will co-host an all-day symposium in Fall 2023 titled “Testimony,” which looks to amplify the voices and stories of children in migration through a variety of art installations and gatherings.
In 2023, Fostering Healthy Futures (FHF), developed by Heather Taussig, PhD, celebrated their 20th anniversary and the positive impact that FHF has had on the lives of hundreds of young people through its innovative and contextually sensitive mentoring and skills training programs. FHF is a positive youth development program, supporting young people in exploring their interests, goals, and visions for the future. The program’s impact has been independently and favorably reviewed by several registries of evidence-based programs and Kempe is now implementing the program more widely through community-based organizations. The first group of Fostering Healthy Futures graduates received their diplomas and medals at the Kempe Center (in the Marion building) almost exactly 2 decades ago – in June of 2003. Visit www.fosteringhealthyfutures.org to learn more about FHF.
Our work in preventing child maltreatment, and offering diagnosis, treatment and support to children, youth, families, and the communities that serve them remains a priority. In addition to helping those at risk for, or affected by, child abuse and neglect, we provide opportunities for medical and nursing students, pediatric residents, fellows, and other University of Colorado students to conduct research and acquire the skills necessary to diagnose, treat and prevent child abuse and neglect.

For the next 50 years, we will continue our progress in advancing the health and well-being of children and families through the ongoing provision of comprehensive expert medical care, ground-breaking research, attention to inequities, timely advocacy, effective clinical work, the education of healthcare providers and social workers through community engagement, and child welfare policy initiatives. Spearheaded by Associate Professor Lisa Merkel-Holguin, we look forward to expanding the international community of changemakers and continue to host Kempe’s Call-to-Action Conference annually, in early October, to discuss and create stimulating ways to transform child welfare.

Today, we honor our legacy while looking ahead for ways to transform our field by uplifting positive experiences and sharing stories that inspire us to do better. “The Center serves to remind us of our responsibilities to protect the vulnerable – our children – as well as their needs and rights here in Colorado and everywhere,” Annie Kempe. Learn more about the Kempe Center at www.kempecenter.org.

At our 51-year mark, the Center’s vision remains aligned with C. Henry Kempe’s overarching passion: “Our children’s future and the world’s future are one.”
Peer Review Journals


Warren Binford & Michael Garcia Bochenek (co-editors), Laws Special Issue on Protecting the Rights of Children in Migration (January 2023).
Peer Review Journals
- Wells, K. Commentary on Kempe, the Next 50 Years. Int. Journal on Child Malt. 6, 347-351. https://doi.org/10.1007/s42448-023-00162-z

Final Report to Funder
- Hollinshead, D. & Barbee, A. (2023). Virginia Department of Social Services Case Supportive Technology Project Short Term Outcomes Summary

Amicus Brief

Select Presentations
- Child Welfare: Does it help or harm? Western Pediatric Trauma Conference, Sonoma, CA (Chiesa)
- Children’s Mercy Hospital – Kansas City, MO. Department of Pediatrics Grand Rounds – Modernizing the Medical Approach to Child Abuse. (Lindberg)
Select Presentations

- EPID 6637 the Injury and Violence Epidemiology and Prevention. Guest Lecture “Family Violence”. (Lindberg)
- Hollinshead & Orsi (2023). Associations among CPS caseworker characteristics, agency culture and proclivity to leave. Presentation at the 38th Annual San Diego International Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment, San Diego, CA
- Kaferly J, Mathieu S, Hosokawa P, Sevick C, Alishahi M, Gritz, RM. (November 6, 2022), "Health Care Utilization and Costs Among a Statewide Cohort of Young Adults by Foster Care Emancipation Status" [Oral Presentation], American Public Health Association 2022 Annual Meeting, Boston, MA.
- McCarthy, L.P. (2023, January). "We wanted to get her help": Caregiver perceptions of decision-making when accessing residential treatment. Presented at the meeting of the Society for Social Work Research, Phoenix AZ
Select Presentations


- **Merkel-Holguin, M., Clewis, W., Lammie, K., & Allan, H.** (2022, October 6). Community Response: Meeting the Basic Needs of Families [Virtual conference session]. A Call to Action to Change Child Welfare Conference, Aurora, CO.


- Panelist, Discussion on Art as Advocacy exhibit and Fly to Heal mural, Center for Bioethics and the Humanities, CU Anschutz, Aurora, Colorado (June 12, 2023). *(Binford)*


- **Taussig, H.N.** (2023). Fostering Healthy Futures through an Evidence-Based Positive Youth Development Program. The 38th Annual San Diego International Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment. San Diego, CA.

- **Taussig, H.N.** (2023). Guest on Karen Albright’s Beyond the Jargon podcast, supported by the National Foundation to End Child Abuse and Neglect.

- **Taussig, H.N.** (2023). Twenty Years of Fostering Healthy Futures for Youth. Kempe’s 50th Ignite Event. Denver, CO.


- Chair, Unaccompanied Migrant Children in US Government Custody, 2014-2021, Law & Society Annual Meeting, San Juan, Puerto Rico (June 1, 2023). *(Binford)*

Select Presentations

- **Warren Binford.** Panelist, Is Personalized Medicine Part of the Problem or the Solution to Healthcare Access and Equity? Charting a Course for Genomics to Lead the Way, ACMG Annual Clinical Genetics Meeting, Salt Lake City, Utah (March 17, 2023).
- **Wells, K.** Words of Inspiration. Invited Guest Speaker at the Great Falls Public Schools Excellence in Education, Great Falls, MT
- **Wells, K.** Building Healthier Children, Families, and Communities: Perspectives from a Pediatrician. Invited Speaker at the Children’s Trist Fund Alliance Annual Meeting, Denver, CO
- Wells, K & Woodard, J. Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act: Update and Overview. Presentation at the Illinois Quality Care Council (ILPQC) MNO-Neonatal Sustainability Group, Virtual
- **K. Wells.** Substance Use During Pregnancy: Creating Connections to Reduce Child Maltreatment. Invited Speaker at the National Conference of State Legislators Child Fellows Meeting, Denver, CO
- **Krugman, R & Wells.** The Kempe Center’s 50 Year Legacy: Transforming the Future of Child Maltreatment. University of Colorado Department of Pediatrics/Children’s Hospital Colorado Grand Rounds, Aurora, CO.

Other

- **Hollinshead, D.** (2023). Virginia Department of Social Services Case Supportive Technology