

KIDS TOGETHER NEWS

All the latest from Kids Together Playground!

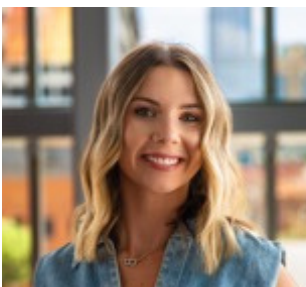
Kids Together has been busy as a bee this spring! We've been drumming, mixing concrete, and celebrating the playground's 24th birthday! We've strengthened our organization with the election of three new board members, while sadly saying goodbye to three others. We also made a guest appearance in Cary Magazine! Read all about it!

NEW BOARD MEMBERS BRING TALENT, ENERGY, AND EXPERTISE TO KT

Kealey Linton grew up coming to Kids Together Playground ("The Dragon Park") over 20 years ago. Now that she has her own daughter they love to visit often. Kealey is currently pursuing an interior design certification and real estate license. She also volunteers with local nonprofit, SAFEchild. She's a self-published author of "The Shy Little Crab (Who Came out of Her Shell)", a children's picture book created to boost social and emotional resilience in young kids struggling with anxiety.

Amanda Rhode is a creative manager excited about translating her user experience and design knowledge to support clever, inclusive initiatives at Kids Together Playground. With over 11 years of community volunteering, Amanda is passionate about supporting children and their families. In her free time, she enjoys puzzles, board games, and learning about her latest interest du jour.

Karine Wills is a program manager thrilled about working with Kids Together Playground, a place her four boys affectionately renamed 'meatball park' after a heavy season of reading *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* and noticing the giant 'meatballs' out front. She's excited to help make this great park even better.



WE SAY “THANK YOU” TO OUR RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS

It makes us a little bit sad to say “goodbye” to our friends when their time of service on our board of directors ends. But we break out with big smiles when we think of all the contributions they made! Here’s a great big KT Thank You to Tullie Johnson, Sarah Kahn, and Jane Mac Neela. Tullie will always be a KT fan. We know that Sarah will continue to lend a hand as a volunteer – thanks, Sarah! And we understand that Jane is a very close friend of KATAL the KT dragon mascot, so don’t be surprised to see her helping out, too.

CELEBRATING THE 24TH BIRTHDAY OF KIDS TOGETHER PLAYGROUND

On June 2, more than 60 children, their families and friends celebrated Kids Together Playground’s 24th birthday. They decorated party crowns, high-fived KATAL the KT dragon mascot, and listened to [the KT story](#). They munched on yummy cookies and made their own fruit juice slushies. It takes a village to host this party, so here’s a great big KT Thank You to the KT board members who helped: Willa Brigham, Marla Dorrel, Pat Fish, Josh Fleming, Karen Gray, Kealey Linton, Amanda Rhode, and Janice Sitzes. Thank you to Maryam and Abdullah Jawad and the Teen Council members who also volunteered.

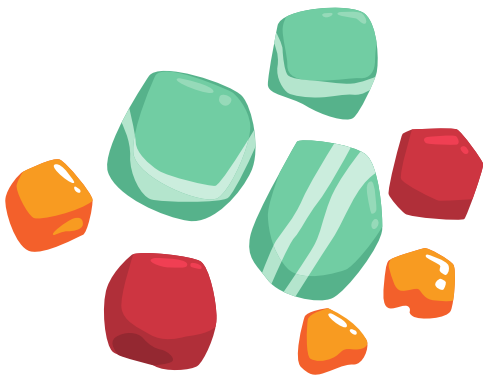
Mark your calendar and save the date for next year’s big 25th Birthday Celebration, Sunday, June 1, 2025!



STEPPING UP TO MAKE STEPPING STONES

Sunday, May 26, was a day filled with messy fun, as kids helped make concrete stepping stones for the Preschool Play Area. KT board members performed many duties to make this activity easy and fun. Pat Fish welcomed participants and helped them choose decorations for their stepping stone. Amanda Rhode showed kids how to smear petroleum jelly on their saucer mold, then shake-shake-shake it with sand. Nearby, Liz Brignac, her husband, Eric, and their sons Joseph and Charlie, mixed and poured the concrete. Kids helped smooth it out in their mold. The best part came last - putting their personal touch on their stepping stone, adding colorful gems, buttons and butterfly shapes. Volunteer Jane MacNeela was there to do whatever we needed - and she did. Our newest volunteer, Jeff Dean, added another pair of hands. Teen Council volunteers, along with teen Prahraas, also helped. Marla Dorrel directed all, and Josh Fleming arrived just in time to help with cleanup. We appreciate the financial support we received from IBM and The Window Works Company to bring this activity to the playground.

Watch our Facebook page for an announcement when the stepping stones are installed, then come out and walk the new stepping stone path!



DRUMMING UP FUN AT KTP

How much fun is it to beat out rhythms on a drum? Just ask any of the participants in our Saturday, June 8, Drumming Event! Dori Staehle of Next Stage Drumming arranged 25 hand drums in a semicircle, then she led participants in a drumming experience. Dori made it easy for everyone to pick up the beat! Since this activity was for older kids, we offered a companion activity for the younger ones. With help from Cary Teen Council members and other volunteers, the kiddos made take-home drums or shakers.



We are grateful to the Lazy Daze Festival Committee for providing a grant to fund this experience.



KTP HOSTS 2ND ANNUAL EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA!

We were thrilled when Cary's Specialized Recreation Program again chose Kids Together Playground for its annual Easter Eggstravaganza. And what an Eggstravaganza it was! We set a festive mood as kids decorated party crowns and egg cartons. Huge smiles broke out when the Easter Bunny, accompanied by KATAL the KT Dragon, appeared. High fives and hugs, all around! Cary's Laura Morton announced the start of not one, but two egg hunts. Each time, a mad scramble ensued! Kids who collected a dozen eggs traded them for prizes. The Specialized Recreation Program staff did an incredible job, and KT and Teen Council volunteers helped make the event a hopping success!



LOOK FOR KIDS TOGETHER IN THE JUNE-JULY ISSUE OF CARY MAGAZINE!

What an honor for Kids Together to be selected for its Nonprofit Spotlight in the June-July issue!

[Read it here!](#)



HISTORY MOMENT

The First Kids Together Board of Directors

When Kids Together, Inc. was formed in 1995, nine community leaders stepped up to serve on the organization's very first board of directors. We're forever grateful to these individuals for the commitment they made when the playground was only a dream: Suzy Barile, George Barutis, Bruce Brown, Richard Burton, Marla Dorrel, Jackie Holcombe, Dena Kennedy, Ira Rubin, and Herb Young.



FOLLOW US!

Keep up with everything KTP on our social media! Follow us on [Facebook](#) and find us on [Instagram](#) at [ktplayground_cary!](#) We'll see you there!



SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendar for our biggest fundraiser of the year! You can walk, run, or roll - in a wheelchair, on a bicycle, on skates, or on a scooter. It doesn't matter how you travel, just be there! On **Saturday, October 5, 2:00 PM**, KTP is the place to be!

MEMBERSHIP DONATIONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We love hosting free activities at the playground year-round, but we couldn't do it without the support of our members! KT runs on a shoestring budget, but we have basic expenses to cover, as well as the costs of the free fun we bring to the playground. Members get advance notice of pop-up and our quarterly newsletter. Subscribe at the \$60 Family level and get a color-changing KT tumbler. At the \$100 level you'll get a KT tote - ready for summer trips to the playground! Get all the details [here!](#)



Businesses and organizations can show their support as KT members, too! Business and organization memberships start at \$250, with benefits at three giving levels. Get all the details [here.](#)

WE ♥ OUR KT MEMBERS!

Willa Brigham
Liz Brignac
Marla Dorrel
Pat Fish
Josh Fleming
Danelle Gambrell
Karen Gray

Robert Harrison
Mary Insprucker
Tullie Johnson
Sarah Kahn
Scott Lassiter
Kealey Linton
Sarah Martin

[Reif Counseling Services, PLLC](#)
Amanda Rhode
Nina Schloss
Janice Sitzes
Tricia Tiu
Karine Wills
[Window Works Co.](#)
Paul and Kaori Zevgolis

DONATIONS HELP, TOO!

You, too, can show your love for Kids Together and our free, fun activities! A donation of any size is welcome and greatly appreciated! Make your donation [here.](#)



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