

Hazelwood East student learns from Black Rep theater veterans



Kennedy Jenkins at her home on Mar. 30, 2021. She is currently taking classes in visualization and improv and talked about how much she enjoys the improv.

Kennedy Jenkins had a bit of trouble with the tongue-twister she practices at home. The 15-year-old, grade 9, Hazelwood East student has been involved in the Black Rep's six-week Summer Performing Arts Program for the past four years. Children, ages 8-17, receive instructions in acting, movement, voice, writing, creative costume crafts and more. Her mother, Kelley D. Harvey, thought the program would be a good fit for her active but somewhat withdrawn daughter. Harvey is a published author and is an active participant in plays at her church. In one production based on the Wizard of OZ, Kennedy played the lead role and had to belt out singer, Tamela Mann's gospel song, "Take Me to the King." "She was kinda shy," Harvey remembered. "I thought she could have sung it with more confidence. But since she's joined the Black Rep, her confidence in performing has gotten better, which is what I was hoping for." At the time, Kennedy had her sights pegged on dancing. Always supportive, her mother signed her up for dance classes with Dance Plus Studio at an early age.

Once Kennedy followed her mother's advice and joined the Black Rep, acting superseded dancing. Acting has given Kennedy a way to cope in perilous times. She's been taking virtual learning classes for about a year, which she found lacking: "At first, it seemed like the teachers and students were very confused. It (virtual learning) wasn't as organized as it is now," Kennedy explained. "The isolation and not being able to go anywhere made me really sad. I like going out, driving, seeing places like the new aquarium, I like being on the road." The coronavirus did delay the usual start date of the summer program last year, but the young actors were able to gather albeit with strict safety and social distancing requirements. It was a good thing for Kennedy whose world was also rocked by the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis

Randy Orton Birthday Special: Check Out 5 Quick Facts About the WWE Star on His Birthday



- Orton went to Hazelwood Central High School in Florissant, Missouri, where he wrestled as an amateur. He graduated in 1998.
- Orton joined the United States Marines but soon found out that he “didn’t have the courage to die for my country”, Thus he started to find a way out and in a bid to do so, he disobeyed his senior. Post this, he received a bad-conduct discharge.
- While he was juggling between Marines and wrestling, he worked at a gas station near his house.
- Orton had become part of a popular and hilarious internet meme that saw Orton, performing the move, inserted into videos of people taking nasty tumbles.
- Orton has starred or appeared in multiple movies including 'That’s What I Am' with 'Ed Harris' (2011), '12 Rounds 2: Reloaded '(2013), 'The Condemned 2' (2015) and 'Countdown'(2016).

To Foster Middle School Success, Focus on the Good

Setting clear expectations can reduce disruptive classroom behavior, research finds.



When teachers encounter disruptive or noncompliant students in the classroom, they typically respond by focusing on the negative behavior. However, new research indicates that offering students more positive encouragement not only reduces misbehavior, but can also improve students' **academic** and social outcomes.

“As **educators**, we often focus on communicating what we don't want our students to be doing in class, but we have found that just doesn't work,” says Keith Herman, a professor in the University of Missouri College of Education. “Instead, we need to be setting clear expectations of what behaviors we do want to be seeing.”

To help teachers provide a nurturing and structured environment for students in the classroom, Herman implemented CHAMPS, a classroom behavior management training intervention, into a St. Louis County school district's middle school classroom over the course of five years.

The intervention resulted in decreased disruptive classroom behavior and student concentration problems. The intervention also improved both completed class work and standardized test scores, as well as increased the amount of time students remained on task with classroom assignments.

“The intervention is based off principles and practices research has shown to be helpful in creating successful classroom management, such as communicating clear expectations to students, giving more positive encouragement compared to negative reprimands, and moving around the classroom to monitor student behavior,” Herman says.

One of the coaches that helped implement the intervention was **Julia Burke, former assistant superintendent for student services in the Hazelwood School District**. She conducted classroom observations to help coach and mentor the teachers receiving the training. She observed that the intervention helped increase student engagement and boosted the teachers' confidence in their ability to manage disruptive behaviors.