

Texas Firefighter Wellness Newsletter

Dallas Firefighters Teach Children Fire Safety FUNdamentals



<https://www.mckinneyonline.com/city-government/the-mckinney-fire-department-mctown-klownz-honored-on-the-national-stage/>

A group of North Texas firefighters are trading in their gear for oversized shoes and colorful outfits. Jason Newell, a McKinney firefighter, and his friends have created a unique and unforgettable “edutainment” experience for the children in their community. McKinney Fire’s McTown Klownz is an educational entertainment group that consists of five firefighters who aim to teach children the fundamentals of fire safety.

The McTown Klownz travel to local elementary schools wearing full clown makeup and clown suits. They instill lifesaving skills in children through humor-filled skits and performances about fire safety. These performances are held throughout the months of September and October in honor of Fire Prevention Month. In addition to educating children about fire safety, The Klownz also emphasize the importance of general life safety. The Life Safety Education office in the Dallas-Fort Worth area annually reviews injury and death statistics for children ages birth to thirteen years, and the Klownz use this data to incorporate high-

occurrence subjects into their performances. In the Summer months, the Klownz educate children about how to prevent dehydration and heat stroke by emphasizing the importance of drinking plenty of fluids, taking breaks in the shade, and scheduling outdoor activities in the early morning or late evening. Jason Newell shares that the Klownz program will continue to change and stay on the forefront of safety for the sake of the children.

The members of the McTown Klownz are all active firefighters in McKinney who share a passion for laughter and public education. Brent Rollins, known as Hoser the Clown, explains that the McTown Klownz are like a family, and that they “all share the same passion and vision for keeping kids safe in McKinney.” Jason Newell, known to children as Siren the Clown, shares that being a part of McKinney Fire’s McTown Klownz is “good for the heart and good for the soul.” He explains that there have been several fires in which the kids involved told the investigators that they knew exactly what to

do because of what they learned from the program. Fire Marshal Mike Smith describes the impact of what the Klownz program has been able to accomplish in educating children as “priceless.”

In June, Newell received the Brian Collins Memorial award for his dedication to fire safety and life safety education. Brian Collins was a firefighter and clown in Fort Worth who dedicated his life to educating children about fire safety and serving his community. Collins passed away in the line of duty about twenty years ago, but the community honors his legacy of service and his pioneering the use of characterization and entertainment to teach fire safety. Collins’ legacy as a firefighter clown has since inspired Newell and others in the Dallas-Fort Worth area to carry on a tradition of this clown service in the firefighter community.

<https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/Something-Good/McKinney-Firefighter-Clown-Recognized-for-Efforts-510799481.html>; <https://www.mckinneytexas.org/325/McTown-Klownz>; <https://www.mckinneyonline.com/city-government/the-mckinney-fire-department-mctown-klownz-honored-on-the-national-stage/>

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What's New at the WRI?

The WRI welcomes a new research assistant and a new therapist!

Megan Cardenas

Megan joined the Warriors Research Institute (WRI) team in June 2019. She graduated from Baylor University with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology in May 2019. During her time as an undergraduate, Megan worked as a research assistant in a lab studying Anxiety and Related Disorders. She also worked as an assistant in the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience at Baylor University.

Megan plans to pursue a Doctorate in Psychology. Her experience working with underserved populations has inspired her to study how inequality affects psychobiological systems; furthermore, she hopes to work toward reducing health disparities among disadvantaged individuals in the future. In her free time, Megan enjoys reading, being outside, listening to music, and spending time with her family.

Hillary Warrington

Hillary joined the Warrior's Research Institute (WRI) team in June 2019. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in psychology (2012), a master's degree in clinical psychology (2017), and is currently a doctoral student at Baylor University working on her degree in clinical psychology. Prior to joining the WRI, Hillary completed clinical practica at the Baylor Psychology Clinic, Talitha Koum Institute, MHMR Counseling Center, Hillcrest/Baylor, Cenikor Foundation, Christian Farms Treehouse Rehabilitation Center, Scott & White Rehabilitation Unit, and with the Area Agency on Aging. Hillary also has experience working with veterans through previous work at the Nashville VA and Vanderbilt University.

Hillary's clinical interests include working with older adults and individuals with memory impairment as well as individuals who have experienced trauma. Her current research projects focus on cognitive impairment associated with smartphone use and alcohol use disorders, respectively. She has been involved in projects examining cognitive outcomes after admittance to the ICU, effectiveness of a motivational-interviewing intervention in veterans who abuse substances, and behavioral addiction studies. Hillary enjoys exercising, playing with her dogs (Toby and Zoë), watching movies, and spending time with friends.

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Summer is Here!

Q: What shoes do frogs wear in the summer?

A: Open toed!

Q: Why did the banana use sunscreen?

A: He didn't want to peel!

Q: What do sheep do on sunny days?

A: Have a baa-baa-que!

**Moving? Changing your phone number? If so,
please let us know so we can update our information.**

Contact Megan Cardenas at:

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Don't forget that you can contact us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year!