

# DANDELION CLUBHOUSE

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NEWSLETTER VOLUME 2: MARCH 2021

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## NEURO-DIVERSE VIRTUAL CLUBHOUSE FOR TWEENS AND TEENS OFFERING ENRICHMENT, SOCIALIZING, FAMILY SUPPORT AND AUTISM EDUCATION

Given a window into our Clubhouse this winter, you would be warmed by the sound of live music, lit up at the sight of artful visuals, or touched by the connections our students were making- both socially and neurally. Welcome to Dandelion Clubhouse - the home turf of neuro-unique tweens and teens.

Our Brain Science class is "making headway" with students experiencing their frontal lobes in action. Through lively drama games and tactile partner activities, students are planning, prioritizing, and organizing up a storm. Finding lost items (shown above) organizing virtual spaces, packing a backpack for a hike- these essential life skills are now infused with positive emotions, a sense of purpose, and self-efficacy. Students were eager to show off "before and after" pics in our frontal lobe challenge- clean your actual room!

In Global Mystery Adventures, we traveled to Tanzania to do a virtual climb of Mount Kilimanjaro. With 5 different weather climates, students were given the challenge to dress themselves for each weather zone. We also studied the honey bee project- where Maasai women are saving the habitat of Big Cats. African music filled the air as we capped off the class with a Maasai inspired jumping contest. Oh, and can you tell the difference between a leopard roar and a lion roar? Our students can!



## Spring Classes Starting March 5th, April 13th and April 22

Our classes combine literacy, world cultures, SEL, drama, music and art to ignite a shared sense of wonder, boost self-esteem and fuel new friendships. **Puppetville:** A play-based group that focuses on emotional problem-solving, regulation and empathy. (ages 11-14) Starts April 22nd **Journey to the Center of Brain:** This lively experiential class combines drama, science and social-emotional learning as it provides a foundation for emotional regulation. (ages 13-17) Starts April 13th **Dandelion Drama** starts March 5th and we still have a couple of spots left. (ages 13-17) Go to [www.dandelionclubhouse.com](http://www.dandelionclubhouse.com) for more details or send us at [dandelionclubhouse718@gmail.com](mailto:dandelionclubhouse718@gmail.com)

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## Spotlight on Jasper Manning

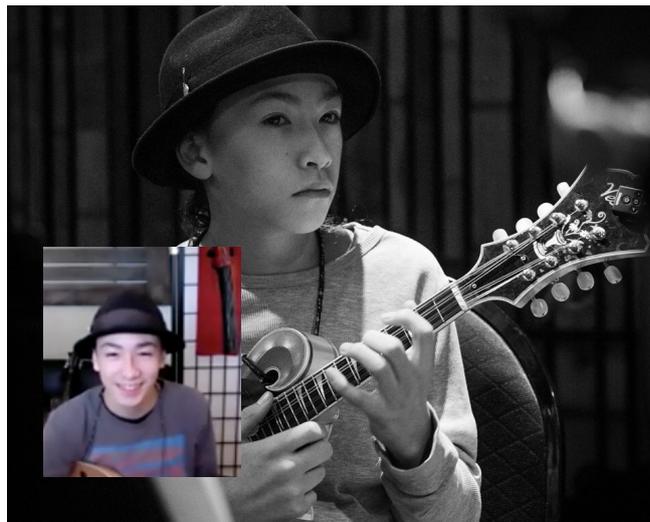
Dandelion Clubhouse invites neurotypical teens to participate in classes to help foster the next generation of autism allies. Volunteer Jasper Manning has been a wonderful addition to Global Mystery Adventures. Jasper is a young renaissance man, passionate about science, social justice and philosophy. And he just happens to be a world-class mandolin player - performing in Bluegrass festivals all over the country. Jasper graces us with live music every single class and not only does this give us an incredible soundtrack but also allows us to connect non-verbally. Students really respond to his calm authentic presence and kudos to him for skillfully correcting Keena and Liz when they confused Fahrenheit and Celsius. Thank you Jasper for sharing your kindness, music and wisdom.



[Keena and Liz Bios](#)  
[Autism Parenting Magazine](#)  
[Qrkcon](#)

## Keena's Ph.D. Update

Keena is rounding the final stretch into her Ph.D. in literacy and will begin her dissertation this spring! Keena has years of experience working in both mainstream and special ed settings. Her dissertation will focus on autistic students who can decode to the point of fluency but cannot comprehend what they read. Keena explains, "There is a complex list of factors of why autistic students struggle to comprehend the storyline, including limited perspective-taking skills, an inability to understand figurative language, lack of metacognitive facility to monitor the passage, and/or poor SEL competency." Keena cannot wait to share insights with you along the research adventure as she explores how interventions such as incorporating drama and multi-sensory supports impact the reading comprehension in her research participants. Keena offers private literacy tutoring to neurotypical students 5-12 and students with learning differences 5-17. Contact Keena if you like to find out more and add your child to her waiting list. [keena@dandelionclubhouse.com](mailto:keena@dandelionclubhouse.com).



## Global Outreach

Our Global Outreach is continuing to blossom as we pursue leads in Germany, Ireland and the UK. Not only will our program teach students around the world about autism but seeks to train teachers, providers and parents on topics such as literacy and play, the power of drama, and the autistic mind. The goal is to foster connections across the globe for our kids. Last weekend, we revisited Pakistan to teach students how to play drama games over Zoom. These bright energetic students were quick to learn and demonstrated their wonderful humor, expressiveness and creativity. We are hoping to have an international drama game mixer with them within the next month!