

NEWS RELEASE



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Children are superheroes for a day at Laurier's Arts Express camp

WATERLOO – Children with special needs will create and perform original dance, dramatic and musical numbers for the 18th annual Arts Express recital, taking place Friday, July 15, at 1:30 p.m. in Wilfrid Laurier University's Maureen Forrester Recital Hall.

Arts Express is an integrated arts camp designed for children aged six to 14 with a variety of special needs. In the week leading up to the recital, their siblings, friends and neighbours will join them for music, drama, dance, art and other sensory experiences at the KidsAbility Centre for Child Development.

"When we shift our focus away from achieving a specific artistic product to engaging in a creative process, experiences in the arts open up new ways for children to communicate, express themselves, and achieve success," said academic and camp coordinator Elizabeth Mitchell, a part-time instructor for Laurier's music therapy program. "This is particularly important for children with special needs, many of whom struggle to express and communicate in more conventional ways."

The Arts Express camp counsellors are students from Laurier and the University of Waterloo who take Creative Arts for Children with Special Needs, a designated Community Service Learning course at Laurier. Students learn to facilitate arts experiences for children with special needs and then put theory into action as counsellors.

"The students not only witness the growth in the children as they lead the Arts Express camp, but they also experience the arts first-hand through the course material," said Mitchell. "Many of them connect the academic material and the camp experience to their own lives."

Arts Express is co-sponsored by KidsAbility and Laurier's Music Therapy program, as well as the Carousel Dance Centre, the Early Childhood Education program at Conestoga College, and the University of Waterloo.

The Arts Express recital takes place Friday, July 15 from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Laurier's Maureen Forrester Recital Hall: www.wlu.ca/maps/recital. The title of the recital is "WANTED: Super Heroes for Mission Green!"

The performance is open to the public and admission is free.

Parking is available in a number of visitor lots: www.wlu.ca/maps/visitor-parking.