

https://www.bgdailynews.com/community/world-class-research-taking-place-in-bowling-green/article_d1ade741-3c3b-5c46-b9cb-025ca3f487ae.html

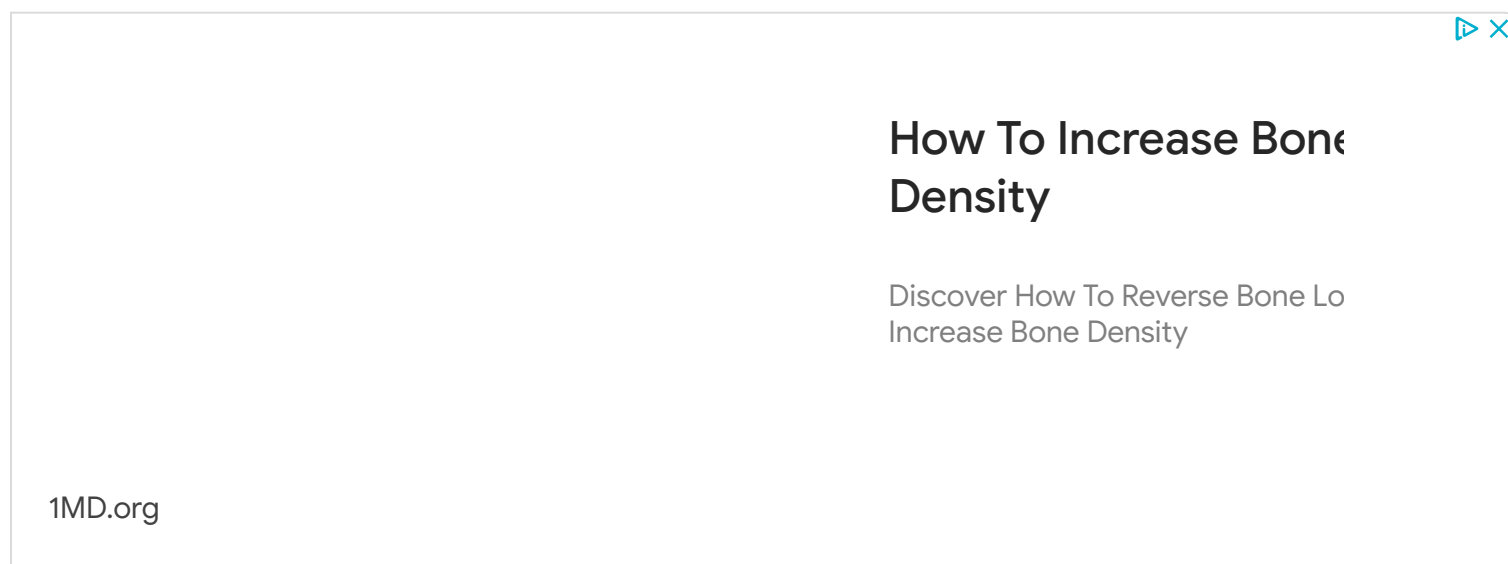
World-class research taking place in Bowling Green

By MAUREEN MAHANEY

Aug 1, 2021

A five-year partnership between Western Kentucky University's Center for Child Welfare Education and Research and LifeSkills has recently been announced.

In recognition, WKU's center, which was established June 21, 2019, as Kentucky's first center for child welfare, will now be known as the LifeSkills Center for Child Welfare Education and Research. It is located on WKU's campus at 1702 Normal Drive.



1MD.org

How To Increase Bone Density

Discover How To Reverse Bone Loss Increase Bone Density

Dr. Austin Griffiths, an assistant professor at WKU and center director, has high hopes this partnership will make a real difference in the lives of Kentucky's children and their families by supporting and advocating for a healthy and vibrant child welfare workforce.



“We know that, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Kentucky continues to have the highest rate of child maltreatment in the country,” Griffiths said. “Due to the many challenges and frustrations of child welfare work, which often lead to stress and burnout, agencies simply cannot keep their workers. This ultimately influences families in negative ways. Bottom line is that families and children benefit from a stable, supported and healthy welfare workforce. This isn’t a secret, as high rates of turnover have been a national problem for decades.”

Griffiths understands the work can be traumatic after more than six years of hands-on work in the field. One of his goals is to use applied research to help child welfare employees maintain optimal physical and mental health by providing them with information and tools to safeguard their health and wellness.



How To Increase Bone Density

Discover How To Reverse Bone Loss
Increase Bone Density

1MD.org

Joe Dan Beavers, president and chief executive of LifeSkills, hopes this is the start of what these organizations can accomplish by working together.

“Dr. Griffiths and his team are conducting cutting-edge research,” Beavers said. “I feel strongly this will result in changing the trajectory for some of the most vulnerable children in our communities. Through this partnership, LifeSkills clinical teams will be able to apply new findings into their daily work, providing best-in-class research from the community for the community.”

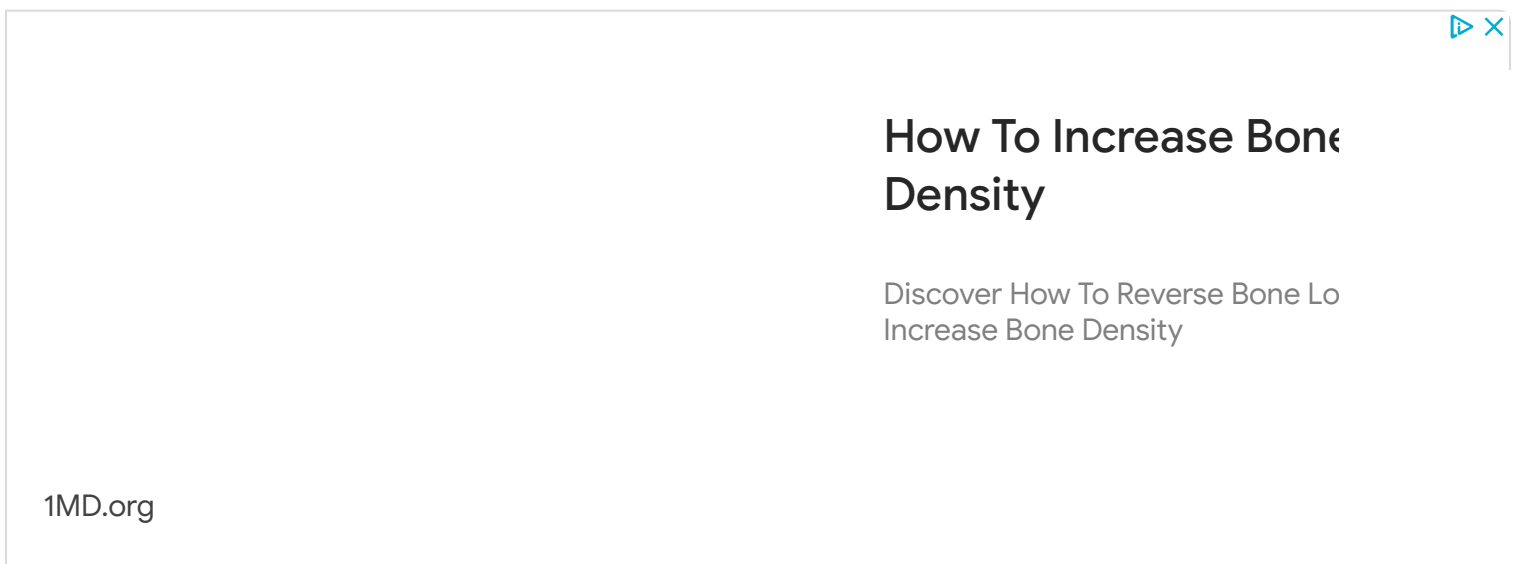
BETTER HEARING EVENT
August 2nd - August 6th

BUY TWO FOR
\$895
Miracle-Ear MINI™
Solution 1 Hearing Aids

Miracle-Ear
CALL 1-888-387-3068
SAVINGS CODE: LH138991

Some innovative and world-class technology currently being utilized involves WKU's Extended Reality Lab that allows a blend of virtual and physical worlds to create fully immersive learning experiences.

"The technology is advanced and sounds quite futuristic," Griffiths said. "We are designing next-level plans to use virtual headsets, artificial intelligence, robotics and more. Acclaimed Biometric Analytic Technology is already being used to measure work-related job stress in child welfare workers. ...



How To Increase Bone Density

Discover How To Reverse Bone Loss
Increase Bone Density

1MD.org

"We start by recognizing that there is job stress," Griffiths said. "Then we use this technology, a device that individuals wear on their person, to collect biometric information like heart rate, heart rate variability ... and about 100 other things ... to assess in detail the body's response to work-related job stress. Research results help us to pinpoint and understand the physical impact of stress and are used to guide us in the development of specific and targeted methods with which to combat it. ...

“It is a great honor to conduct this research and to advocate for improved working conditions for child welfare workers,” Griffiths said. “We are beyond excited and feel we are in the process of building something truly special that will impact our communities and our state in positive ways for years to come. People all around the country, as well as people in other countries, know about us and the innovative work taking place right here, right now in Bowling Green.”

– *For more information, contact Griffiths at 270-745-2676.*

– *Maureen Mahaney coordinates public information for LifeSkills Inc., a nonprofit, behavioral health care corporation that plans for and serves the people of southcentral Kentucky. Her column appears monthly.*