



# Counseling & Testing Center

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## LGBTQIA Group

Join the Counseling and Testing Center Nov. 17, 2015 for a support group in Potter Hall, Room 409, from 4-5 p.m. For more information, contact [ctc@wku.edu](mailto:ctc@wku.edu).

## Home for the Holidays

# Take the stress out of the visit

By Debra Crisp, Ph.D.

This time of year brings to mind the movie *Home for the Holidays* starring Holly Hunter, Robert Downey Jr., and the late Anne Bancroft and Charles Durning. It is the story of a woman who has formed her own life several hundred miles away from her family, and her dreaded trek home for Thanksgiving. Once there, she contends with the family dynamics that probably caused her to move away years before.

The movie highlights what happens for many of our students as they head home for Thanksgiving and the Winter Break after a semester of setting their own rules without curfews and other limits that parents often set.

For their parents, especially those with first-year students, their college students are often frozen in their minds as the young people that they left on campus in August or as someone who was less autonomous than the person they see before them now. It's a time of great stress for both. The following are suggestions for both so that the stress may be lessened.

For both have a conversation before the holiday about what you would like to see as a parent and as a young adult returning home. Try to agree on the rules before there's a disagreement or misunderstanding.

For both, remember that time has passed and there have been changes. While you may speak on a daily basis or even visit on the weekend, it is not the same as living together for an extended period of time. Be patient with each other.

For students, while this is still your family home, you are in some ways a guest. Try to use your guest manners—pick up after yourself, ask if there's anything you can do to help, etc.

For parents, remember that your college student has gotten out of the habit of doing chores for the home so you may have to remind them (gently).

For students, your parents are really excited to have you home and they want to show you off to their friends, family, and co-workers. That means they may have made plans for you without consulting you. Be prepared to divide time between your friends and your family.

For parents, your student may not have seen his/her best friend(s) for three months or more and is really excited to spend time with them. Remember, just because they want to spend time with their friends does not mean they love you any less. Time is finite so they have to make a choice.

For both parties, be realistic about your expectations. One of the biggest mistakes people make around the holidays is to expect their families to behave like the Waltons, Bradys, or Huxtables, when in reality their families are more like the Bundys or the Simpsons. If great-aunt Gertrude gets on your nerves 364 other days of the year, she will get on your nerves on a holiday—that's just who she is and who you are.

At the end of the day, remember to relax, breathe and think before you speak. And realize too that the holiday season will pass.

# SPOTLIGHT

## Megan Wilson

I received a B.S. in psychology and sociology with a concentration in criminal justice from Central Michigan University. Currently, I am working on earning my M.A. in clinical psychology from Western Kentucky University (WKU). Before entering the clinical psychology program at WKU I was able to spend some time working in the adult inpatient psychiatric unit at the University of Michigan. Having this opportunity helped me to see that I had a great passion for working with individuals in the mental health field and sparked my interest for clinical psychology.

I take a collaborative stance to counseling. I believe that clients should set the goals while I try to give them the tools needed to reach them. To do this, I view each client as an expert on their own life and experiences. I strive to create a comfortable relationship and environment so clients feel at ease and willing to work with me. My theoretical orientation is primarily cognitive-behavioral. I strive to help clients identify the emotions or behaviors that are dissatisfying so they can find the thoughts that are causing them.



### Domestic Violence Awareness Month

## Lip Sync Battle wraps up busy month

Domestic Awareness Month was full of events from a proclamation signing to a Lip Sync Battle.

The WKU community donated old cell phones and accessories to the HOPELine from Verizon which turns no-longer-used wireless devices and accessories into support for domestic violence organizations.



(Above) CTC's own Elizabeth Madariaga channels Hannah Montana during a lively performance of "Best of Both Worlds." (Left) The WKU community came out to support the 1 in 4 campaign at DSU Oct. 19. Events included a photo booth and information table.



A candlelight vigil was held Oct. 15, at the Justice Center.

Dr. Gary Ransdell (*right*) signs the annual Domestic Violence Proclamation during a ceremony at the Downing Student Union Oct. 19. The WKU community and community leaders, joined the Counseling and Testing Center to honor those who have been touched by domestic violence.



Oct. 19 was also the "1 in 4" display located in the DSU lobby which featured a photo booth. One in four people will be affected by domestic violence.

The Lip Sync Battle was held over two nights with the winners being Ms. Wolfe's Counseling class taking first place and Jay Todd Richey coming in second Oct. 21. Oct. 28th's winners are Celeste Jackson, first place and Phyllis Townsend in second place.

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## Star's Report

Hello, my name is Star and I am the new therapy dog-in-training for the Counseling & Testing Center. I am an Aussie-Doodle and one of my favorite things is to be cuddled. As you can see by my picture, my coat is all black with a white star on my chest and a little tuft of white on my chin. I have a bald spot on my tail where my brother chewed off all the hair.

I have been with the Counseling & Testing Center for only a few weeks but have enjoyed seeing my new home and meeting with so many people on campus. I have attended a couple of the campus events but it is going to be a little while longer before I get to be in the office everyday.

My days are filled with learning how to sit and behave as well as learning all of my new commands. I am very excited to meet new people and look forward to coming to work everyday at WKU.

## Counseling Services

### *College should be challenging, not overwhelming*

That's why we're here to help, offering our services Monday thru Friday from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. There is a ONE-TIME \$20.00 fee for paperwork and documentation. After the one-time fee, students have access to unlimited visits for their entire college career here at WKU. Our services are confidential and NO information is released without the student's written permission, unless in an emergency situation. So if your mom, grandma, or next door neighbor calls to learn about your counseling appointment, "mums" the word.

We offer individual and group counseling services to help with coping strate-

gies, conflict resolution, and crisis situations related to:

*College Adjustment*  
*Eating Disorder*  
*Decision Making*  
*Bipolar Disorder*  
*Problem Behaviors*  
*Stress Management*  
*Grief/Loss*  
*Depression/Anxiety*  
*Relationship Issues*  
*Suicide Prevention*  
*Sexual Assault/Abuse*  
*....and more!*

Don't Forget! We also offer counseling for couples of all kinds: friends, relationships and roommates.

## Testing Services Available

The Counseling and Testing Center offers most national tests such as CLEP, MAT, LSAT, DSST, ACT, HESI and COMPASS. Residual ACT and Chemistry Placement tests are also available. For more information on testing dates, see [www.registerblast.com/wku](http://www.registerblast.com/wku)

PRAXIS testing dates are at [www.ets.org/praxis](http://www.ets.org/praxis).

Questions may be e-mailed to: [testing-center@wku.edu](mailto:testing-center@wku.edu).

## Mindfulness Group meets Thursdays

The Counseling and Testing Center hosts a Mindfulness Group every Thursday in the Health Services Building, room 1075. The meetings are 1-2 p.m., and consist of a weekly introduction to mindfulness and meditation. For more information, contact Todd Noffsinger at [todd.noffsinger@wku.edu](mailto:todd.noffsinger@wku.edu).

