



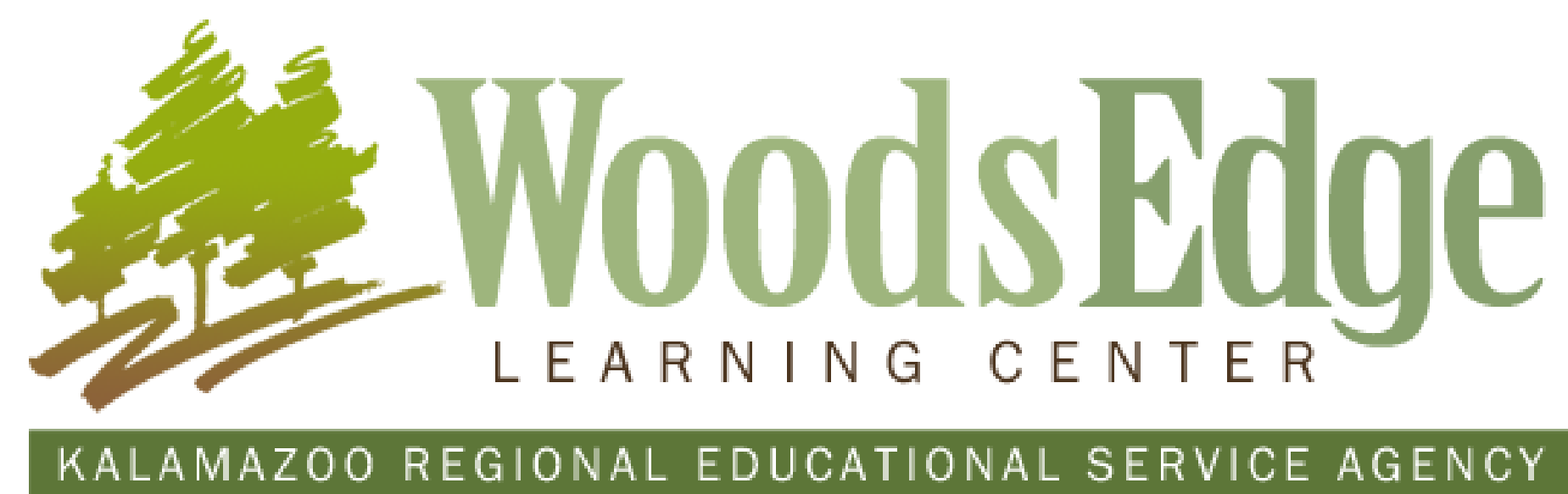
About WoodsEdge Learning Center

Located in Portage, Michigan, WoodsEdge Learning Center is a special education center-based school that provides services to all nine districts within Kalamazoo County. They support students with autism, moderate cognitive impairments, and severe cognitive and physical impairments. Each student has an individualized education plan (IEP) and are between the ages of 3 to 18.

KALAMAZOO RESA

INSPIRING EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Challenges



“With the right training, equipment, culture shift, and mindset, an approach that limits and attempts to eliminate restraint and seclusion is 100% possible. Once you start using an approach like Ukeru, you will soon see that it is far more dangerous and unsafe to use systems that include restraint and seclusion.”

Jason Ervin, M.Ed.
Behavior Support
Specialist

Prior to Ukeru, WoodsEdge Learning Center was seeking to reduce their use of restrictive practices. Some of the behaviors leading up to these restrictive measures included aggression towards staff and peers, elopement, and self-injurious behavior. “These behaviors were dangerous enough to warrant emergency restraint and/or seclusion to keep staff and students safe”, explained Jason Ervin, M.Ed., Behavior Support Specialist. They knew that there had to be a better way to support both their staff and students. **Ukeru appealed to them as a partner due to the approach being trauma-informed, restraint-free, and containing a protective equipment component.**

Working with Ukeru

WoodsEdge Learning Center began with a pilot of Ukeru in early 2022. After a successful 5-month pilot, they then trained their entire staff, totalling all together about 150 staff trained. To ensure a successful implementation, trainers met with administration, informed staff of the approach, created a parent letter to send home, and created a social story for classroom teams to read to their students about Ukeru and the use of the shields. Additionally, they made sure that their trainers were available to answer questions, held Q&A sessions during teacher and staff meetings, and had trainers readily available to observe, assist and model correct usage during crisis situations.

To further support the effort, they collected data on the number of emergency seclusions, restraints, injuries, and major property destruction. That data was compared for the same amount of time before implementing Ukeru with the time after implementation. They frequently shared this data with staff and administration to show the impact.



“Staff have had very positive feedback. They have said that they feel safer with the shield component and that they feel better not having to put hands on kids that are in crisis. Staff have said that it's a good feeling to know that we will have students move through our program who never have to experience seclusion or restraint.”

Jason Ervin, M.Ed.
Behavior Support Specialist

In just 8 months of training their entire school, they have achieved the following:

88%

Restraint
reduction

98%

Seclusion
reduction

79%

Staff injury
reduction

Results

The results have been remarkable. WoodsEdge Learning Center has seen a dramatic decrease in the use of restrictive practices just 8 months after fully implementing Ukeru. **“Our overall result has been incredibly positive. We are preparing to share those results with key stakeholders, parents, and community members”**, Ervin proudly shared.

Staff have provided positive feedback including that they feel safer with the shield component and feel better not having to put hands on kids that are in crisis. Ervin shared, “Staff have said that it’s a good feeling to know that we will have students move through our program who never have to experience seclusion or restraint.”