



Dartmouth College Child Care Center Newsletter

May 2010

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Office: Jeff Robbins,
Terry Chase, Amy
Potter, Faith
Goodness

Floaters: Eileen
Ruml, Moya Stevens,
Joelle Wyffels, Amy
Potter, Teresa Hahn.

Part-time, fall term:
Anne Steele, Gladness
Msumanje, Sue
Hewitt.

• **Child Care Provider Appreciation Day, May 7**

Thanks to all who provided testimonials for DCCCC teachers for Child Care Provider Appreciation Day. These were displayed at a banquet in teachers' honor and are currently displayed at DCCCC.

• **“Kids Stuff” magazine premieres!**

Congratulations to Jennifer Hopkins (William – Pandas, Sophie – Teddy Too) on the publication of the first issue of Kids Stuff magazine. Kids Stuff features articles from Upper Valley authors, directing parents to local resources and answering the questions such as, “Where to go? What to do? Who to ask?” It is published 5x/year in April, June, September, November and February. It is free in the Upper Valley and available at DCCCC and other locations. More information at www.uvkidstuff.com.

• **Beautiful Music**

Thanks to Elise Plans (Ollie-Pandas, Thomas-Polars). The children and the teachers enjoyed a Piano Presentation in April. Elise took the top off the piano and showed us the strings and hammers. She played high and low, fast and slow, familiar and new. We both sang along and just listened to some beautiful music. Thanks, Elise!

• **Administrative Professional’s Day, April 21**

A hearty thanks to our hardworking administrative professionals who work behind the scenes. Three cheers for Terry Chase, Amy Potter and Faith Goodness!

• **Tuition Due**

June tuition is due by June 18 to clear out books for the end of the fiscal year.

• **Moved? Changed jobs?**

Be sure the office has your new contact information.

● **DCCCC will be closed:**

- **May 31**, Memorial Day
- **July 5**, Independence Day
- **August 30-31** , Preparation for the new school year
- **September 6**, Labor Day

● **Dashing Out the Door:**

What excellent progress we've made in directing children's play and parents' conversations to a safer location on the west lawn after hours! Thank you for continuing to ensure that your children do not stop to play on the sidewalk, in the circle or in the parking lot. As warm weather has arrived and outdoors beckons us and as children's growth toward independence continues, enthusiastic children may forget or test important rules. Dashing out the door ahead of one's parents is a spring time concern and we all share the responsibility for children's safety including making sure that no one else's child slips out the door with us. Enforcing rules can be tedious and sometimes we just run out of words. Here are some suggestions from Big Jeff's lexicon.

<p><u>Tell children what TO DO instead of what NOT to do.</u></p> <p>Stay with me.</p> <p>Stay on the sidewalk.</p> <p>Wait in the greenhouse until we are ready to go.</p> <p>Hold my hand.</p>	<p><u>Congratulate yourselves.</u></p> <p>You stayed with me.</p> <p>You remembered the "wait rule."</p> <p>You kept yourself safe.</p> <p>You did it! We did it!</p>	<p><u>Reinforce rules as necessary.</u></p> <p>I want you to stay right beside me.</p> <p>Hold my hand so I can be sure you stay on the sidewalk.</p> <p>The rule is for EVERYONE.</p> <p>The rule is ALL THE TIME.</p>
<p><u>Make sure rules are clear.</u></p> <p>Walk with me; don't run ahead.</p> <p>Close means we can touch each other.</p> <p>Close means you can get to me in one step.</p> <p>Tell me the rule so I know you understand.</p>	<p><u>When your child notices that someone else is not following the rule.</u></p> <p>Sometimes when other people break the rules, it reminds us to follow the rule.</p> <p>Her mom/dad is helping her. I am helping you.</p> <p>Our family is very careful about these things.</p> <p>We are good a following important rules.</p>	<p><u>Save these lines for when you really need them.</u></p> <p>No! Stop! Never!</p>

News from Teddy One

Debbie Burnham,
Lead Teacher

Wendy Irwin,
Teacher

Keri Wolfe,
Assistant Teacher

It is Spring! All the teddies have gotten outside during this warmer weather. The new walkers are exploring the outside space in an upright position while the older teddies are having a great time at the play house, in the sand box and on the bigger climbing structure. The younger teddies are having fun watching all that goes on while out in the sunshine. We even went on a tour of the Panda Garden last week.

Last month Wendy and I went to an all day workshop on natural outside spaces and the Panda garden is a wonderful example of a natural, kid friendly outside area. Wendy and I came away from the workshop with some wonderful ideas for items we would like to incorporate into our space. Please feel free to go out to the back yard and check out the garden space!

Keri has been accepted into the MALS program for the fall. She will be studying educational resources and will be applying her knowledge here at the center. She will still be working full time in the Teddy room while doing her program.

Spring conferences are happening. If you have not been asked to schedule a conference yet, the time will be coming. The end of the school year is fast approaching so we are making sure the Teddies see their new teachers, even if just in passing.

Music class will be ending this month. The Teddies will miss Brooke, but we will be sure to keep her in mind by singing her songs! We hope to expand our song collection so if your child has a favorite CD, we would love to borrow it and make a copy for our room.

Last week the kitchen cubbies were cleaned. Now would be a wonderful time to add extra spring clothing and sun hats to your child's space. Please do leave a sweater or fleece for those cooler days. Think warm thoughts everyone!

Fondly,
Debbie B.

News from Teddy Too

Terri Crane,
Lead Teacher

Lori Higgins,
Teacher

Denise Ayres,
Assistant Teacher

The Teddies are rapidly changing before our eyes. We are so thrilled to hear new words and see new skills appear on a daily basis. Here are some Teddy Too happenings that we have noticed from the past month:

Liam has become strong enough to roll over and he loves the view from the Exersaucer.

Sophie can sit up and bend to reach out for toys around her.

Louisa gets herself standing and is taking a few steps at a time.

Zachary has started to say words like hi and bye. He also is getting past his stranger anxiety.

Jadon can name colors and says many words in English and Chinese. Our favorite word we love to hear him say is Lulu.

Lyra is on the move. She is moving toys around and walking behind them. She is also signing more and more words.

Alistair is walking all around now without any help.

Anaya has become quite the conversationalist. She comes out with the funniest things sometimes.

Lila is teaching us all the sign language signs she knows (which are a lot!).

Allie has become a great climber and jumper. He loves to play trampoline on the blue mats.

Noah has been saying more words and is working on saying sentences.

Calvin has discovered the bikes outside and has become quite a biker.

This spring we will be doing another round of parent conferences. We will let you know when those will be, but as always if you have any thoughts or concerns please do not hesitate to contact one of us.

Now that the room your child will be going to next is set we will be getting your child ready to move up over the next few months. We typically start with visits to the new room and spend a little time with the teachers. Sometimes the teachers will come to our classroom and spend some time allowing the children to get familiar with them. This is done all summer long and will help your child become accustomed to the new situation slowly over time. Our goal is to make sure everyone is familiar and comfortable with their new teachers and classrooms.

Since the weather has been unpredictable lately we ask that you continue to bring a variety of clothes, hats and jackets to fit the weather. We do like to go out and having the right gear is helpful.

Happy Spring!
Terri

News from the Pandas

Susan Quimby,
Lead Teacher

Jenn Boudro,
Teacher

Tatyana Bills,
Assistant Teacher

Alas, my favorite time of year!!! (I say that at least 3 if not 4 times a year by the way!!!) Let the gardening games begin! We have been watching the Panda garden for weeks now as forget-me-knots poke up and bloom. The peonies are budding, chives and mint are up and being eaten and peas have been planted along the fence. There is a beautiful assortment of plants filling in. At this time of year, I put fencing up to keep the young growth from being trampled. I expect to remove the fencing when the plants are fully established.

One of my favorite books, *One Bean*, by Anne Rockwell is a wonderfully age appropriate book about a bean starting as a seed and sprouting. It goes through how the seed comes up, roots grow and how little green bumps turn into flowers and the flowers turn into beans!! When we started reading this book, we all had a bean seed to hold. Just like in the book, it was "dry and smooth and hard." Then, just like in the book, we covered seeds with wet paper towels. It is wayyy fun to use the squirt bottle to spray them!!) And....just like in the book, the seeds have become wrinkly and fat. This is as far as we've gotten but we'll be inspecting those seeds several times a day, waiting for the skin to split, which will be our clue that they are ready to plant. We'll have this book out and about for many weeks to come as we eventually plant our beans for the magical bean house.

Last week, we cleaned out some old leaves and growth that needed to go out to the compost pile in the field. We all had buckets to help transport these old leaves to a wagon. It was a quite a process and so fun to watch. Then a whole herd of us headed out the gate to dump our wagon. You'll see a photo display in the hall documenting our excursion. You'll find over the course of the spring and summer, that there will be a wide variety of Panda alumni helping out as they recall their time in the bean house and Panda garden; they are itching to help. Some Pandas even help with chives hanging out the side of their mouths! You'll see some Teddies join in our bean fun as well. I love including as many children as would like to help. And by the way, I'll be hunting down this year's Pandas in the fall when we put the garden to bed for the winter and do more cleaning out!

We will have a bean patch part way up the fence on the playground as well this year. I have a large variety of seeds: green beans, yellow beans, mottled red and yellow beans, asparagus beans, Kentucky wonder pole beans and a very cool PURPLE bean! These can double as shakers for music as we sing some of our gardening songs.

And speaking of music—we have begun to talk about and play with a lot of musical instruments. David has been very into Peter and the Wolf and as we listened to it (my first time in about 15 years!) I had forgotten how each character is played by an instrument or a combination there of. I was delighted when I realized several children were able to say, "that's the bird" when a flute was played. We downplay the wolf being scary but focus on the sounds. A few sounds from instruments your child may tell you about are: the Bird is played by the flute, Cat/clarinet, duck/oboe, Peter/the strings in the orchestra, Wolf/ 3 horns, grandfather/bassoon and the Hunters /kettle drum and base drum. It has been fun to listen to different instruments. If any of you have any you'd like to share, do feel free! I brought in a collection of recorders, penny whistles and flute type instruments as well as an electric piano with a huge variety of instrument another sounds on it. As soon as we figure out it really works, it'll be fun to listen to that as well. We use a large variety of instruments often so this is adding to their music enrichment! Ok, so there ya have it. It's a great time of year in the Panda room!!!

Fondly,
Susan for the Panda team

KOALA NEWS coming soon!

News from the Woolly Bears

Debbie Girdwood,
Lead Teacher

Barb Merchand,
Teacher

Kristin Ball Cole,
Assistant Teacher

Hello Woolly Bear Families,

The trees are in full bloom and the spring flowers have brightened our world. We had a fantastic time in the Woolly room welcoming in spring. Our class was very excited to plant new plants for the planters located at the entrance of DCCCC. We also mulched the trees on the preschool playground. The grand news on Earth day was the return of the worms from their vacation spot at Eileen's house. Eileen has given our room a compost bucket. Woollies are very excited every day to place their compost in after meal times.

We have also welcomed in spring by visiting the vernal pool and bringing tadpoles into our classroom. We had so many we were able to share with the Koala's. We have watched them hatch from the eggs and continue to feed and grow. In a few more weeks we hope to see some legs start to emerge. All the children have enjoyed your interest in our pollywogs as well. They love when you can stop for a moment and be

scientist with them and observe all the changes that are happening. Polliwogs have been out in shallow containers with magnifying glasses to get a better look. We will continue to learn more about these amphibians during our project times.

Wow! Woollies are great mathematicians. They are amazed at what they are interested in when it comes to math. I have introduced 10 frames with small cubes at our morning gathering. They love the hands on experimentation they can do to explore numbers. They can see the five cubes on the top row and quickly add the number of cubes on the bottom row. I had planned to play 10 frames again but a few had questions about even and odds numbers. When they were asked what an even number was, one Woolly was able to explain that evens are "fair." We played several games of Cookies on the Plate: a number of cubes are randomly picked, counted by the children and then sorted between two plates to see if the number was even or odd. We made predictions about each number before sorting them on to plates. Exciting!! At times the Woollies are surprised by the outcome of their sorting. We will continue to play with numbers and see where they lead us.

Looking Ahead:

We have begun spring conferences. If you have not scheduled your conference yet, please contact us for a time and date.

We are going through more clothes at this time a year with the water open and the weather is in its usually New England flux. We appreciate any help you give us in keeping your child's cubby full of a variety of clean clothes!!

A time and date for a spring parent snack to follow in a separate email. Keep a look out!!

Thanks for all your support to us,
Deb, Barb and Kristin

News from the Polar Bears

Sunnie McPhetres,
Lead Teacher

Bobbie Lynn Stone,
Teacher

Ray Garcia,
Assistant Teacher

What a l Welcome to May! I had snow at my house on May 8 and May 9! Will this be a year without a summer like 1816? Here's hoping not! Along with the snow, two other things happened in early May: Teacher Appreciation Day and Mother's Day. Having two such days so close together, I had reason to contemplate the meaningfulness of special days of recognition. I was very appreciative of the gifts and words of gratitude from families, but it was really the children who attracted the majority of my attention.

“Young children are naturally ‘egocentric.’ This does not mean that they are selfish. Young children’s kindness is always offered from their own point of view instead of understanding the other person’s needs. A toddler, for example, may try to comfort his sick mother while she sleeps by giving her his teddy bear. The teddy

bear comforts him so he believes that it will do the same for his mother. As children grow older, they are better able to offer more effective help from the perspective of the person who needs it.”
(Charles A. Smith, PhD., *The Peaceful Classroom*, p. 144, Gryphon House, 1993).

Watching the faces of children as they came into the classroom bearing their symbols of appreciation caused me to realize how important it is for children to have the opportunity to say “thank you for caring about me.” Some children brought cards or drawings, some flowers, some edible treats, some gifts, some homemade crafts. They offered their gifts in a variety of ways. Some were so excited that they just couldn’t contain it. Some were shy and a bit embarrassed. Others were very serious and looked for my reaction. One child who did not bring a material offering asked me, “Why are they all bringing you stuff?” I replied, “Because it is a day called Child Care Provider Appreciation Day and they want to say thank you for taking care of me.” I was worried that the child would feel sad about not bringing something for the teachers. I watched the child’s face while pondering my response; it was very thoughtful and reflective. Neither sadness or anger or joy was apparent on the face. After a few seconds the child looked directly in my eyes and responded, “Thank you.” This simple, heart-felt expression of gratitude was one of the most amazing gifts that I have ever received.

Showing gratitude is not something that children do naturally. It is something that is nurtured by loving caring adults. Adults who express love and gratitude for children serve as examples for future behavior. This is particularly important to us here in the Polar Room. We encourage children to express gratitude to children who have birthdays, bring toys to share, or do kind things. We model more than just routinely saying “thank you.” We encourage

children to say things such as, “That was helpful,” “It felt nice when you let me take a turn,” or “Your recipe was yummy! I’m glad it was your favorite!” Charles A. Smith, PhD. writes:

“Real teachers do more than fill children’s heads with numbers, shapes and letters of the alphabet. These skills are important. But real teachers change lives. To change lives, we have to reach out to children’s hearts as well as their minds. We have to create a place of safety where children are free to investigate the world around them, to discover their inner landscape of emotions and to explore human relationships.” (Charles A. Smith, PhD. , *The Peaceful Classroom*, p. 12, Gryphon House, 1993).

In the Polar Room, we take this responsibility very seriously. Creating a place of safety where children can appreciate others without feeling underappreciated themselves is important. We do this by recognizing the uniqueness of each child and the contributions that they make to our group. We say things like, “Thank you for helping the Koalas play baseball. That is something that you are good at and you shared it with them.”

On Mother’s Day, I was confronted with the other side of this issue. My family did nothing to show gratitude for my contribution as a mother. I spent most of the day being very grumpy because my husband did not encourage our children to do something to show gratitude. So rather than recognizing my hurt feelings and discussing it with my girls, I chose to be grumpy. After writing this article, I think that I will go home and start over with them! As a parent, I can recognize that I am responsible for developing this sense of compassion, empathy and gratitude in my children. By recognizing that it is more about the traits I am developing in my children than it is about me, I can look at this situation in a whole new light! I think that we will redo Mother’s Day at my house and give us all a chance to practice these skills.

Judith Anne Rice writes:

“It is remarkable that the acts of kindness important to people do not include actions we might think would impress, such as the giving of expensive gifts. Rather, the powerful kindnesses that stay with us and change our lives are simple, unsolicited, and seemingly insignificant acts of pure giving.” (*The Kindness Curriculum*, p. 103, Redleaf Press, 1995).

The elation on a child’s face, the shy manner in which gifts are offered, that one very simple, unprompted “thank you” are the things that will stay with me, change my life, and change the lives of those who offered them. Thank you for helping your children develop this important skill – you are their most important teacher!

News from the Grizzlies

Carolynn Wilson,
Lead Teacher

Karen Gray,
Teacher

As I write this newsletter I am amazed that only 6 weeks remain until Kindergarten graduation and Carol's retirement. We have begun to prepare ourselves as well as the children and their families for these significant transitions. Our summer program will begin on Friday, June 18th. At this



time, Joelle Wyfells will become the new Grizzly teacher and we will adjust to the longer days spent together as well as a shift in group dynamics. In addition to losing Carol, we also say goodbye to several Grizzly friends at the end of the school year. Last month was Alexander Velichkov's last day and next month Grizzly time terminates for Aidan Peterson, Natalie Feyrer, Evan Yang, and Shantel Zhou. As of now, new Grizzly friends joining will include Alix Livingston, Lily Welch, Dexter Joffrey, Ian Parish, and Sophie Prescott.

Recapping the past month, we have been enjoying the nicer weather and spending lots of time outdoors. Many have been enjoying jump roping, playing sidewalk games and group games. Performing amazing tricks on the chin up bars and cooperative high pumping on the tire swings never seems to grow old. With some of the children on baseball teams, there has been an interest in practicing their hitting skills.



Grizzlies can always be found enjoying the endless water and sand constructions too. The group found a way to use up our recyclables as they created various musical instruments and put on performances. We have been observing the changes in our garden as well as the many types of birds and insects that we are sharing the outdoors with. In recognition of Earth Day and Arbor Day, we've



been discussing the importance of trees and ways we can help to take care of our Earth. We have also welcomed back the return of the worms and thank them for all the wonderful and hard work they do to help our Earth. We also want to thank Jackson, Carol's yellow Labrador Retriever, for visiting us several times and providing us with lots of entertainment

and tricks.

We enjoyed the vacation week and having more time to experiment with our contraptions, creations, and concoctions such as making "box"



cars, "whirly birds,"

purple "volcanoes," bubble pictures, dip dyes, magic copper cleaner for the pennies found on our penny hunt, and yogurt pops. Over the past weeks Carol has been reading chapter books to the group. She started with reading Pippi Longstocking by Astrid Lindgren and then moved onto Fantastic Mr. Fox by Roald Dahl. No matter what activities we introduce or set up for exploration, a ritual seems to

have formed after lunchtime: getting out the Magnatiles, Playmobile community figures, and the little animal figures have become a preferred activity, inspiring lots of collaboration, imagination, and fun. More imaginative play is evolving with the return of our baby dolls, jewelry, and scarves.

Please enjoy the photos of Grizzlies finding pleasure in some of these activities mentioned!



Happy May,
Karen and Carol