



Dartmouth College Child Care Center Newsletter

May 2017

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Office: Jeff Robbins, Sunnie McPhetres, Dawn Cote, Karen Small, Janene Robie

Floating Assistant Teachers
Terri Crane, Kristin Cole,
Judy Labrie, Jenn Murphy

ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION

Two plum trees were added to the DCCCC orchard and the Black Bears observed a pruning demonstration.





From the Director

Dear Big Jeff,

Did you approve the schedule change I asked for? How are you coming with fall enrollment? Will my child be with her friends?

Signed,

Gotta Work

Dear Gotta,

Summer and Fall requests for schedule changes have indeed been made. If you didn't receive one, check with Dawn. We think we got everybody.

Fall enrollment is right where I would expect it to be. It's pretty much a full house for fall at the moment. More spaces will emerge as families let us know about departures. I'm expecting changes as summer draws closer, indeed over the summer and right up to the last minute and then some.

All children moving to a different classroom in the fall will move with a cluster of their friends. I have a pretty good drift on this, but I won't be able to finalize class rosters until summer. Even a few changes can markedly change group composition. To compose congenial and compatible groups, I need most of the pieces of the puzzle before the whole picture begins to emerge.

Signed,

Big Jeff

Dear Big Jeff,

We love that the children are getting outside so much in the nice weather. Although we think dirt is good for children and we don't mind the laundry, we do appreciate those new rain suits!

A new situation has developed, though. It's getting harder and harder to get my child to leave at the end of the day. Sometimes it's because she is playing outside and doesn't want to come in. Sometimes, well, sometimes I don't know what the deal is or why she doesn't want to go. I love that she loves school, but I also love getting home and getting dinner started.

Signed,

Almost Late to Leave

PS, Thanks for your gentle (although not necessarily subtle) reminders that it's time to leave when you are cruising the hall at the end of the day. My child thinks you are the boss of the school and takes the warning seriously – it can be a big help getting her to move toward the door.

Dear Almost,

You're welcome, although contrary to some children's fleeting impressions, I'm not the Boss of the Everything.

Thanks for not being Actually Late. I have to get teachers out of here at 5:30 so they can get home to their families, their second jobs, their evening classes or simply home.

As far as your child not wanting to leave – as your grandmother used to tell your mother, it's a stage. Ride it through. Soon enough she will be reminding you that she is late for soccer practice and you need to hurry up.

In the meantime, here are a few tips:

- Allow a few extra minutes at the end of the day so neither you nor your child feel rushed. Rushing makes everything take longer.
- Understand that no one likes to stop having fun. That can help you feel a bit more patient.
- Have a chat with your child at a quiet time. Acknowledge calmly that there is a problem for both of you and that you would like to work it through. If your child is old enough, ask her what ideas she has. Choose a solution to try, then follow-through. Give the new plan a chance to work. If it needs adjusting, you can make changes.
- Solicit the teachers' help in establishing a protocol. S/he may be able to help prepare your child in advance of your arrival.
- Keep it simple. Say good-bye to the teacher in charge, sign out, get the lunch box, check the cubby and go.
- I suggest that you avoid outright bribery, excessive negotiation and punishment. It is what it is – it's time to go. If you leave with a fussy child, know that we've all been there and aren't thinking poorly of you. In fact, we are probably admiring your calm patience and supportive, but firm approach.

Signed

Big Jeff

The following is reprinted from previous years – it is great reminder to check for ticks often! We have found some here, but checking at home is recommended as well.

Dear Big Jeff,

I've heard that there will be lots of ticks this summer. I also heard that ticks are related to spiders. Say it ain't so.

Signed

Arachnophobe

Dear Tickster,

I attended a workshop on ticks, which I have fondly called the Tick Talk, at the Ray School earlier this month, so I've had a chance to think about the topic. It's true, ticks have 8 legs (insects have six) and are arachnids like spiders. BTW, I did get your "Say it ain't so" reference to Shoeless Joe Jackson and the Black Sox scandal of 1919, not that it has anything to do with ticks, of course.

As has been well publicized, it is the deer ticks that transmit Lyme Disease. The larger dog ticks are annoying, but if you make yourself strong of heart and just pluck them off and drop them in the toilet, they're nothing to worry about. I have a strong stomach for external parasites and some internal ones, so I'm happy to send cheerful thoughts your way. In this way it is quite helpful to have a country boy as your COO.

I found a few facts to be comforting:

- a. Deer ticks must be attached for 36-72 hours to transmit disease.
- b. Not every deer tick carries Lyme Disease.
- c. Each tick only feeds once in its life, so they aren't prowling from person to person.
- d. The rate of disease transmission is very low.
- e. Ticks avoid open sunny places like our playground

Still, deer ticks aren't to be taken lightly. Children should be checked after outdoor forays and each night. Bath time is excellent for a full body check. Lyme disease is most often transmitted by immature ticks called nymphs. They are really small, so look carefully. If you find one, remove it with fine tipped tweezers. Pull gently up and away from the skin. If the head separates from the body and stays in the skin, try to remove it with the tweezers, but don't panic. It will heal over. The germs are in the body of the tick, put ineloquently. Wash the area with soap and water or rubbing alcohol. Call your pediatrician if you have concerns.

Some forms of prevention are especially well suited to home and family activities:

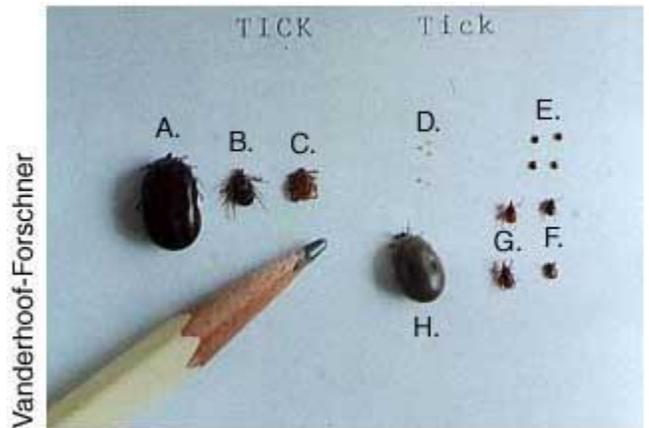
- a. Insect repellent with 20% DEET which must be reapplied every 2 hours. DEET is a powerful chemical, so we'd need your written permission if you want us to use it at DCCCC.
- b. Permethrin treated clothing
- c. Wearing long sleeved shirts and long pants tucked into your socks.

The CDC is an excellent source of information: <http://www.cdc.gov/lyme/transmission/index.html> Check this link for a good photo of the relative size of dog ticks, deer ticks and their nymphs.

At DCCCC we will check for ticks after outdoor play. We'll let you know if we find anything interesting. In the meantime, play hard and go outside often.

Best wishes,
Big Jeff

Brown Dog Ticks	Black-Legged Ticks (Deer Ticks)
A. Engorged Female	D. Larvae
B. Female	E. Nymphs
C. Male	F. Males
	G. Females
	H. Engorged Female



Greetings From Sunnie:

Feedback that we received from our Annual Family Survey let us know that we are not always clear about the distinctions between different groups of employees at DCCCC. I'd like to take a moment to explain the types of teachers that you will see here at DCCC. We are also working on ways to help make sure that you know who is in your child's class at all times! Stay tuned!

You see many faces at DCCCC, especially in the afternoon. We have several categories of staff members here.

- **Regular Staff Members**

- All regular staff members have completed higher education course work in Early Childhood Education (ECE). They joined our staff after a rigorous interview, reference and background check. They are qualified and very capable of working alone with groups of children. They are able to open and/or close classrooms without direct supervision.
- Our regular staff is comprised of two groups:
 - First are the **assigned classroom staff members**: with the exception of the Otter Room (at this time) each classroom has three regular staff members, and I bet that you know who they are for your child's classroom(s).
 - The second category is **Floating Assistant Teachers**. We have a team of Floating Assistant Teachers who are regular DCCCC employees and have the same credentials as our classroom staff members. They are able to step into any classroom and function fully as a member of the team when needed. Profiles of all Floating Assistant Teachers are available in the multi and in the West Wing foyer.

- **Temporary Staff members**

- Most of our temporary staff members have not completed higher education in ECE. Like our regular staff, they had to complete the interview, reference and background check process. Temporary staff members work under the direct supervision of a regular staff member.

- Our temporary staff are also comprised of two groups:
 - **Substitute Staff.** The people in this category enjoy working with children, are looking for a temporary job or are willing to work on a term by term basis. The people in this group change frequently.
 - **Student helpers.** We offer experience to Dartmouth Students on a term by term basis. We also employ students from the Hanover area who are home from college. Occasionally, we have local high school students who work here afterschool or are doing field placement for a class.
- **Volunteers**
 - Our volunteers are mainly comprised of upper elementary/middle school age children who are DCCCC alumni. Their experience of DCCCC is so memorable that they want to *give back* by volunteering to play with children for a few hours a week. We love having alumni come back to volunteer (just a note for your future planning)!
 - Occasionally we have older volunteers as well.
 - As with all temporary staff, volunteers work only under the supervision of regular staff members.
- **Office Staff**
 - We can't forget our office staff.
 - Our amazing office staff are trained to do the things that they do so well.
 - They had to undergo the same interview, reference and background check as required for the teaching positions.
 - The office staff will step in to help a classroom from time to time, but only under the direct supervision of a member of the regular teaching staff. (Jeff and Sunnie are allowed to be alone with children-they do have backgrounds in ECE!)

I know that it can be very confusing with so many people around. If you are ever unsure, please ask! We love to answer questions!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DCCCC Will Be Closed On The Following Days:

- Monday, May 29, Memorial Day**
- Tuesday, July 4, Independence Day**
- Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 28 and 29, In-
Service and Transition**
- Monday, September 4, Labor Day**
- Thursday and Friday, November 23 and 24,
Thanksgiving Break**
- December 25-January 1, 2018, Winter Break**

Events in the Community

"Lindsay's Puppet Pals" in Lebanon

Saturday, May 20, 2017

2:00 pm

First Congregational Church

10 South Park St.

Lebanon, NH

[Directions](#)



Price: Free

Puppeteer Lindsay Aucella brings a menagerie of colorful, hand-crafted characters and her sense of comedic timing to this highly interactive performance. Families welcome. For more information, visit www.lindsayspuppetpals.com.

Contact Info

Brian Clancy

First Congregational Church

church@fccleb.org

[603-448-4281](tel:603-448-4281)

Kite Day on Balch Hill in Hanover

Saturday, May 20, 2017

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Balch Hill Natural Area

Intersection of Grasse Road and Trescott Road

Hanover, NH



Price: Free

Bring kites and kids for an afternoon of kite-flying on the Balch Hill summit. Leashed dogs welcome. Co-sponsored by the Hanover Conservancy and Red Kite Candy.

Contact Info

Courtney Dragiff

Hanover Conservancy

cdragiff@hanoverconservancy.org

603-643-3433

Dinner Under the Balloons in Post Mills

Saturday, May 20, 2017

4:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Additional Dates

Friday, May 19, 2017 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Post Mills Airport

104 Robinson Hill Road

Post Mills, VT

[Directions](#)



Price: Admission is free; dinner available for purchase.

Dinner will be served under the hot air balloons at the Experimental Hot Air Balloon and Airship Meet. The menu features local grass-fed beef hamburgers and cheeseburgers with Cabot cheese (\$5), locally smoked pulled pork sandwiches (\$7), hot dogs, grilled Cabot cheese sandwiches, coleslaw, baked beans and home-baked goodies. Proceeds benefit Caring Community Preschool in Post Mills. Balloons typically launch around 6 p.m. Admission (without dinner) and parking are free.

The Post Mills Airport is also home to the Vermontasaurus (a large wooden dinosaur statue) and the Museum of Rusty Dusty Stuff, both available for viewing.

Contact Info

Ann Hughes

Caring Community Preschool

ccpreschoolvt@gmail.com

[802-333-9352](tel:802-333-9352)

Open Fields Medieval Festival

Saturday, May 27, 2017

11:00 am - 4:00 pm

[The Thetford Green](#)

37 Academy Road

Thetford Hill, VT

[Directions](#)



Price: \$0.00 to \$7.00 Children under 4 are free

During this annual family-friendly festival, the Green comes alive with the sights and sounds of a Medieval village. A King & Queen, knights and ladies, peasants, craftsmen, shepherds, and farmers gather to celebrate the age via music, dance, games of skill and chance, food, traditional crafts, hair braiding, storytelling, Benny the Dragon, Highland ponies, feats of juggling and acrobatics, and the No Strings Marionette Company. Costumes are encouraged. Visit VTMedFest.com for details.

Contact Info

Mandy

Open Fields School

greenmandyr@gmail.com

[6036676284](tel:6036676284)

Cheese & Dairy Celebration at Billings Farm and Museum

May 27 - May 28

We'll celebrate Vermont's distinctive dairy heritage during Memorial Day Weekend, with two days devoted to cheese, cows, and family fun. Sample many delicious dairy products from some of Vermont's finest artisan cheese makers – and of course [Billings Farm Cheddar!](#)

Learn how we care for our cows, their calving, and milk production and find out why dairy cows have been the backbone of Vermont's economy for over one hundred years.



The Arts Corner

Sensational Spring Time



I Love Mud!



What do we have a bounty of in the spring time? Mud! With just a cup and a spoon [even sometimes just hands alone], mud can be one of the most exciting- and affordable- playtime materials. Mud can be found in its natural habitat or can be created indoors in trays/bowls.

Some Mud Ideas:

- Mix a bit of food coloring, mud, and some extra water to create some mud paintings! [Tape some paper to a fence/wall to explore this outdoors!]
- Offer some (sized age appropriately) natural materials, such as rocks, sticks, etc. and small cups and just observe. Will they become cakes or ice cream? Fairy gardens? Open-ended “loose parts” allow for creative exploration!
- Water down the mud and offer materials such as potato mashers, plastic animals, and whisks, to create mud prints on paper.
- Combine dirt (approx. 6 cups of moist soil), water (1 cup), vegetable oil (1 cup) and cornstarch (as needed) in a large plastic bin to make mud dough. Mix the oil and water in the bin first, then stir in the dirt. Add cornstarch as needed to dry the mixture out a bit. If you use dry soil, try mixing it with the liquids one cup at a time to desired consistency.
- For a silly mud-themed song, listen to the song I Love Mud by Rick Charette!

Worms



Where there's dirt (or mud), there are often worms! You may have seen them while digging or while crossing the DCCCC [or any] parking lot on a rainy day. Grab a bin full of dirt and be a worm-saver on wet day or take a moment to observe how they have to move their body to get across the dirt. Ask your child how they feel when touched; are they slimy? Don't forget to make your hands damp if you plan to hold them for a long time!

Some Worm Stories:

- Diary of a Worm by Doreen Cronin
- Garden Wigglers: Earthworms in Your Backyard by Nancy Loewen
- An Earthworm's Life by John Himmelman

Gardening

Springtime is the right time for planting seeds- and exploring how they grow! Your child is never too young to engage in the joy of gardening. Digging the soil, planting seeds, and watering the growing plants are all jobs your child can participate in! What will happen when you put the seeds into the dirt? Will it take a long or a short time for the plants to grow? What will it look like when it grows up? Your child can draw pictures of their predictions or what they notice is happening as the plant grows.



Song of the Season



“My Garden”

[Actions are below the lyrics in italics!]

This is my garden,

[Left hand becomes the “garden” - extend it with palm facing up]

I’ll rake it with care,

[Use your other hand to rake your “garden”]

And then some seeds I’ll plant in there.

[Pretend to plant seeds in the “garden”]

The sun will shine,

[Use both arms to make a large circle]

And the rain will fall,

[fingers pretend to be “rain” - wiggle fingers as they go from top to bottom]

And my garden will blossom and grow straight and tall.

[“Garden” hand becomes a “cup” and opposite hand (pointer finger) becomes the plant- finger “grows” from the “cup” when you push up through the bottom. Once it “grows” up through the “cup” your hand opens up into a flower!]

News from the Chickadee Ones

Ali Wachunas
Lead Teacher

Denise Ayers,
Teacher

Deserai Stone,
Assistant Teacher

Greetings from the chickadees,
Can you believe there is only 4 months left of the school year! Where did the time go? We feel like just yesterday we were meeting all of you.

Our chicks are on the move and talking up a storm. We are so close to having all our little ones walking. It is truly remarkable how far they all have come. Every single one of them has a distinct, beautiful & unique personality that we all just adore. Our group of chickadees is now becoming much more independent and expressive of things they want.

Lunch time has become a task for two as they are now beginning to refuse foods and throw their food (read below articles).



ENJOYING PANCAKES...Yum Yum

These chicks are also into climbing anything and everything. Friendly reminders to “please keep your feet on the floor” have become our favorite saying. Although this time of the year is busy, it is also a time to celebrate how far they all have come. They are all so curious and love to explore their world. It is a beautiful thing to see.

We just completed the week of the young child...our favorite week! What’s better than celebrating the life of these brilliant chicks? Our week consisted of music Monday, tasty Tuesday, work together Wednesday, artsy Thursday and family Friday. The chickadees were able to explore instruments, enjoy delicious pancakes (which they helped to make), spend time with the Black Bears, paint with golf balls, and enjoy a bite to eat/songs with their families. Thank you families for spending time Friday morning/afternoon with your child/children. We always love having families come in and gather together. This week was a wonderful celebration of young children and how truly amazing they are 😊



The chickadees have been enjoying music class with Brooke & getting more and more engaged with the songs and instruments. Many of them now have dance moves. They love to take each other's hands and dance together. Laurie Berkner is one of their favorites, if you want to check out her music. She has many cd's and tons of YouTube videos. P.S. Congratulations to Brooke who is expecting another child! She makes our Tuesday morning ☺



Now with the warmer weather here we have been getting outside more and more. We have new rain suits that the chicks are enjoying the wet, muddy weather even more.

Reminders:

1. If your child has rain boots please bring them in! We do go outside in the rain and mud. The children love being able to splash in the puddles.
2. Weather appropriate clothes (each day the weather changes so make sure to have cool clothes along with warmer clothes and sweatshirts). Our air conditioner will be in use soon and so the classroom may be on the cooler side, while the weather outdoors will be warmer.



We are looking forward to our upcoming field trip to Billings's farm on May 26th. The chicks have been very into farm animals and the noises they make. This field trip will be a great way to wrap up the unit on farms/farm animals and give them a chance to explore farm life. The children will be seeing cows, horses, sheep, lambs, baby chicks, and farm equipment! Look for pictures to follow ☺



~ Other things to look forward to:

Parent picnic which will be in August sometime☺ This is a time to come together and spend time before our chicks move on to the next classroom.



♥ ~Chick one teachers

* Below are some interesting/informational articles we came across that we thought you would all enjoy.

<http://families.naeyc.org/content/11-reasons-take-kids-outside>

<http://families.naeyc.org/learning-and-development/reading-writing/12-ways-support-language-development-infants-and-toddlers>

<http://www.parents.com/toddlers-preschoolers/feeding/problems/toddler-feeding-problems-solved/>

<http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/toddler-meals.html>



News from the Chickadee Toos

Teresa Hahn,
Lead Teacher

Lori Higgins,
Teacher

Moya Stevens,
Assistant Teacher

Spring is here, the birds are singing and flowers are poking up their heads. We have been able to enjoy more spring weather, thanks to the purchase of rain suits for the Chickadees. We have been having lots of fun splashing in and scooping up and pouring the puddles. We would appreciate puddle boots or water-proof shoes sent in for your child. Also a sun hat, preferably one that can be secured on (ties, Velcro or a buckle) Please remember to label your child's clothing and footwear.

We are beginning to think about gardening in Chickadee Too. We are planning some planting activities and look forward to growing tomatoes in our fenced garden. We have started weeding out our sunflower house and will plant when the ground warms up enough.

The Week of the Young Child was a great experience. We enjoyed the instruments from Music Monday throughout the week & Tasty Tuesday's pancakes were a big hit for p.m. snack. Work Together Wednesday was so much fun. We were invited to the Black Bear room which was set up with block building in the loft, playing with a parachute and balls, exploring playdough, my little ponies, puppets and stuffed animals. There also was the opportunity to use a variety of writing and drawing materials. The kids really enjoyed the freedom to climb the stairs into the loft and move from one activity to the next. Artsy Thursday we did ball rolling painting both inside and outside. The all center a.m. snack and afternoon sing-a-long and story time was a perfect Family Friday to end our week. A big thank-you to Liz for organizing W.O.Y.C.!





We are excited that Maggie has been walking more than crawling now and she seems quite proud of herself. Sammy has learned to roll, giving him access to more toys. Emily has become quite the story teller. She also has discovered both her thumbs and how to kick at hanging toys to make them move. Lucy continues to delight us with her giggles and has been developing quite a vocabulary herself. Connor, Graham, Franz and Maxwell love playing outside! They are learning to ride bikes, use the swings safely and get on and off the rocking toys. Digging in the dirt is an activity we all love. Nolan is on the verge of walking and has found his voice. He continues to charm us with his smile. Zelda is crawling and cruising around hanging on to shelves etc. It won't be long now. We are growing so fast and ready to spring in to Summer.

Enjoy the sun!

Teresa



News from the Owls

Debbie Burnham,
Lead Teacher

Wendy Irwin,
Teacher

April Buchanan,
Assistant Teacher

The Owl Room will become an official "Two Year Old Room" by the end of May. Everyone will have turned two! We definitely see changes in our group. There is more group play and more conversations. We are able to introduce new ideas and explore new areas. We are looking forward to water play outside and walks outside the fence. Gardening started with the Owls helping Teresa get ready for a Sunflower House.

We celebrated Week of the Young Child in a big way. We joined the Black Bears, in their classroom, for a story and snack. We played with the Hedgehogs in our little multi with block building. We are seeing complex building structure happening now that our group is older. We even shared and took turns with new instruments on Music Monday!

You will see changes in our classroom with children's schedules changing for the summer. Some children are adding days while some are dropping days. Charlotte will be moving with her family in June. We will miss her greatly, but wish their family well in their new adventure.

Here are some of our spring accomplishments:

Cole can build a tall tower using all the duplos
Torin can make up songs on his own such as "Happy Birthday to the Corn Muffins"





Julia can put on her own shoes and socks
Libby is starting to recognize patterns using colored blocks
Ada can race trucks down the blue hill in our multi, after she counts to twelve
Jack can put on his own socks, when he chooses to
Nicole can read herself a book, singing the words
Joshua is happy that the sand box is opened again and likes making tracks with truck tires in the sand
Charlotte can tell us "up" when she wants to sit in our lap
Louisa can count to ten using Autumn's fingers
Zoe will return from China soon
Charlie shared his Nanna with us when she visited from South Africa
Maya has returned from China and we hope she will tell us stories about her trip when she is ready



Please check your child's cubby for warm weather clothing and a sun hat if you want your child to wear one. We have started using sunscreen and will use our supply unless you have provided one of your own choosing.



We hope you have a wonderful springtime with your TWO YEAR OLD!

Fondly,
Debbie, Wendy and April

News from the Hedgehogs

Jennifer Sprague,
Lead Teacher

Jenn Boudro,
Teacher

Angelica Morrison,
Assistant Teacher

Hello Families,

We have been enjoying the rain and the puddles and boy we do love to jump in all the puddles! We have been doing a variety of activities on our Hedgehog calendar. Celebrating days that children have requested to have on the calendar like hockey day and car wash day. The Hedgehogs are very busy during the day learning about new topics as well as socially interacting with peers/teachers. They are sharing materials, waiting for turns, and communicating their wants and their needs. Below is a great article from the Zero to Three Website about how to set limits for children and help them develop self-control.

In order to follow rules and understand limits, children need to develop self-control. Self-control is the ability to cope with strong feelings and stop one's self from doing something that is not allowed. Developing self-control begins at birth and continues throughout childhood. Young children learn self-control through interactions with peers and guidance from parents and other loving adults.

Two-Year-Olds and Self-Control

Older toddlers are making great strides in developing self-control but still have a ways to go to learn to manage their impulses in appropriate ways. While they are beginning to understand what is and is not acceptable, they still do not have the full ability to stop themselves from doing something that's not allowed. Here is an example:

A 2-1/2-year-old wants the toy that his friend is playing with. He grabs it. His friend grabs it back. He hits his friend. They both begin to cry. His mother calms him and then helps him return the toy to his friend. She explains that hitting is not okay and helps him ask for a turn with the toy.

At this stage, setting and enforcing rules consistently becomes very important. Age-appropriate rules let children know what to expect, which makes them feel safe, secure and in control—key ingredients for their healthy social-emotional development. Experiencing consistent responses to behaviors also helps children make good decisions.

Everyday ways to nurture self-control:

Suggest ways to manage strong emotions. When a child is really angry, suggest that he jump up and down, rip paper, cuddle up in a cozy area for alone time, paint an angry picture or another strategy that you feel is appropriate. Teach children that there are many healthy, non-hurtful ways to express their feelings.

Look for ways to practice self-control. Turn-taking games such as rolling a ball back and forth require children to wait and control their impulses. Take turns hitting a soft foam ball off a tee. Play "sharing music" where each of you chooses an instrument to play and set an egg-timer for 1 minute. When the timer goes off, switch instruments and set the timer again.

(Continuing Zero to Three article)

Give choices to head off misbehavior. For example, when a child is having trouble sharing a ball, you might say, *You have a decision to make. You can choose to take turns with the ball or put the ball away.* Keep your language firm while positive, simple and at the child's level. Help him understand he has choices, and that every choice has a consequence.

Offer alternatives. Help toddlers meet their goals in acceptable ways. *It's not okay to throw blocks. Someone might get hurt. Let's throw these foam balls into a basket instead.* Offering an alternative is important because toddlers need help identifying more appropriate activities.

Be consistent. Consistency with rules is key to helping children learn to make good choices. If every time a child throws a toy it gets taken away, she quickly learns not to throw toys. But when the rules keep changing, it is hard for young children to understand which rules are "for real."

Give children a visual to help them cope with waiting. If you'd like children to brush their teeth for 2 minutes each day after lunch, use an egg timer so they can watch the countdown. Need 10 minutes to call a parent? Set a timer so that children have a concrete way of understanding how long they have to wait. This helps them feel more in control and therefore able to cope better.

Look for patterns in children's behavior. Sometimes you can identify patterns that signal a child is likely to "lose it." Anticipating these breakdowns can help you prevent them. For example, if you notice that a child has a hard time coping with transitions, such as going from lunch to nap, you can give him a warning 5 minutes before. It can also be very helpful to establish a ritual that helps him make the change, such as reading a book or starting a drawing together that you finish when he wakes up.

Don't do something, just stand there. If a child is having a tantrum, take 15 seconds to stop and think before reacting. *Ask yourself: What is my goal here? What do I want the child to learn from this experience?* Taking the time to think it through can help you respond in a calmer more thoughtful and more effective way.

ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families



News from the Otters

Susan Quimby Young,
Lead Teacher

Stephanie Cummings,
Teacher

Katie Robinson,
Assistant Teacher

Greetings from the Otters,

As you know from our daily emails home we have been very busy in the Otter Room. We have been learning about Spring and the changes that take place from Winter. We looked at how plants start to bloom and how the world around us starts to turn green. We did playdough flower planting, vegetable scrubbing and zig-zag frog hopping to name but a few activities. The Otters loved learning about frogs and enjoyed having a frog pond sensory bin. Their favorite song over recent weeks has been 5 Little Speckled Frogs. We sing it when we are inside, outside and when we play with frogs. The children used small logs while outside to stand on and when it was their turn they jumped into the “pond”, as we sang the song to them.

Although the Otters enjoyed the Winter months, they were excited to see the changes that Spring brought back to the yard. In particular, the opening of the climber and the return of the swings. These are the first things the Otters run to when we go outside. We have been teaching the children to pump when they are on the swings as we are not always able to push. On the climber, they enjoy using the slide and like to hold hands with friends when they go down. They also use the climber to play chase games with the Hedgehogs and Badgers.





The Otters had a lot of fun for the Week of the Young Child (WOYC). We focused on activities that we do every day but tried to use different methods and materials to do them. For example, the Otters painted with their feet, tried different fruits and vegetables, painted with their heads,

played with a variety of musical instruments, made rice shakers and made colored toast for snack. The Otters really enjoyed taking part in the activities during this week and the opportunity to work with different classrooms.



Our latest theme is Food & Farming as requested by the children. For a while the children have taken an interest to farm animals and the storybook Driving my Tractor. We started work on this unit by asking the children what they already know about farms and farmers and displayed this information around a picture of a farmer. Some of the responses were “Farmers sell animals, farmers sell milk too, they feed animals hay, farmers work hard, farmers drive trucks and tractors.” At the end of the unit, we plan to ask this question again to find out what the children have learnt when we ask the questions what do you know about farms/farmers.

We have already learnt about milking cows, this activity was loved by the Otters. They learnt how to milk them by hand and we saw how much time this took. We talked about how farmers use machines to collect the milk quickly and referenced books to look at this information. We have also learnt how many legs animals have, why sheep have wool and why they need to be shorn. We have talked about different breeds of cows and how some are bred for milk. We just visited Billings Farm & Museum to see and understand



everything we have learnt about in the past few weeks. It was great seeing the children's faces as they visited the animals in person.



As you have noticed there have been changes to the layout of the Otter classroom and the introduction on our parent connection board. This board allows you to keep informed with everything that is happening in the classroom. We have a daily staff schedule, monthly calendar, weekly activity calendar, reminders board and spare *no nut* notes. It is updated daily, so check in everyday to see the staff shifts, and any reminders of any upcoming events.

We are getting to enjoy some warmer weather outside and sometimes we get dirty, so please remember to check your children's cubbies regularly to see if they have additional clothes in case they need to change.

On behalf of the Otter team,
Stephanie



News from the Badgers

Terri Hollis,
Lead Teacher

Miranda Arruda,
Teacher

Judy Labrie,
Acting Assistant
Teacher

Greetings Badger Families,

This is the time of year that it will astonish you if you stop and take a deliberate look at how much your child has changed, socially, emotionally, and physically. The goal has been to give essential space, materials, and guidance for your children to explore. Oh and they have done just that.

We have seen children hang on to good friends while expanding who they are willing to play with. They most certainly have shown caring attitudes toward one another, Ok not always but certainly most of the time. Children will report if another child is hurt, or share, or give random hugs if they feel it is needed. We have seen a surge lately in cooperative play. Groups of children building with magna tiles, or “cooking” together and for each other in rather small space. There has

been so much cooperative mud play. They decide, who are the diggers? Who are the carriers? Where the water should go? Think about that for a moment. Yes they have their share of disputes but they use newly learned tools to work it out. They are way more successful at the process of negotiating that a few months ago.

Most of the Badgers have really begun to be equal partners in conversation. They have become confident and comfortable to exchange with both peers and adults. They are using bigger and more elaborate language to express themselves. We have heard words like complicated, strange, hilarious, energy, exhausted, delay, only to name a few. Remember to read our quote board for samples of funny thoughts and words fresh from your child’s mouth. We see and hear humor all day long. The most exciting thing (I think) is when they become self-motivated learners. Wanting to explore, wanting to participate, capable of obtaining what is being shown or discussed. We saw this in a big way when we were discussing the stages of insects, or what the process of recycling is. Little inquiring minds want to know. I can tell you most of your children could have cared less about hearing pages of a story without pictures. Your children have really learned to do incredible listening, and conceptualizing. A favorite time of day is when it is time to hear a chapter, sometimes two (they often tease for another) from our Junie B Jones chapter books.

They have become very independent and quite frankly do not even want adults help even when offered. We have all been witness to a Confidence explosion. Teachers love that this is often extended to them wanting to be helping hands to us and others. Yes the list goes on and on and on. You get the idea, right? STOP take note and notice how your child has changed in a short period of time.

On behalf of the Badger Room

Terri



News from the Black Bears

Amy McLellan,
Lead Teacher

Barb Merchand,
Teacher

Liz Harrington,
Assistant Teacher



Welcome Spring!
The Black Bears have been very busy enjoying the garden outside our meeting space window. We are beginning to notice that lots of plants and flowers are blooming, and wonder daily if the robin who built the nest in the umbrella tree last year will return this year. With clipboards, the Bears have been documenting all of the changes that are occurring in the garden each day. We so enjoy filling the pages of our *Black Bear Garden Journal* with pictures of the flowers, plants, and insects that we have discovered in the garden.

In addition to enjoying the garden, the Black Bears are giving the natural playground a new look. We took two garden boxes apart to create one larger flower/rock/exploration garden space. The Bears have worked hard to spread and smooth the compost so that we can plant wildflower seeds and see what comes up! We have added short fencing to define the space, rocks to create a walkway, and a birdbath and shepherds hook to hang a flower pot. Over the course of the spring and summer, we will continue to "grow" our garden space. Check it out and notice how it the changes all season long! Next, we repurposed the boards from the original boxes to begin work on our outdoor stage space! This is another work in progress and will include "stadium seating" when it is all complete. The Bears have been very involved in collecting



the planks, and screwing and unscrewing brackets in an attempt to make a solid stage for our outdoor performances!



Speaking of performances, the Black Bears want to thank everyone for coming to our world premiere viewing of *Abiyoyo: the Black Bear Edition*. It was quite a gala! We had such fun being the stars of our own movie, and hosting our Black Bear families at our "before and after" party! The Bears worked very hard on their performances, and we couldn't have done it without the amazing producer, director, costume designer, editing and film work of Liz Harrington!



The Bears celebrated the Week of the Young Child with the rest of the center in April. The Otters explored instruments with us on *Music Monday*. The Owls shared corn muffins and homemade strawberry jam with us on *Tasty Tuesday*. On *Work Together Wednesday*, the Chicks and Chicks Too joined us for center time activities in our room, and on *Artsy Thursday*, the Hedgehogs came to paint, color, and glue with us. Thank you to the WOYC Committee for hosting a delicious breakfast snack in the big multi for families to enjoy before heading off to work on *Family Friday!*

Until next time,

The Black Bear Team
Amy, Barb, and Liz

