



Dartmouth College Child Care Center Newsletter

May 2015 Quarterly

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Chase, Dawn Cote

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Terri Crane, Kristin Cole,
Brian Goodness

We Skipped Spring!





From the Director

Dear Big Jeff,

I want to garden with my child this summer. It would be a great family activity. Last year, she was really into the gardens at DCCCC. She was excited about the harvesting the beans and even asked for some in the produce section at the grocery store. When we tried gardening together last summer though, her attention span was, like, 30 seconds. Any suggestions?

Signed

Green Thumb

Dear Green,

What a great idea! Sounds like planting beans should be on your spring list. Did you see the Black Bears bean-pole teepee last year? Or the sunflower house? Or the Owl's shade garden? Or the path through the Hedgehog's garden? Or the Badger's tunnel? Or the Chickadee's butterfly garden? Or the Otter's raised beds? Whew! I forgot we had so many gardens and I don't think I listed them all. Check in with your child's teachers for more good ideas and to get the inside scoop about what interests your child about gardening at school. As for your daughter's interest level, don't be discouraged. Gardening in short spurts can be fun and productive.

I remember my first garden as a child, so it must have made a big impression. Maybe because one of my favorite books was *The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Kraus in which a little boy succeeds in growing a carrot from a seed that nobody thought would grow. I really liked putting the seeds in and I liked spraying the garden with the hose, too, although not all the water went in the garden exactly. My enthusiasm lasted all the way until the business of weeding began. My parents could do it for hours, it seemed. Playing in the dirt with a shovel, a pail and a dump truck was infinitely more interesting than that. I admit that I put my children through a similar routine, but now I am smarter! When I have grandchildren old enough to garden with, I plan to keep my expectations appropriate to their age. Just a few minutes and a just a few weeds! After all, the most important thing is for them to enjoy the world of garden plants and animals.

By contrast, I was fascinated by the indoor garden on the kitchen windowsill. My mother put an avocado seed in water and it grew! When we planted it, it was a real tree. When she noticed my interest, she put a sweet potato in a jar of water and that REALLY grew. I asked if we could try a "regular" potato and that worked, too. From there we experimented with carrot tops in a saucer of water and orange seeds in a pot

of dirt. Then turnips tops, watermelon seeds, and so on. Some things grew, others didn't. It was interesting, it was close at hand, we did it in short spurts and we used my ideas. Eventually I lost interest and we stopped doing it. Now that was good teaching, Mom!

My advice then: Let your child lead you. Start with something simple perhaps planting a pot or window box (the plastic ones are cheap in the big box stores) with your child. Then take the bucket and the shovel to the garden for some good old-fashioned playing in the dirt. Mostly, just have fun.

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:

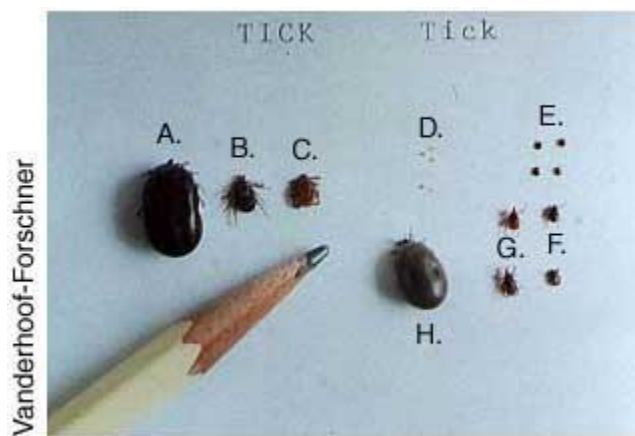
- a. Insect repellent with 20% DEET which must be reapplied every 2 hours. DEET is a powerful chemical, so we'd need your written permission if you want us to use it at DCCCC.
- b. Permethrin treated clothing
- c. Wearing long sleeved shirts and long pants tucked into your socks.

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



DCCCC Will Be Closed On The Following Days:

- Monday, May 25, Memorial Day**
 - Friday, July 3, Independence Day**
 - Monday and Tuesday,
August 31 and September 1**
- To prepare for the new school
year**

**The first day of school for the Ray
School and our first day of new
groups will be Wednesday,
September 2.**



healthy children.org

Powered by pediatricians. Trusted by parents.
from the American Academy of Pediatrics

Well-Child Care: A Check-Up for Success

Well-child care is one of the hallmarks of a family-centered [medical home](#). Despite what some might think when hearing "medical home" for the first time, a medical home is not a physical place. Rather, it is an approach to providing primary care in a way that looks at the entire picture incorporating all the things that are important to the health and wellbeing of a child.

As part of the care provided within a medical home, the well-child care visit is an opportunity to raise general questions and concerns about your child's development, behavior, and general well-being. Many parents also use this well-child visit as a time for [scheduled vaccinations](#) and to see [how much their child has grown](#) since the last check-up. Pediatricians are used to discussing common concerns with parents such as eating, sleeping, [toilet training](#), and social behaviors, as well as attention and [learning difficulties](#). This type of visit differs from a "sick visit" in which you might take your child to the doctor for a specific problem like an [allergic reaction](#), an [ear infection](#), or [breathing trouble](#).

Having regular well-child visits with your child's doctor and raising the concerns that matter most to you are key ingredients in helping the doctor know you and your child and forming a reliable and trustworthy relationship.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recently conducted 20 focus groups with parents and 31 focus groups with pediatricians and pediatric nurse practitioners to gather recommendations about how to make the most of the well-child office visit. From these conversations, four common ideas arose:

- Pediatricians and parents share the goal of healthy children.
- Pediatricians want the well-child visit to best serve the needs of children and their families.
- Pediatricians are experts in child health, but *parents are experts on their child*.
- A [team approach](#) can best develop top physical, emotional, and developmental health for the child.



Read more of this article at

<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/health-management/Pages/Well-Child-Care-A-Check-Up-for-Success.aspx>

START SMART

with a Healthy Breakfast for your Kids



Cereals may seem like a great breakfast option for your family, but too often they come with something you don't want – loads of sugar. **And that's not good.**

Americans consume an average of 22 teaspoons of sugar a day. And you might be surprised to know that after obvious foods such as candy, cookies, ice cream, sugary drinks, **breakfast cereals are the single greatest source of added sugar in the diets of children under eight.**

A 2012 EWG report found that every single cereal marketed to children contained added sugar. On average, children's cereals have more than 40 percent more sugar than adult cereals, and twice as much sugar as oatmeal. **A child who eats an average serving of a typical kid's cereal every morning ends up consuming more than 10 pounds of sugar a year from that source alone.**

THERE ARE BETTER WAYS TO START YOUR CHILD'S DAY. HERE ARE SOME GREAT TIPS FROM HEALTHY CHILD HEALTHY WORLD AND EWG FOR A SMART START:

1. One great alternative is a bowl of unsweetened hot cereal topped with fruit. It may even save you money. An EWG analysis of government data found that on average, a bowl of oatmeal or other hot cereal costs half as much as cold cereal.

But beware of instant oatmeal – it averages 75 percent more sugar than regular oatmeal.

Granolas can seem like a good option since they usually contain more fiber and protein per serving than other cold cereals, but they, too, pack a sugar punch – the average granola contains nearly 11 grams of sugar per serving, nearly three times the recommended 4 grams.

Prepare breakfast from scratch as often as possible. Check out EWG's Healthy Breakfast Tips for great ideas on making healthy and sustaining breakfasts.

2. Beware of added vitamins and minerals

Food producers often fortify cereals with large amounts of vitamins and minerals to make their products seem more nutritious and sell better. **But too-high doses of some nutrients can cause liver damage, skeletal abnormalities, hair loss, decreased immune function or rashes, nausea and vomiting.**

The three nutrients to watch out for are vitamin A, zinc and niacin, and fortified cereals are the number one reason that children sometimes get too much of them. That's because they're added in amounts based on adults' needs, not children's. EWG identified 114 cereals that contain 30 percent or more of the recommended adult daily amount of vitamin A, zinc and niacin. **That's considered high by the FDA, and above the safe level for kids younger than eight.**



3. Don't give infants rice cereal as their first solid food

Parents used to be advised to start infants on fortified rice cereals, which were touted as non-allergenic and nutritive, but experts' guidance is shifting – **there's no medical evidence that parents must introduce solid foods in any particular order**, and there may be a known human carcinogen lurking in that rice cereal – arsenic. Consumer Reports tested infant rice cereals and found more than 95 parts per billion of arsenic in every brand, nearly 10 times the legal limit for drinking water. **Soft fruits, vegetables or even meats are great first sources of nutrients for babies instead.** Try bananas, avocados or sweet potatoes. Or look for non-rice whole grains such as whole-wheat farina, grits or oat cereal. You can make your own by blending oats in a food processor and then cooking them with water.

4. Some cereals are better than others.

HERE'S WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

WATCH THE SALT.

Look for less than 210 mg of sodium per serving.

No more than a teaspoon (4 grams) of sugar per serving.

Less than 20-25 percent of the adult daily value for vitamin A, zinc or niacin.

HIDDEN TRANS FATS.

Look out for "partially hydrogenated" ingredients.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 10 crackers (30g)
Servings Per Carton about 14

Amount Per Serving

Calories 140 **Calories from Fat** 35

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 4g **6%**

Saturated Fat 1.5g **8%**

Trans Fat 0g

Polyunsaturated Fat 0.5g

Monounsaturated Fat 1g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 270mg **11%**

Total Carbohydrate 21g **7%**

Dietary Fiber less than 1g **3%**

Sugars 3g

Protein 2g

Iron 6%

Not a significant source of vitamin A, vitamin C and calcium.

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:

Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

INGREDIENTS: ENRICHED WHEAT FLOUR** (WHEAT FLOUR, NIACIN, REDUCED IRON, THIAMIN MONONITRATE, RIBOFLAVIN AND FOLIC ACID), VEGETABLE OIL* (CONTAINS ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING OILS: INTERESTERIFIED SOYBEAN, CANOLA, PALM) WITH CITRIC ACID AND TBHQ ADDED TO PRESERVE FRESHNESS, SUGAR, HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, CONTAINS TWO PERCENT OR LESS OF: SALT, AMMONIUM BICARBONATE, SODIUM BICARBONATE, MONOCALCIUM PHOSPHATE, SOY LECITHIN* (AN EMULSIFIER), ARTIFICIAL FLAVOR AND SODIUM SULFITE.

CONTAINS: SOY*, WHEAT**

To learn more, check out these resources:

EWG's report – Children's Cereals: Sugar by the Pound

EWG's report – How Much is Too Much?

EWG's Food Scores database

Healthy Child Healthy World's Blog

EWG's Healthy Breakfast Tips

EWG's report – Good Food on a Tight Budget

Try for at least 3 grams of fiber per serving.

ADDED SUGARS.

Also known as corn syrup, dextrose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, molasses, corn syrup solids, cane sugar, evaporated cane juice, fructose, invert sugar, cane sugar syrup, glucose, sucrose, rice syrup, malt syrup, maple syrup, agave nectar, brown sugar, or fruit juice concentrate.



News from the Chickadee Ones

Michele Estes,
Lead Teacher

Denise Ayers,
Teacher

Like spring, we are sprouting and blooming in the Chickadee One room: tummy rolls, sitting independently, rolling/wiggling about the room, crawling to standing, toddling steps, and attempts to run! Your babies and young toddlers work hard every day as they innately incorporate emerging milestones and mastery into their play. If you notice an ebb and flow of frustration, crankiness and sleep changes, this is very healthy and normal when on the verge of a milestone. Here is a good read that may have you nodding in agreement, as you and your baby/toddler may have experienced some pre-milestone frustrations: [You'd Be Surprised At The Emotional Toll The Pre-Walking Stage Takes On Your Baby.](#)

A welcome to the youngest of the Staath family! Torin joined the DCCCC and Chickadee One family at the beginning of April. Torin is chiming right in as our youngest Chickadee of 4 + months!

Most of our babies & toddlers have naturally developed their way to two or one nap a day! With more time for exploration and activities, their developmental needs change as well. The way that we structure our day will change as the children's needs change.

Some ways that you can help, please:

- know that the children are interested in playing when they arrive; we'll be providing more opportunities for early morning play so it will be likely that our growing kids will not be interested in eating until our mid-morning snack. (may not apply to our younger babies with closer feedings and naps)! We will offer a snack mid-morning either from the center or one that you would like for us to feed from his/her lunch box. If your child is not able to eat breakfast at home, please let us know.
- provide outdoor wear appropriate for current weather conditions (raincoats, puddle boots, sun/rain hats...)
- be sure your child's closet is current with extra clothes that fit and work for fluctuating temperatures & messy fun!



Whole Food Finger Food Ideas:

cooked & cut to bite size of the following:

- sweet potato
- white potato
- cauliflower florets
- broccoli or broccolini florets
- carrots
- celery
- parsnips
- squash
- zucchini
- green beans
- beets
- tomato
- apple
- pear
- cubed avocado
- peas
- raw tomato (can scald the tomato in boiling water for 10 or more seconds & peel the skin off if your little one cannot yet eat the skin)
- scrambled egg or omelet cut up (great place to add shredded veggies)
- flakes of fish
- cooked beans - cut large beans in half
- berries: blueberries, raspberries & blackberries - cut large berries in half
- banana - cut to bite size
- grapes - quartered lengthwise
- slightly overcooked brown rice (makes it a bit sticky & easier to grasp)

Recipe - grain, nut, dairy & refined sugar free!

[Two Ingredient Toddler Pancake](#)

Enjoy Spring!

Michele, Denise, Kristin and Liz



News from the Chickadee Toos

Teresa Hahn,
Lead Teacher

Lori Higgins,
Teacher

Moya Stevens,
Assistant Teacher



HAPPY SPRING!

We are so delighted to have some beautiful weather to get outside in! We have been exploring the grass and the sand and even some mud. April was farm animal month in Chickadee Too. We played with the barn, some tractors, and of course some animals. We enjoyed many farm themed books and sang many rounds of "Old MacDonald".

May brings thoughts of gardening, and that's what we are going to do. We will be sharing the raised garden beds with the Owls and planting plenty of veggies to enjoy in the summer and fall. We also will be planting a sunflower house to play in. We will be digging in the dirt, so please expect us to get a little dirty! We will be learning how things grow, and what plants need and how to take care of and nurture them.

I guess this is a good time to remind you to make sure your child has a few changes of warm weather clothes in their cubby, and if you would like to use a special sunscreen please send it in. Otherwise we will use the Equate brand sunscreen that D.C.C.C.C. provides.

Wishing you a joyous Spring,

Teresa for the Chickadee Toos



News from the Owls

Debbie Burnham,
Lead Teacher

Wendy Irwin,
Teacher

April Buchanan,
Assistant Teacher

The majority of the children in the Owl Room are now two years old! Sam, Cornelia and Austin joined the "Two Club" and we now have three owls that will have birthdays over the summer. Being two means becoming more independent. Children are getting on their own jackets and taking off their own shoes and socks, throughout the day, with minimal help. They are also making their own decisions about parts of their day: deciding to come for lunch when asked or to come inside from playing on the playground. We offer children a head's up such as, "In two minutes we will go inside" and we allow them time to make decisions on

their own. Some may choose not to eat snack and may continue to play. When coming in from outside they may need encouragement such as, "Lunch is ready, let's go inside to eat". Some may choose to lay down and scream and we allow them time to express themselves and then offer them words to use, "You are upset because you do not want to stop playing and pick up". Each day is a new adventure in the Owl Room!

We have started conversations about our gardens and hope to be able to have each child help in planting and tending the gardens.

Summer is our time for transitioning children in order to get them ready for their new placements at the end of August. We will be planning visits to their new rooms and spending more time with their new teachers.

Extra clothing has been cleaned out and now is the time to check sizes and bring in extra clothing. If your child has an extra t shirt for water play we would appreciate having one here for those hot days. Sun hats are also needed as are any special sunscreens that you want us to use.

Happy Spring!
Debbie, Wendy and April



News from the Hedgehogs

Jennifer Sprague,
Lead Teacher

Jenn Boudro,
Teacher

Anna Fuller,
Assistant Teacher

Hello Hedgehog Families,

The children have had a great last few months with all the weather changes. They have enjoyed the puddles, mud, more snow, and now the hot sun! Thank you to families for bringing in the water pants and water boots and now sunhats and summer clothing! We did enjoy a fun mud season together outside and now the children are loving putting their bare feet in the sandbox. We look forward to a wonderful summer together before the Hedgehogs move up to the Otters. We will be doing lots of gardening projects as well as activities based on books from home (more details to come). Below are some pictures of Hedgehogs exploring and learning through new adventures.





News from the Otters

Susan Quimby Young,
Lead Teacher

Joel King,
Teacher

Valerie Stefani,
Assistant Teacher

Wow but this year is zooming by! I can't believe we are well into May already. The sun is shining and kids are so ready to be outside!! The playground is alive with activities ranging from digging, loading dump trucks, excavating, making rivers and lakes, riding bikes, making mud cakes or dinner for friends, swinging and pumping, throwing and kicking balls, taking shots at the basketball hoop or just chatting with friends in the shade of a big tree. There is lots of dramatic play going on as well as "superheros" race around rescuing and dancers perform

on the stage. Yesterday, I watched several kids watch and wait for a chipmunk to stick her little head out a hole under the shed... and yes we had the discussion of..."no, never try to grab the chipmunk with your hand. It's a wild animal and we can't touch them!" They waited so very patiently and were rewarded several times with a brief viewing of the chipmy! We also have baseballs and gloves now. I have been amazed with the throwing and batting skills of some of the children. Of course there is a wide variety of skill levels but all have enjoyed playing in some fashion. Frizbees are another favorite.

We have begun our gardening season! Peas were planted this week. We're working with other classrooms to get the gardens up and running. We hope to have a bountiful harvest and want to share with families. We will be planting a bunch of seeds over the next few weeks including but not limited to lettuce, carrots, purple and green bush and pole beans, spinach, gourds and hopefully another batch of pumpkins.





We'll be talking about the changes as the vegetables grow and you can bet there will be lots of tasting going on!! I can't wait to do "garden tours" which my mother used to MAKE me do every evening as we checked for growth and change. We'll be looking for seeds to sprout, vegetables to form and flowers to bloom and things that might be ready to eat.

As summer approaches, we encourage you to send in a labeled water bottle for your child. We want to keep the crew hydrated and what better way than to have their very own water bottle available to them when outside (or inside). Also please keep your child's cubby stocked with a few pairs of shorts and t-shirts, socks, bathing suit and extra underwear. Kids will get wet and muddy playing! Please send in a sunhat if you'd like your Otter to wear one.

Another aspect of summer is helping your child prepare for their fall placement in the Badger room. Our doors are often open and the Otters are very familiar with the Badger room and staff. There will be both planned and spontaneous visits at different times of the day during the summer. Please stop in the check out their space and chat with the teachers. I'm sure Terri Hollis (lead teacher) will be happy to set up a time to meet if you'd like.

I'll be putting out a sheet for you to let us know if you are planning any vacation times this summer as plan for staffing.

Happy spring and summer!!
Susan for the Otter team



News from the Badgers

Terri Hollis,
Lead Teacher

Miranda Arruda,
Teacher

Melissa Horrigan,
Assistant Teacher

Hello Badger Families,

Typically and for good reason the focus for this newsletter is specific to your children and the room in which they are in. After spending four days in NYC attending the young Child Expo and seeing so many people dedicated to young children, I decided it would be

appropriate to switch gears this time around and focus on your children's teachers. What are we expected to bring the table? Where do we get our ideas and knowhow of what curriculum looks like. How and where do we stay connected to continued education? How and when do we come together to formulate our thoughts and plans? How do we stay motivated? In short what does it take to make your child's room a fun and stimulating place to be.

Each Teacher is expected first and foremost to come to work each day turning off personal interferences and focusing on your children from the get go. We are each responsible for having 18 learning credit hours (not counting CPR, water safety, and First Aide). These hours can be fulfilled by in house trainings or out of center. We try to vary topics and presenters. We also have one in service day that we explore ourselves as a whole center as well as individuals. We ask hard questions like, what are we not doing at all or what can we do better? This is also a great opportunity to meet as a whole staff to share ideas that we do not typically have an opportunity in which to do so.

What is really amazing is how the years of experience, varied personalities, strengths, talents, energy, really do shape how and who we are as a team. All are crucial and important! Here is an obvious statement: I am the older (much older) and seasoned teacher, I have a pretty good grip on how to handle certain behaviors, and what curriculum to me looks like, but I can also be set in my ways. Miranda and Melissa pull me with their energy, new theories, and enthusiasm in newer directions. Together we have experience and innovation and lots of energy, and enjoy your children as a whole.





The following thoughts represent who I feel I am and what best represents who I am as a teacher:

- A leopard can and does change some of their spots.
- You get from children what you give to them.



- Love them enough to assume they can, rather than they cannot.
- Remember children's play is their work.
- Modeling speaks louder than any words.
- I will not do or say anything to children that I would not be comfortable to do or say if the parents were also there.
- Every hour, day, month, and year are always different. (I love that!)
- Your children are my teachers, equally to me being theirs.
- Trust takes time.



- Boundaries and helping children stop feels like a security blanket.
- There is definitely more than one way of doing things, so let them explore how.
- Say what you mean and do what you say most of the time.



Here is what Miranda had to say about what represents her as a teacher:

I have learned a lot since coming to DCCCC. Terri Hollis has been a great mentor for me. She pushes me to do my best and has allowed me to discover my abilities and find my confidence in my own way. It has been a great few years with her. One thing I have learned is how to manage a group of children with enough energy to light up a city, and I have learned to harness that energy and turn it into amazing things. It is my belief that people are different, and that is exactly



how it should be. I love to find the uniqueness of each child and help them to expand on that. It is an amazing thing to witness a child finding pride in something that sets them apart from their peers, allowing them to realize that different can be beautiful. I also believe that children deserve credit for their capabilities. They are like sponges and it is important to hold them to a standard they deserve, even if that means they have to work a little harder to get there. I love my kiddos and as much as I hope they learn from me, I certainly learn from them. One of my favorite things about this age is that they are so unfiltered. I love to see their perspective on the world, and it gives me a constant reminder to get back to that innocent way of thinking, and seeing things for not only what they are, but what they could be. If I could pick only three words to represent my teaching style, they would be Respect (For who they are and for each other), Acceptance (Of differences and the possibility of change), and Excitement (For our daily routine and for all the fun we have!)



Last but not at all least here are Melissa's thoughts: In this past year I have grown as a teacher. My ideas, creativity level, and love for children have grown and been shaped so drastically after working with these amazing Badgers. I went from floating in different classrooms to joining such an incredible team as Terri Hollis and Miranda. They have supported my ideas and helped me to become the teacher I am proud to be today. We work so well as a team and bounce ideas off of each other to come up with the curriculum that we use every day. The most important part, to me, about being a teacher is that the children always come first. I have enjoyed so much watching these kids grow, as I





have this year. They have taught me an insane amount in patience, individuality, and reminded me how amazing and beautiful life truly is. At this age children are so excited and interested in everything happening around them, they helped to open my eyes to how amazing everything really is and can be. I believe that it is so important for these kids to show their own personalities and individuality, I love each of them for that. I find it so important to make sure the children get the opportunity to learn while having fun. My favorite part of this job is coming up with fun and creative ways for the children to absorb as much information as possible. It makes me so happy when parents and children come in and tell me how much they have learned, and how much fun they have had doing it. My beliefs as a teacher have become more developed and for that I thank my team and my kids in the Badger room. I am so happy to say that we have all grown an incredible amount this year as a class. Now, as we near the end of the year I can say that my teaching style includes, embracing and accepting children for who they are, allowing children to learn from their own experiences, and lastly creating fun and exciting ways for the children to learn.

Thank you so much Badger Families for supporting your teachers!

Terri, Miranda and Melissa

News from the Black Bears

Amy McLellan,,
Lead Teacher

Barb Merchand,
Teacher

Kelly Bosma,
Assistant Teacher

Goodbye winter, Hello Spring!
The Black Bears have officially embraced the sunshine and warm weather of the season! Curriculum topics have revolved around weather, insects, and spring blossoms.

March, “comes in like a lion and out like a lamb” while “April showers, bring May flowers.” Ask your Black Bear to tell you about wind and clouds, what is an overcast day? With the warmer weather, we have been enjoying more time on the playground, picnic lunches, and nature hikes. We had great fun making kites and windsocks and flying them on the playground. We decorated plastic grocery bags with stickers and string, running down the hill and watching them fill with air to fly behind us.



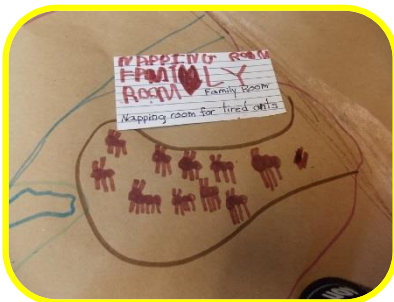


Our ant farm has been a fascinating addition to the classroom. We watch the harvester ants build and rebuild tunnels, make rooms for food and dead ants, and carry sand piece by piece from one area to the other. Every day, the farm is rearranged, as the needs of the ant colony change.

We have learned that every ant has a job; the queen lays thousands of eggs at a time, soldier ants protect the queen, nurse ants care for the eggs, harvester ants create the tunnels. They even bring the dead ants to the

“graveyards.” We have learned about the lifecycle of ants as well. The queen lays the eggs, which grow to larvae, pupa, and finally adult ants emerge to complete the cycle. Did you know that the worker ants are always female?





Check out our life size mural of a working anthill in the hallway outside our classroom. All of the children have had a hand in creating this multi-layered project over the past couple of weeks.



The Black Bears have been learning about still life portraits. A still life portrait is very different from a drawn picture in that the artist must first study the object to be depicted. The shape, color, and size of the object must all be considered before putting pencil (or marker, paintbrush, crayon) to paper. The process takes much longer than drawing a picture from memory or imagination. We have been learning some new vocabulary: medium, art gallery, still life, portrait, framing, mounting. Thanks to our families for the beautiful daffodils, carnations, tulips, and plants. These made wonderful subjects for our first attempts at still life drawings. Check out our art gallery outside the Black Bear classroom.



Until next time,
Amy, Barb, & Kelly



Medieval Fun Comes to Thetford, VT for Memorial Day Weekend

Join the fun on Saturday, May 23, 2015 from 11 am to 4 pm at the Open Fields Medieval Festival on the Thetford Green in Thetford, VT.

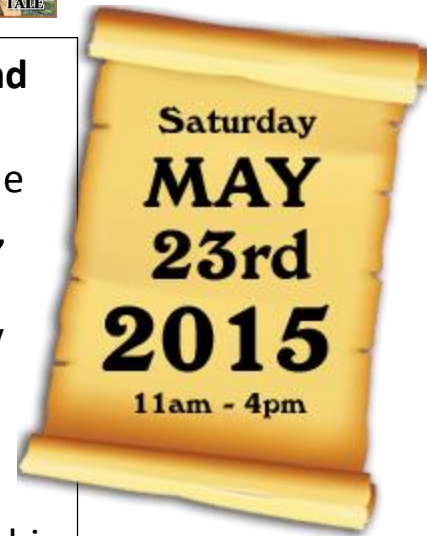
Open Fields School once again presents its annual family-friendly Medieval Festival, bringing the Green alive with the sights and sounds of a medieval village.

This year, the No Strings Marionette Company will perform Wasabi, A Dragon's Tale. With morris dancing by Catamount Morris, a Shakespearean sonnet performance, traditional songs, and a maypole dance, there will be entertainment throughout the Festival. Come see a fire spinning show by Phoenix Bazaar, bellydancing demonstrations by Raq On Dance, a sword demonstration by Sensei Aaron Hoopes, and hear traditional songs performed by soprano Mary Ann Stanford and classical guitarist Frank Kelecy.

Try your hand at felting, milling, weaving, calligraphy, candle-making, and beading, among others. Kids will love maneuvering their steeds through the horse course, digging for treasures in the bran bucket, and getting lost in the hedge maze. Meet Glenfiddich, an 11 year old gelding Highland pony, or get into the spirit of things by dancing around the may pole after visiting our hair braiding and face painting booths.

Admission to the festival is \$7 per person. Children ages 4 and under are free. Purchase tickets online at www.VTMedFest.com or at the gate on festival day.

More details at <http://www.vtmedfest.com/>



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