



Dartmouth College Child Care Center Newsletter

September 2009

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Office: Jeff
Robbins, Terry
Chase, Amy Potter

Floaters: Gretchen
Beisler, Eileen Ruml,
Moya Stevens, Joelle
Wyffels

• Using our “Company Manners”

Aren't you impressed by how cooperative your child is being? Surely you have noticed the politeness, quietness and good manners that are hanging about us.

Don't worry! Soon the honeymoon will be over for most children. The ones who haven't been sure that is safe to protest will remember that here, like home, they don't need to use their company manners every day. Children who were eager to get here this week—rising in the wee hours of the morning to put on school clothes—will remember how much they like to sleep in and how much they hate saying good-bye to you. Children whose behavior was impeccable will be exploring their limits in essentially the only way they know how—by breaking the rules to see what happens, or by watching someone else do it for them. Expect to hear many stories about how bad another child is. (P.S. sometimes, the child that your kid is referring to is him/herself!) Don't be surprised if your child lets you know that school is boring, the rules aren't fair, nobody wants to be his/her friend and that the teachers are mean.

In the mean time, enjoy the peace and pleasantries of this time. Tomorrow, next week and each of the coming months will all be different. Soon your children will be rowdy and only semi-cooperative again. That, too, you can chalk up to being a stage. The latter part of

October and November tend to be golden months for young children in new groups. The newness has worn off, children and adults have settled in and routines are predictable. This, just in time for the December meltdown! More about that later.

Questions will be cheerfully answered by any DCCCC staff person.

• **Terri Hollis Celebrates 15 Years at DCCCC**

Terri's name was omitted from the list of long-term teachers in the last newsletter. She is indeed a member of the august group of staff who have worked at DCCCC for, like, ever.

• **Welcome, Joelle Wyffels**

Joelle has joined our team of floaters, bringing with her a degree in elementary education and several years of experience working with preschoolers.

• **Helpful Hints for a Happy DCCCC**

- Access Card: if you don't have one, please go get it. If you have one, please, please use it.
- Check with your child's teachers to see how they celebrate birthdays and other special events.
- Children must always be with an adult: no wandering, running ahead or waiting in the Multi please.
- The Multi closes at 5:00. This helps everyone leave a bit more smoothly.
- DCCCC closes at 5:30. Really. Late pick-up charges are assessed for departures after 5:30.
- Sign in/out every day.
- Let your child's teacher know when you are leaving with your child.
- Keep lots of extra clothes in your child's cubby. We value messiness!
- Always send outerwear. Every day is an outside !
- Make sure we know how to reach you. If you are in a different place for the day, let your child's teacher know.
- There's a parent bulletin board outside the office with articles and events for families.
- A lending library of resource books for parents is also located outside the office. Other titles are available, too.
- Big Jeff welcomes the "easy" sort of questions to be answered in the newsletter.
- Big Jeff welcomes more complicated questions to be answered in person. Drop by sometime. Or call. Or blitz.

• **For sale**

Two Britax Star Riser Comfy booster seats. These seats have only been lightly used, as they were in Grandma's car. Fabric is a blue, washable, suede feeling material. Has a back with headrest; back is also removable. These seats are narrow, so makes it easier to fit Multiple children in the back seat. Manufacturer information listed below. \$35 each (paid \$90 new). Please contact Holly Taylor (holly.taylor@tufts.edu).

- **DCCCC BlitzBulletin**

Check our BlitzBulletin regularly for information about community events for children and families. For example:

1. **A Kinship Conference for Grandparents and Relatives**, "Raising Children and Those Who Support Them. Parenting Revisited: Life on a Trampoline."October 8, 8am to 3:30pm, Fireside Inn, 25 Airport Rd, West Lebanon, NH. Call Thom Linehan at UNHCE 225-5505 for more info. <http://extension.unh.edu/Family/NHRAPP/documents/KinshipConf2009.pdf>
2. **Confident Parent, Confident Child: Parenting Preschoolers workshop** series. Tuesdays, Sept. 15, 22, 29, 6pm– 8pm. \$24 fee. Sorry, no child care available. The Family Place, Norwich, VT. Contact Brenda: (802) 649-3268 x 12.

- **Driveway Island CLOSED**

The driveway island is CLOSED to children. Children may play on the Grizzly side of the driveway with parental supervision.

Important rules for children

- a. Stay with an adult when leaving the building.
- b. Walk on the sidewalk.
- c. If you have permission, you can play on the grass behind the cones.

Important rules for adults:

- a. Keep your child with you at all times - in the building and out.
- b. Keep everyone's child safe - don't allow other people's children to slip through the door past you.
- c. Use the sidewalks for getting to and from the car - no running, running away, or playing.

Feedback on this policy has been very positive. For example, "LOVE to see that you sent this out. Stories on this web site can really get to you. www.kidsandcars.org"

- **Childcare space needed/available:**

Teddies: some days are available
Pandas: need MW
Koalas: TTh available
Woollies: need W
Polars: Th available
Grizzlies: MWThF available

• Dear Big Jeff

I can't stand it. My child whines and cries if I don't let her play outside DCCCC in the afternoon. Sometimes there are just too many people hanging out for me to feel safe. Sometimes I'm in a rush to get home to fix dinner before soccer practice. Sometimes I just don't feel like it. How can I get her to go home peacefully. I hate for her school day to end in tears.

Signed,

Just can't stand it.

• Dear Still Standing,

I totally understand. I have vivid memories of trying to get two tired, cranky children out of here in one piece before I completely lost my temper and demonstrated the decidedly un-child development side of my personality. There are times when the sun shines, our children are happy to see us, leave school readily and chat openly about their days. Then there are the days when nothing goes right: the teacher has news about an injury, a sneaker is missing, your child needs to do just one more thing, etc. God forbid that you are tired or feeling impatient. Here are some thoughts for you:

1. Discuss the situation with your child's teacher. S/he will have insights and suggestions. S/he may be able to help your child practice getting ready to go or to start winding down when you arrive.
2. Don't wait until the last minute (arriving at 5:25) and expect to have a smooth departure.
3. Discuss the situation with your child in a peaceful moment. Explain your expectations. Give him/her a mental picture of how a smooth departure would look. Ask for his/her ideas.
4. Give your child something to look forward to in the car – a book, a tape, a funny joke, a glass of water.
5. Express your appreciation for their cooperation.
6. Use natural consequences e.g. "That went so quickly, we have time for a story when we get home." Or, "Oh dear, we've spent so much time trying to get out of here, I don't have time to play before I fix dinner."
7. Empathize: "Some days it's so hard to leave."
8. Accept the fact that your child, and you, has good days and bad days.

As parents, each of us is different. Some of us need to slow down and stop rushing our children. Some of us need to be more firm so our children understand that we really mean it. Some of us need to lighten up. Some of us need to be more consistent or more flexible. We all need each of these attributes at different times. Be patient with yourself, too.

Wishing you smooth departures,
Big Jeff

News from Teddy One

Cathy Fleming,
Coordinator
Infant/Toddler
Program

Wendy Irwin,
Teacher

Keri Wolfe,
Assistant Teacher

Hello Teddy One parents,

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year!!

Everyone is settling in so well! It has been a great start. We feel that our new Teddies are connecting with the three of us and enjoying the Teddy Room. We have so many fun and exciting things planned for this year. Every day we are looking for fun things to experiment with and, as time goes on, you will see the results of your child's new explorations!!

It has been a lot of fun for Wendy, Keri, and me getting to know all of the children, their schedules, and all of you. In just these past few weeks we have seen many changes. Aidan is working so hard to walk; a few times he has made us think he is going to take a step and then decides to wait. Cosima has become our lunchtime entertainer. She sings, she talks, she just pulls all of us together in the fun. Tejasi will be returning from her big trip to India and we cannot wait to see how much she has grown. Grace and Cooper are neck in neck for who is the fastest crawler. Grace loves to crawl to the toy shelf and Cooper loves the futon. Lea is making us realize we need to hurry and put up new posters and pictures of the children on the walls. She loves to look at every picture with us and give us a running commentary. Amelia is communicating by doing the baby chat with us. Her big smile lights up the room. Harper is right there in the smiling department. She is a big conversationalist, too! We are having a great time with all of our Teddy Ones! We appreciate the communication we have with you helping us to know what works best for your child. Also, thank you to everyone for helping us out by washing hands and sending notes in lunches. We greatly appreciate it!

We look forward to the coming year and the many, many changes everyone will be experiencing!

Until next month, Cathy, Wendy, and Keri

News from Teddy Too

Terri Crane,
Lead Teacher

Lori Higgins,
Teacher

Denise Ayres,
Assistant Teacher

Dear Teddy Too families,

The Teddy Too room has enjoyed a quiet ease into the new school year. We welcomed Lyra Williams, Jadon Shi, Louisa Nordberg, and Calvin Mills to the Teddy Too room.

Everyone is settling in and getting used to being here. We are learning what works and what everyone likes and how they like it. Noah Gregorio-de Sousa and Alistair Smith are here for their second year and seem to be adjusting well to all the new faces. We are still waiting for Allie and Lia Muirhead to start.

We love the uniqueness of each child and of each child's development. While we have a daily schedule in our room, it is very loose and flexible to accommodate everyone's needs and desires. During this time of transition we know that things will not always happen as they do at home; bottles, food, and nap schedules may be off, but we really try to keep everyone on their own rhythm and meet their needs as they arise.

We strive to make a smooth transition to the Teddy room for everyone. If you have any thoughts or questions about how things are going for your child please let us know. You can call, email or, if the timing works out, chat with one of us in the morning or at the end of the day. We really want to hear from you.

We have enjoyed a spell of good weather which allows us to play outside. For the babies we bring a blanket out to lie on and toys to play with. The toddlers are enjoying exploring the playground. The sandbox, riding toys and slides are the favorites so far. Make sure to bring in labeled sun hats and warm clothes for the changing weather.

Happy Fall,

Terri, Lori and Denise

News from the Pandas

Susan Quimby,
Lead Teacher

Jenn Boudro,
Teacher

Tatyana Bills,
Assistant Teacher

Welcome, welcome to the Panda room!!!

What a wonderful start it's been. As we've looked at how the transition went, it is clear that having you all come through in the morning (especially in August) was crucial to the Pandas comfort level in their new environment. Remember the tentativeness, shyness and wariness as they came in those first few times? That all seems to have gone to the wayside! You guys did a great job facilitating this and we thank you!!

We have had a busy start. We have done body tracings and paintings, finger painted, glued, easel painted, squished PlayDough and Floam, played with ocean creatures in the water table, done tons of puzzles, colored, built block towers AND PLAYED IN THE BIG MULTI!!! I cannot tell you how it warms my heart to open the Panda door and

watch the children run down the hall, eyes gleaming and voices shouting, "BIG MULTI!" They have practiced climbing up into climbers, used big slides, jumped off mats, balanced on wooden blocks, balance beams and stepping stones. They have kicked and thrown all kinds of balls and foam Frisbees. We have used a variety of drums and musical instruments. A favorite is kicking balls down the hall and watch them bounce off the walls. Beach balls work really well for that! William was spotted "spiking" a football just yesterday! They have been having such fun. I have taken them down repeatedly in the late afternoons after snack for more romping and running. Their muscles are most certainly getting a workout these days! We are also outside daily. As the weather cools off and leaves that lovely wet coating of dew, puddle boots are a great idea. You may want to send in rain pants as well.

As you have seen at pick-up times, our bean house is a huge hit with children from all over DCCCC. I love having the garden open and children munching and crunching the beans (some beans are better than others, we've learned)! There are generally an abundance of such beans on a daily basis – especially after a weekend of sun. This will continue until it frosts. Then we'll have to begin cleaning up; we'll load wheelbarrows of vines and dead plants and cart them off to the compost pile at the edge of the field. I'm sure I'll have to gather up the old Pandas for their help, as they also helped plant that garden. It'll be a group effort just as it will be next fall when your kiddos have moved up and I go get them to help clean out the garden that they will help plant in the spring.

So there you have it...September and the new Pandas are going well together, don't you think?

So fondly,
Susan for the Panda team

News from the Koalas

Terri Hollis,
Lead Teacher

Debbie Lensing,
Teacher

Tiffany Chapman,
Assistant Teacher

Greetings Koala Families,

So we all did it. By the time you all read this we will have a couple weeks of Koala-hood under our belts. The Koala teachers will not lie, twelve boys and one girl, gave us reason to ponder such a thought. That being said what an amazing, truly enjoyable group of children they are!

They have really enjoyed the cars, trucks, tractors, trains, planes, and boats. It has given them endless hours of play with one another. The exploration of their new environment and materials around them has been amazing to watch and be a part of as their teachers. The “big” playground has been very motivating for them. You should see their faces as they get onto those bikes, like they mean business. The shrieks of delight and giggles as they bounce on the fire truck are contagious. How cool can life be now that they can get water from the fountain whenever and for whatever reason their imagination

thinks of. They are learning how to work the swing area, and how to be safe there.

The teachers have already picked up individual little traits about your children. As a whole group we have noticed that this group really loves sensory play. Sand and water are a hit whenever the opportunity is given. These Koalas also love to explore how they can use their hands to create and put materials together to accomplish an idea. By far, however, all of the Koala Teachers (hands down!) are blown away and impressed with how much they enjoy each others company and friendships. The level of cooperative play that this group of children exhibit is something to behold.

For reasons that are rational we always seem anxious when changes are ahead for ourselves and our children. It is so calming to get on the other side so we can look back and sigh. Your children have embraced the newness of a situation with enthusiasm. They have quickly moved onto looking to see what is next, rather than what was. This seems to be telling of just how ready they were for change.

The teachers’ objective for the first few weeks was to just give time. Time to explore and learn about each other and the “new” environment that the children were expected to negotiate and function in. Now that we have gotten nicely settled in, we will be having our first team meeting to discuss certain curriculum plans for the room. This is a combination of watching what the children’s interests are, but as teachers using our skills to further teach and build off from your child’s interests and ideas. Look for our curriculum plans posted in the classroom.

On the lighter side, don’t forget to check out the memorable quote board that is also posted. We already have a couple of quotes on it. They always seem to help begin or end your day with a chuckle.

On behalf of the Koala room,
Terri Hollis

News from the Woolly Bears

Deb Girdwood,
Lead Teacher

Barb Merchand,
Teacher

Kristin Ball,
Assistant Teacher

Hello Families,

Our Woolly Bear adventures have begun with the start of a new school year. We have been having a lot of fun getting to know each other and exploring our new classroom. Our returning Woollies were thrilled to see the new classroom set up and the new Woollies were excited to see all the cool “stuff” their new room has to offer. All of the children expressed joy when they realized they could play with the baby dolls and train set. New friendships are forming on a daily basis, yet old friendships are continuing to



flourish. Everyone has made the transition very smoothly thanks in part to your help and help of the other classroom teachers. (We love our hellos and hugs from the Panda and Koala teachers.)

We have been getting to know each other



the

and our classroom materials. Mr. Mouse has been visiting often to help us learn how to use our classroom materials safely. Barb is a master at teaching children with Mr. Mouse, the puppet. He resides on the yellow shelf with his backpack. Judy has passed down Francis Fairy to me, and Mouse and Francis help teach social stories in our class. Kristin will continue to keep baking with the Woollies. We often bake on Fridays.



We look forward to a great school year!



News from the Polar Bears

Sunnie McPhetres,
Lead Teacher

Bobbie Lynn Stone,
Teacher

Radoyka Garcia,
Assistant Teacher

Welcome to the Polar Room 2009-2010!

The first newsletter of the new year! This group of children is settling in with unbelievable ease! We are watching all of the children and getting to know more about them. We have just one more Polar, Annie Liu, to join us later in the month and we are awaiting Vidushi's return from her extended vacation. The Polars are already showing us some exciting interests.

We have been noticing that the Polars are interested in many things that we will explore further with them as time progresses. They are interested in masks, what's inside our bodies, making traps and hunting for "The

Cracker Man," trains, measuring, building big structures, exploring the Polar Pines, worms, fairies, and treasure hunting. We are excited about all of the possibilities for learning and growing that this budding list presents!

You may have heard stories of "The Cracker Man." The Cracker Man is a bad guy created by some of the Polars. He is made of crackers and smells like old rotten grass. He is very elusive. A few of the boys tried to follow



his path with Sunnie, but the Cracker Man managed to put a swamp in their path. They decided that they needed their "hunting boots" in order to continue on. The excitement spread and many children are now interested in the pursuit of Cracker Man.

The Polars have greatly enjoyed working in the Polar Pines. They have been busy deciding which trees need to be removed and which need help to be saved. They have found hundreds of earthworms, some fairy houses, a skunk house and even a bear cave! Everyone becomes very excited when they hear that the Polar Pines is the outside choice!



Speaking of choice, you may have noticed that “choice” is an important word in the Polar Room. We feel that the more often children are aware that they have choices in life (and that can’t always happen) the more likely they are to realize that they have (and make) behavioral choices. You will hear teacher’s say things like, “You chose to dump all of the toys on the floor, now your

job is to put them all away.” A phrase such as this helps children to learn that there are consequences to every choice that they make. You will also hear teachers saying things such as, “You put the toys back on the shelf when you were finished, now you have no clean up to do and can go right to the Multi!” Consequences are not always negative (aren’t we lucky)!

Things to look forward to: Apple picking on September 21! This is always a lovely trip. The people at Poverty Lane Orchards are delightful and very patient and tell us just the right things! The wagon ride is fun too! We will enjoy the fruits of our harvest at our family gathering on September 30!

We are looking forward to an exciting fun-filled year!

- Sunnie and the Polar Team



News from the Grizzlies

Carolynn Wilson,
Lead Teacher

Karen Gray,
Teacher

Our year of Grizzlies has gotten off to a busy start, especially since the first day of Kindergarten and Grizzlies coincided for most of the children. For some reason, we were reminded of the book Fortunately, written and illustrated by Remy Charlip (a favorite from our Grizzly library) as we began to reflect on our first few weeks together:

Fortunately, we are settling in to our new routine, and the children are feeling increasingly comfortable and confident each day, but

Unfortunately, they miss their preschool teachers and friends and the familiarity of their old classrooms.

Fortunately, we still see those teachers and friends on the playground who have an abundance of smiles and hugs to give, but

Unfortunately, it's not nearly as long a time to spend together as the children would like so – *Fortunately*, Grizzlies are dropping in to their old rooms for visits, much to the the delight of children and teachers alike.

Fortunately, the children have lots of time to play with new friends in the Grizzly Room, after a busy morning at Kindergarten, but

Unfortunately, they have some “jobs” to do—hanging up their backpacks, getting out their lunches, trying to use the bathroom, and washing their hands. Then there is a gathering to join, followed by lunchtime, before the play can really begin.

Fortunately, there are two faucets at the sink so children don't need to wait as long to wash their hands, but

Unfortunately, adult eyes are watching to make sure we wash hands properly, soaping them all over for “at least three birds” (10-15 seconds on our bird clock).

Fortunately, there are many new and exciting things to explore, but

Unfortunately, Grizzly toys do not include action figures or materials connected to TV or movies, but

Fortunately, our toys are open-ended and unstructured, which necessitates the children to use their own ample imaginations and creativity, but

Unfortunately, it also requires lots of sharing and cooperation, but

Fortunately, these children have been learning great communication and problem-solving skills that we will continue to support and respect.

Fortunately, the children have lots of free play time, but

Unfortunately, the children are learning they must carefully clean up what they are using when they are finished with something.

Fortunately, we also have an upstairs area to play in, but

Unfortunately, sometimes that area is closed and it can't be used until the sign says, “Yes we're open.”

Fortunately, we go outside every day, using the big playground and the Grizzly yard and garden, but

Unfortunately, we don't play in the Multi every day.

Fortunately, there is a relaxing rest time at the end of the day, but

Unfortunately, it is also a quiet time with no talking.

Fortunately, rest time is only 30 minutes, and when it ends, it is almost time for everyone to go home, and

Fortunately, Grizzly parents arrive with hugs and interest and happy anticipation, and we know that

Fortunately, the Grizzlies are going to homes full of love and comfort so that

Fortunately, they will want to return and play some more!



Our afternoons are full and busy, and we are so grateful for our afternoon assistants, Sue Hewitt, Claire Galya, Nida Intarapanich, and David Jackson, who help in so many ways to make it a great day for each child. They apply sunscreen, read countless picture books, play round after round of games, toss baseballs, push swingers, make snacks, sweep, dust, scrub, and generally are here to do whatever is needed.

We have just had our first birthday in the Grizzly Room, celebrating that Shantel is turning 5. Her mom visited to tell us the story of the day she was born, showing us pictures of baby Shantel and her proud big brother, Justin.

We hope you enjoy the photo display of our new class in the Grizzly hallway. We will add one more photo to the display when Alexander Velichkov joins our group on September 22nd.

And we look forward to you welcoming you on Wednesday, September 23rd, from 4:30-5:30 for a start-of-the-year snack and get-together.

With our best,
Carol & Karen