



# Dartmouth College Child Care Center Newsletter

Fall 2022

## In This Issue:

From the Director	pg. 2
Announcements	pg. 3
Chickadee One	pg 4
Chickadee Too	pg 6
Owl	pg 8
Hedgehog	pg 10
Otter	pg 12
Badger	pg 14
Black Bear	pg 16

**Office:** Sunnie McPhetres,  
Abby Plummer-  
LaBombard, Dawn Cote,  
Karen Small

**Floating Assistant Teachers**  
Liz Harrington, Will Berman,  
Megan Widli, Sam Estes

## Things are Getting Back to Normal



It is great to be  
able to gather  
together again to  
share fun times  
and events!





## From the Director

It is a great feeling to be moving back toward normal. We still have days when there are absences due to Covid... but not as many. We still have days when staffing makes keeping things running smoothly a bit tricky... but not as many. We still wear masks sometimes when we have colds or other illnesses... but not as often. We have had to worry more about illnesses other than Covid... RSV, hand-foot-and-mouth, colds and sniffles – who ever thought that it would be a comfort to worry about the normal illnesses that children experience? Of course, for those of you who have been experiencing these other illnesses, it is not really a comfort!

It was a great pleasure to meet with so many staff and families a couple of weeks ago to talk about another step toward normalcy: expanding our hours back to our pre-covid times. The committee is nearly set, I am just waiting on a couple more members and then we will be able to get started in charting a course forward! I have had the privilege of chatting with a few of you since the meeting and it is encouraging to know that you all really do understand the circumstances and that you realize that we are doing our best to meet your needs.

What did you think of our first Trunk-or-Treat? I loved it! It was full of fun and excitement and just the right amount of chaos. Soon I will have a link to a survey about the event to get your feedback. I am always blown away by the participation that we receive during these events. I am now looking forward to resuming our annual July 4 bike parade in 2023!

I am excited that we are using the big multi again! While we returned to offering music class last year, we did so in classrooms. Using the big multi for music for the Otters, Badgers, and Black Bears opens up the possibilities for movement and cooperation! Brooke, the teachers, and the kids are all happy that the space is available again. I was happy to be able to have a whole group gathering in the big multi and have the children watch as I (along with Dawn and some of the others) received my flu shot! And, really, just hearing children playing there again is very nice. We have learned during Covid-times that outside is much more important than multi use, but it is nice to have the chance to get out there a couple of times a week!

And, the return of the quarterly newsletter is big step back toward normal! I hope that you all enjoy seeing what is happening in all of the classrooms. The Family Friday updates will continue, but you will also get a glimpse into all of the classroom happenings several times a year. Enjoy!

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **Thanksgiving Feast for staff**

If you would like to help show appreciation to D4C staff members next Friday, November 18 by providing something for a staff FEAST, please reach out to Sunnie and let her know what you will be able to bring.

([Sunnie.j.mcphetres@dartmouth.edu](mailto:Sunnie.j.mcphetres@dartmouth.edu)) or enter your item on the [Staff Feast google doc here.](#)

## **Reminder – Professional Development Day Closure**

This is a reminder that we will be closed on Wednesday, December 7 for a professional development day. The staff will be meeting together to review our emergency protocol and explore appreciative inquiry, among other subjects!

## **DCCCC Will Be Closed On The Following Days:**

**-Thursday and Friday, November 24 and 25, Thanksgiving Break**

**-Wednesday, December 7 -In-service Training**

**-December 23-January 2, 2023, Winter Break**

**-Wednesday, March 22, 2023, In-service Training**

**-Monday, May 29, 2023, Memorial Day**

**-Tuesday, July 4, 2023,**

**Independence Day**

(anticipated: Monday and Tuesday,

August 28 and 29, 2023, Transition Days

– subject to change)

## **Holiday Pajama Party and Sing-a-Long**

We would love to have you join us for the return of our annual holiday pajama party and sing-a-long in the big multi on Thursday, December 22 at 4:00 pm. All children and teachers will be invited to wear pajamas to childcare (if they wish). Each classroom will prepare a couple of songs to sing for and/or with the entire group. Families are invited and more than welcome to attend and sing along with us!

# News from the Chickadee Ones

Ashley Flannery  
Lead Teacher

Margaret Fraser

Prajna Mohapatra

We have been off to a very busy start this fall introducing new families, kiddos, and even staff to our classroom!

We welcomed Margaret in February from the Otter Room and Prajna this fall and couldn't be happier that they joined our team; the kids just love them!

We have been experimenting with a lot of sensory things for these kiddos. So far, we have enjoyed painting apples, rolling pumpkins in paint, coloring with chalk, and playing with crunchy leaves! Sometimes we even get the kiddos down to just diapers, roll out a large piece of paper, add the babies to the paint and tah-dah we have an activity!



Our kiddos are young to participate but have really enjoyed the many parades of older children coming through in costumes!

We are not looking forward to losing the warm weather but are getting excited to bundle up and experience some snow!

Some fun facts about our kiddos!

**Miles:** Returning from last year he is our oldest kiddo who is now running around the classroom! He is working on being gentle to his younger baby friends and learning many new words! His favorite activity is singing!



**August:** August (Auggie) has grown so much since last year and he as well just began walking! He is starting to interact more with his peers and venture around the classroom unassisted. Auggie enjoys time outside and mealtimes with his peers!



**Violet:** Violet has been a great addition to our room this fall and is filled with so much love to be spread with her teachers and friends! She started walking a little bit after starting and is just so happy to engage in activities with her friends!



**Frederick:** (Freddie) came to us in the fall with his twin brother! He has the cutest crooked smile and has taken off crawling on his hands and knees! Just recently he has started pulling up on furniture and even baby friends when they're sitting in their bouncy seats!



**Otto:** Otto has been a great addition to our group where he is always smiling and trying to make his friends laugh! Along with his brother Freddie they love to crawl on their friends and show so much affection! Mealtime for Otto has been a favorite time of day!

**Zinnia:** Zinnia (Zinny) comes just a few days a week and has warmed up nicely to the staff and her friends! Zinny has started crawling on her hands and knees and pulling up on furniture! Zinny enjoys spending a lot of time outside with her friends and knocking over tiny block structures that her teachers build with her!



**Simon:** Simon is one of our returning kiddos from the summer! He looks small and age wise is one of our younger kiddos, but he is mighty! He started not being able to sit up quite yet, but has now learned sitting, crawling, and climbing. We call him our determined little guy because if he wants to get somewhere he will get there and nothing in his way will stop him!

**Sebastian:** (Bash) is our second youngest kiddo who can just brighten up the room with his smile! He enjoys teachers and friends talking to him and has really found his voice this passed month. We can't wait to see all that he learns from his older peers!



**Rhett:** Rhett is our newest and youngest member of the chickadee classroom! He is the sweetest little squish who has also found his voice! He loves interacting with his new teachers and gives great snuggles! He has started grabbing onto toys in the bouncy seat and loves watching himself sit in the bumbo seat in front of the large mirror.



We are excited to watch and help these kiddos grow! We have a great group of kiddos that have come to love one another and have so many plans to keep them busy learning and growing!

As always, if there are any questions feel free to email at any point!

[ashley.m.stankevich@dartmouth.edu](mailto:ashley.m.stankevich@dartmouth.edu) Chickadee One Lead Teacher: Ashley Flannery

# News from the Chickadee Toos

Teresa Hahn,  
Lead Teacher

Michelle Ackerman

Leah Ziai

Wow, I can't believe it is November already! The Chickadees are settling into routines and getting to know each other. Friendships are forming, and we are all enjoying our time together.

Our most exciting news is having Leah join our team. It is wonderful to have her, she is fitting in nicely and the children(and adults) are enjoying her presence. Michelle and I are able to work regular shifts and the center is able to have Liz back floating.

We have been exploring Autumn colors and themes. Playing in leaves, painting with fall colors, and pumpkin spice playdough are some of the many activities we have offered. We have been enjoying the warmish weather as well. Music class has started again and we are thankful for that. Our music is Tuesday at 9:15. If your child is not enrolled for Tuesday, you may bring your child in to music and stay for the class. It really is a lot of fun.



I am amazed at how much the children have grown and changed in these past 2 months. New rollers, new crawlers, new walkers and some new words. I find it fascinating to experience this development and am honored that I get to witness it each day.

With the new year, unfortunately comes some childhood illnesses. We are being diligent in our sanitizing and hand washing, but sometimes those dreaded germs get through regardless. I am hopeful that our collective health improves soon.



It would be very helpful for our team, if when sending an email, you send it to all 3 teachers.

[Teresa.M.Hahn@dartmouth.edu](mailto:Teresa.M.Hahn@dartmouth.edu)

[Leah.T.Zia@dartmouth.edu](mailto:Leah.T.Zia@dartmouth.edu)

[Michelle.L.Ackerman@dartmouth.edu](mailto:Michelle.L.Ackerman@dartmouth.edu)

This ensures your information is received in case of my absence. Thank you.

As the weather changes, it is important to be sure your child has outside clothing and footwear. Fresh air is an important part of staying healthy. Please send in weather appropriate gear for your children, so we can get them outside.

I am looking forward to a great year! Teresa for Chickadee Too



# News from the Owls

Moya Stevens,  
Lead Teacher

Maya Lopez

Jyanna Vaughan

Happy Fall Everyone! We have been extremely busy in the Owl Room. All the children are adjusting well! They quickly settled in and are becoming familiar with our schedule and routine. The children have been actively engaged while playing and learning with all the toys and activities that we provide in the classroom. Social learning and language skills are a huge part of a toddler's day, they will learn these skills through lots of practice and repetition. Not only are the toddlers learning social and language skills, but they are also developing cognitive skills as well as small and large motor coordination.

Booker has been saying more words. He enjoys doing all the activities and he still loves playing with cars and trucks.

Tristan has learned new signs and words. She loves playing with the baby dolls and rocks them while saying, "shhh".

Alex still loves playing with all the different cars and trucks. He also plays with everything outside, especially moving the cars very fast.

Sejal has learned some new words including "more", "mine", and "Mana". She likes to look at books and to be pulled for a wagon ride while outside.

Mana has been talking a lot during the last few months and she knows most of her friends' names. Mana also likes books, animals and doing projects.

Caleb has been learning new English words here at daycare. He likes to play with poppers (fidget toys), cars and trucks. Caleb also likes to do our daily activities.

Raiyan loves to repeat the majority of words we say with lots of enthusiasm! He is also a fan of playing with the tractors, cars and trucks.

Vincent likes to play with the cars outside, he enjoys the climber and going down the slides. Vincent enjoys saying everyone's name and giving nice gentle hugs.





Nir is in the process of transitioning to the Owl Room, she enjoys playing while next to a teacher. “Bunny”, “leaf”, “truck”, and “fish” are new words that she has learned.

As you can see, the children have gone through lots of growth and development in the Owl room, toddlers change quickly and temper tantrums may be part of this growth. Please be patient with your toddler and help guide them through this process positively.

Here is an article addressing this step in life:

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/behaviour/crying-tantrums/tantrums>

We are proud of our Owls! They are all working hard on learning so many new things. Our adventures of learning will continue throughout the year!

As always, please talk, call or email us with any questions, concerns or ideas that you’d like to share.

Best,  
The Owl Team  
Maya, Jyanna and Moya



# News from the Hedgehogs

Brendita Barnes,  
Lead Teacher

Jenn Boudro

Emily Courtemanche

Happy Fall! I can't believe that the kids have been Hedgehogs for two months now. They have changed so much since they came to our room. This is my first time watching children this age make a classroom change and I am amazed at the changes. In just two months they are starting to use the potty, putting on their own clothes, doing big kid activities, playing on the big playground, finding their spots to eat, sitting at circle, marching right through the multi for fire drills, and going on long hikes. They are also learning to share, take turns, and work as a group. So much learning happens at this age.

We have been having so much fun together especially hiking along the trails. They hike right along on their little legs and run down the big hill laughing all the way. The Hedgehogs always find something new to look at along the way. We have seen so many things. Falling leaves, geese flying, butterflies, a stick house, milk weed pods, mud puddles, tractors, squirrels, circle drains, rugby players and tractor trailer trucks just to name a few things that they noticed. The stick house is a favorite, they like to look right through it to the other side. Getting outside is so important to the Hedgehogs growing bodies.

The Hedgehogs have been very busy doing activities like dancing with scarecrows, making soup and applesauce, having a farm animal parade, counting in Spanish, harvesting gardens, painting on gourds, counting in Spanish, making a scarecrow with leaves they collected, and making dancing pumpkins. These children sure know how to keep us busy and have fun.

The Hedgehogs had so much fun during our Fall Festival. It was confusing at first to not be with their teachers and friends, but it was fun to be with different classes and different children. They ran through the corn maze, fed sheep and played fun games at different stations. It was fun to do something together as a whole center.

We also had a great time with classroom special days like Big Green Day, Diwali, Halloween, and Dia de los Muertos.

Thank you so much to the families that came in to share



stories and activities with us. We learn so much from you. We have celebrated two birthdays so far this year, Gigi and Rowan. We are all 2 now. No more birthdays until May and then oh boy, watch out, it will be one after another. It will be so much fun. Just a reminder that we will be doing conferences soon. Watch our daily emails for more information. We look forward to meeting with you all.

Fondly,  
Ms. Brendita for the Hedgehog Team

\*\*\* note from Sunnie: this newsletter was written before Ms. Brendita broke her elbow. She is currently staying at home to give her elbow time to heal. We miss her and wish her well. She let me know that she really misses the children already and doesn't look forward to being away so long.\*\*\*





# News from the Otters

Josie Byam,  
Lead Teacher

Alex Azua

Can you believe that we are already in November?! I know we sure can't. This year we have a super fun, kind, loving group. These Otters are energetic, eager, and forward driven. We have worked on so many different developmental skills already in the few short months we've had.

The Otters are between the age of 2.5 and 3 years. This is a time of transitions, and big emotions for our kiddos. We call this the "threenager" stage. This is when they find new emotions and a BIG sense of independence, but don't quite know how to handle them yet. So, we have been working on a few tools to help us properly express our emotions toward our friends along with giving our emotions a label.



One of the skills we are working is grasping what emotion we are feeling we are having in that moment. Using that emotion in the age appropriate manner and then checking in with our friends to see how they are feeling as well.

One thing in the Otter room that we really push for is allowing the kids to figure things out for themselves. For example, there are so many new things to explore in the classroom, it can be hard to share. If one child takes an item from another child, and it can be resolved amongst themselves, we as the teachers allow them. We like to only step in if the problem cannot be handled on their own.

Alternatives to yelling no or pushing our friends away are:

"You can have it when I'm done".

"We can use them together"

"There is another one over there you can have"

When we do need to step in, we give them the tools to do it on their own rather than make our own decision for the kids. Natural consequences work in the





same way. If you are playing at the table with your milk cup, it may spill on to your clothes. However, if you leave the milk cup on the table and drink it without playing, its less likely to spill. There's no reason to cry over spilt milk, but we talk about what could or would have happened if we had not been playing and focused on eating.

For the month of November, we are working on "Filling our Buckets". To fill someone's bucket is to do something kind for them without persuasion. Such as giving them a hug, helping someone clean up their station, getting a friend their water bottle and so much more. We have a bulletin board we will be creating into a bucket to chart our progress. This works as a cause and effect scale.

Some of the themes we've worked on so far are listed below ☺

All about me

Apples

Harvest

Fall foliage

Fair season

Scarecrows

Pumpkins

Halloween

Dia de los muertos

We can't wait to see what the rest of the 2022-2023 D4C school year has in store for us!

Thanks for reading ☺

Miss. Josie, Lead Teacher (She/Her/Hers)

Mrs. Alex (She/Her/Hers)



# News from the Badgers

Cat Kaschak,  
Lead Teacher

Jason Clark

Elizabeth Darragh

Over the past few months we have been welcoming our Badgers in the morning with a variety of options for table choices or open floor activities. The transition into the Badger room went smoothly for everyone. It was a pretty happy transition.

We are working on fine motor skills like cutting, gluing, and painting. Our classroom is filled with the artwork the children have created while working on these skills! We have also been hard at work on our social skills. At the beginning of the school year, they often take things from their friends without asking and cry for help. We are already seeing a little difference with this. We have them ask their peers a question and the other peer will answer with eye contact. Modeling, sharing, taking turns. Recognizing our emotions and others. We have also seen our friends become much stronger in their problem solving skills like spatial reasoning. We see this in everyday activities like solving puzzles, putting their lunch boxes away or getting bikes out from the shed when they're stuck.



As we stepped into fall we cut apples, added some extra goodies and made our own applesauce and enjoyed it for a snack. We had large pumpkins and all helped decide on what kind of jack-o-lantern they wanted carved, we all scooped out the seeds and the goop inside. We had a chance to feel the pumpkin. Some of our badgers enjoyed it and some said "I don't think so!" We will be roasting them and comparing before and after. We worked together peeling corn on the cob. Some took turns with the cob and some peeled it together. We then painted them. We loved painting our own mini pumpkins to take home!



We picked colorful leaves while out for walks and on the playground. They enjoyed using them for art and crumbling them in a sensory bin. There was a lot of raking going on outside and jumping into the piles of the leaves. We all enjoyed listening to the leaves crunch under our feet as we walked.

We are looking forward the next quarter watching the Badgers blossom even more!

The Badger Team,

Cat, Elizabeth and Jason





# News from the Black Bears

Viviana Rodriguez,  
Lead Teacher

Anna Blair

Hannah Rowland

Our first couple months in the Black Bear room have been very exciting and fun! Since this year our classroom is mixed up with children ages 3-5, this has posed some behavioral struggles but overall it has been a beautiful sight to see how much the older children love and care for the younger kids. We often say in the classroom that the older kids are role models and they are beginning to take this job very seriously. As we know, the younger kids are just learning how to express their thoughts and identify their feelings in a positive way- and the older children continue to help them along the way.

The Black Bears have had a blast learning about their favorite topics with our emergent curriculum and exploring the outdoors. Some of the favorite topics explored so far were our Superhero week in which we made our own capes & our Community Helpers and Transportation week. During Community Helpers week we got to have a medical student and the Fire & Police department come visit us to share with us what they do, show us their tools & equipment and answer questions the kids created. The children even got to explore the fire and police vehicles- making themselves cozy in the front seat. During our Transportation week, we got to have a line service technician from the granite airport come to visit. During this visit, children explored the tools used to stay safe & communicate w/ other technicians and pilots. The children even got to pretend to park a plane with the wands & speak code in the walkie talkie. The children came up with some wonderful questions during these visits and had a blast getting to meet these people in person.

We have done a number of science experiments and have really enjoyed making predictions and exploring cause and effect. Children also have made great observations about why the experiment resulted in the way it did. Some favorite experiments thus far include a fall sink or float activity, making pumpkin volcanoes, and friction/speed exploration with a variety of ramps.





Music and games are another huge favorite in the classroom. We sing a variety of interactive songs related to the week's theme each Wednesday and play a handful of games each week related to the theme as well.



The Black Bears have loved using the multi for big body play during the week and have really enjoyed our writing & alphabet workshops each week. Children continue to smile ear to ear and giggle with excitement when they complete each letter and are eager to learn how to write more letters and even words. All the older children can completely write their names and the younger children are learning this skill very quickly. Each week, with each theme, children get to practice tracing or writing words related to the theme using word cards. We also do a lot of letter sound identification with sound songs and constructing letters with a variety of materials. It's been great sharing this workshop time w/ the kids and seeing how much fun they're having gaining this skill.



Black bears have also enjoyed celebrating each other's birthdays and engaging in holiday activity. We had a blast with the Black Bear Halloween dance party, costume contest & treat exchange- as well as the center wide Trunk or Treat event. Believe it or not we have already celebrated birthdays and have lots of birthdays coming up this month. We look forward to our Thanksgiving Feast event & Holiday Caroling Concert that is soon to come.



The journey thus far has been a blast and we can't wait to see what else this year brings.



Sincerely,

The Black Bear Team

