



Dartmouth College Child Care Center Newsletter

May 2023

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**Thank you, Josie (Otter Lead Teacher) for
inviting the Manchester Mounted Police to Visit**





From the Director

Here we are at another time of transition! The fall transition seems so far away, but we begin preparing now. You should all know by now which classroom your child will be in during the '23-'24 school year. You are probably wondering if the class that your child is moving toward could be anywhere near as wonderful as the class that you are currently in. You wonder how you will get to know new routines and new teachers. You wonder if your child will light up when they see their new teachers like they do now. Because we know that the connections that children have with adults are very important to creating brain connections on the inside, we start our transition process way in advance. By starting our preparation this far in advance, the children (and their families) are ready to move on when the time comes.

You might notice that I didn't say "move up." Doing so would imply that children are moving toward something better or more than. That couldn't be further from the truth. Each year for each child is different and we aim for each year to be the best possible year that a child can have at their unique stage of development. Even if they remain in the same classroom, they are still moving on. They are learning new things about themselves, their peers, and adults. We choose to help children through their next stage of development by moving classrooms for the sake of putting them in physical environments that are best suited for their needs. We know from experience that the Black Bear Room is not suitable for infants (we had to have infants in that classroom one summer while work was being done in the Chickadee space). Likewise, Black Bears would not do as well in the Owl space. You get the idea. We are very fortunate to have a building that recognizes children's needs in different stages of development.

While our teachers tend to develop an affinity for a certain age group, they are all very capable of teaching any age under five (and some beyond). We are so fortunate to have a knowledgeable, educated and experienced staff who can meet a variety of developmental needs. We will not have the same amount of teacher movement this year as we saw last fall, but there may be a teacher or two who decide that they would like to be with a different age group. As of right now, no changes are scheduled – but time may change that.

I have had the privilege of working with all our teaching staff in classrooms over the past few months. I am very impressed with the dedication, patience, and skill that they all possess. Each teacher has their own strengths, and we are fortunate to be able to tap into the resources that they all bring.

If you have any questions as we move forward in this transition, please feel free to reach out. It is a very exciting time of year! Happy Spring!

Sunnie

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Picture Day Is Returning!

Mark your calendars for Monday, October 9, 2023.

We will be hosting a professional picture day once again.

Details will be shared as we get closer to the date!

Transition Dates

**Last day of current classes:
Friday, August 25, 2023**

**Closed for transition days:
Monday, August 28, 2023
Tuesday, August 29, 2023**

**First day in new classes:
Wednesday, August 30, 2023**

DCCCC Will Be Closed On The Following Days:

Tuesday, July 4, 2023 -Independence Day

Monday and Tuesday, August 28 and 29, 2023 - transition days

Monday, September 4, 2023 - Labor Day

Thursday, November 23, 2023 - Thanksgiving

Friday, November 24, 2023 - Day after Thanksgiving

Wednesday, December 6, 2023 - Professional Development

Monday, December 25, 2023 - Christmas

Tuesday, December 26, 2023 - Day after Christmas

December 27-29 Winter Break

Monday, January 1, New Year's Day

News from the Chickadee Ones

Ashley Flannery
Lead Teacher

Margaret Fraser

Prajna Mohapatra

How is it already Spring?! We are all happy to be seeing such nice weather that we are able to enjoy! With that being said, it is a great time to ensure your children come to school daily with weather appropriate clothing such as spare shorts, shirts, socks, sunhats, and sunscreen if you prefer to supply your own. We have water shirts that we supply for water play, but if you prefer to send swim gear that is also acceptable. We do go outside daily, especially when the weather is nice!

We have been grateful to have had many “hands in the pot” while Ashley has been on maternity leave, and we are excited that she has returned! The kiddos seemed to adjust well to the change and continued to have so much fun with teachers they might not have seen every day! Some exciting news from the little chicks:

Miles: Miles has adjusted well to becoming a big brother and is excited to be returning to school with friends!



August: His vocabulary is soaring these days! New words include apple, please, and thank-you and we believe he will just continue to add words to his vocabulary. He is really starting to understand our conversations to him and finds great fun in listening to our fun ideas for him like climbing to the very top of the soft climber!

Violet: Violet was a little timid in the beginning having different people in and out of the classroom, but she has come a long way! She is learning about her body parts and loves playing a little game of Simon says with her teachers when they ask her to point to specific parts like eyes, nose, etc.



Otto: Otto is a new walker! He is our little reader and often will find an empty teacher's lap to plop himself with a story.

Freddie: Freddie watched his brother Otto in the walking department and followed along soon after! He is that crooked smiley little guy that can make anyone smile back at him! Freddie enjoys showing off to his teachers and standing up without assistance for the teachers to clap for him!

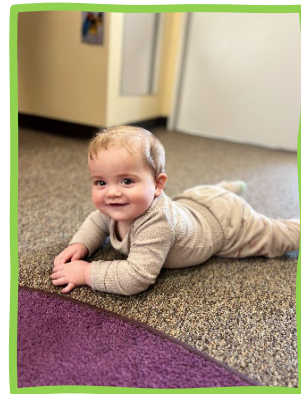


Simon: Simon started walking and has taken off running ever since! He is here, there, and everywhere these days! A little spit fire who greatly enjoys smirking at his teachers before doing something he probably shouldn't be doing. Simon enjoys reading books and flipping through pages all by himself.



Rhett: Rhett is officially on the move! It started with lots of rocking back and forth on his hands and knees! He loves giggling at teachers and the older kiddos of the classroom and he is also enjoying many kinds of foods!

Sebastian: Bash is always smiling! He has found a way to let everyone know that he is present in the room with his voice! He is also getting places fast by moving backwards and enjoys telling stories to his teachers and friends.



Emilio: Emilio has been such a sweet addition to our classroom! He has such a positive attitude and greets many with a smile. We can't wait to spend even more time with him to get to know him that much better!

All of the kiddos have enjoyed music with Brooke on Tuesday mornings and have been happily engaging with her more. We have been getting outside and playing as much as possible and enjoying many arts and crafts! We are looking forward to warm weather and sunshine! As always with any questions or concerns feel free to reach out!

Sincerely,

The Chickadee One Team

News from the Chickadee Toos

Teresa Hahn
Lead Teacher

Michelle Ackerman

Leah Ziai

We are so excited to see the return of warmer weather! The Chickadees have been enjoying watching the leaves and flowers come out, birds singing on the playground and spending longer time outside. We have been exploring marvelous mud and learning to make sand castles.

The week of the young child was lots of fun, we made music, did some berry squishing, built with the Owls and had messy art time! I especially liked the love notes and drawings shared by families.

Miriam celebrated her 2nd birthday this month. She is speaking so many words now, some of them are French. She loves giving hugs and kisses to all the babies and can say all her classmates' names.



Holden is a bundle of energy and enjoys rolling around with his friends on the futon. He likes being outside now that the snow is gone and especially likes puddles.

Sibyl has many new words, including lots of animal sound. She really enjoys books and singing songs with her teachers and peers.



Pippi has just started to walk! She still loves to crawl, because she is so speedy that way. She loves to be sung to and will ask for Open and Shut Them through gestures.

Jude is our funny guy, always making us laugh at his antics. He is our resident dancer, and busts a move as soon as he hears music.





River is a busy guy. He moves through the room, checking out all the toys. He loves to be outside exploring the playground and all the fun it has to offer.

Vera is the fastest bottom scootcher I have ever seen! She recently has started to combat crawl around the kitchen and classroom. She enjoys painting and does not mind getting messy.



Teddy is cruising all around the place inside and outside. He likes to walk along at the ballet bar and look out the window and babble.

Ivy is on the move, also cruising around the place. She has earned the new nickname screecher creature, as she likes to make her needs known by screeching at us.



Sarah has perfected her crawl and is pulling up on everything. She is affectionate and loves her snuggles. She always has a smile for her teachers.

This is an exciting time of change for us Chicks, everyone is growing and developing their personalities. I feel privileged to be a part of this process.

Please remember to provide a sunhat, footwear and appropriate clothing to go outside. If you have a specific sunscreen you prefer to use on your child, please send it in. It would be helpful to go through the clothing you currently have here to make sure it is size and weather appropriate.

I am looking forward to summer and starting some gardening with the children.

Teresa for Chickadee Too

News from the Owls

Moya Stevens
Lead Teacher

Maya Lopez

Jyanna Vaughan

Hello Everyone!

Happy Spring! The Owl Classroom has been a very busy place and a lot of things have been changing with the Owl Children! They are growing so fast and now all the children in the Owl Classroom are two years old. We have heard so many new words, lots of sentences and songs. The children are actually communicating information to their friends and teachers which makes the day easier, more fun, and very interesting. The Owl's physical abilities have also improved and the children love to go outside twice a day to run, ride, climb, slide and just use up some of that excess energy!

The Owl Children are also learning some French words and songs. Thank you, Nicole (Vincent's Grandmother) for teaching us French.

The Owl Children have many favorite activities, but here are a few individual activities that each one seems to enjoy:

Mana- Loves to hold and take care of a baby pig from the farm animal set. She also likes the tiny Eric Carl Animal books that we ordered recently.



Tristan- Loves to help! Teachers or friends. She also does a fantastic job taking care of the babies in our classroom.

Booker- He is another great classroom helper! Booker also enjoys playing with all the trucks in our room.



Alex- He is another truck loving child and always greets us with a huge wonderful smile. Alex also likes to request the song "Wheels on the Bus" daily.

Cecilia- Enjoys reading and listening to books inside and outside.
Cecilia also is enjoying playing with our tea set with her friends.



Sejal- You will also find Sejal at the table having tea time with her friends. Sejal loves to snuggle with her teachers.



Vincent- He always seems to have a plan! He likes to put the leaf blowers, chain saws and other tools in the back of the black truck and push it around the playground.



Caleb- He always has a big grin on his face and loves to play with the vehicles inside and outside.

Nir- She seems to always be singing! She enjoys Music Class, listening to music on Alexa or listening to books with songs.





Raiyan- He enjoys learning new words and repeating them. Raiyan has been traveling a lot, but always loves coming back to D4C to play with his friends and teachers.

Summer is approaching and we will do things a little differently. Instead of planning monthly activities, we plan activities for the whole summer. We will send the list of summer activities soon. We all look forward to the nice weather outside so that we can continue with playing and learning as much as possible while outside. We will continue to include all aspects of learning, but we want to incorporate as many activities outside as possible.

As always, if you have something to share, please feel free to contact us and we will make it happen.

Fondly,

Jyanna, Maya and Moya



News from the Hedgehogs

Deb Davidson
Lead Teacher
As of 6/19/23

Jenn Boudro

Emily Courtemanche

Here are some springtime observations of the amazing children in the Hedgehog class:

Thalia: If we are outside on the big playground, chances are you will find Thalia pedaling around the bike path on a tricycle. She has learned how to pedal on the bikes. She absolutely loves to ride around, announcing to everyone to look at her newly mastered skill. Thalia has quite an extensive collection of stuffed animals and friends at home. She usually arrives with a new one each day, which she enjoys snuggling with at rest time. She has recently become a big sister and loves to tell us about baby “Artie”, who will join the Chickadee classroom in the fall.



Palmer: Is one Hedgehog that we never have to guess what she is thinking. She is very proud of her accomplishments and loves to tell everyone of her newly mastered skills, which most recently is straightening out her own pants by herself. She is thrilled that the swings are back on the big playground, and something tells us learning to pump her legs on the swings to make it go by herself will be her next goal. Palmer often inquires about what day it will be when she is not here on Fridays. On Cino de Mayo, we discussed we would be serving burritos for lunch, similar to the wraps she has in her lunch sometimes. So, when the Hedgehogs later brought up the subject of Cino de Mayo, Palmer told us, “I will not be here for wrapper day”. Palmer is also beginning to do some potty training and is having some success on the toilet.



Elliott: was our first Hedgehog to turn three recently. He requested for us to read his current favorite story, Abiyoyo, which he often enjoys reciting the words in the book. We celebrated his birthday with chocolate chip cookies and has us convinced that chocolate chips can be found in the middle of some flowers, such as black-eyed Susan and daisies. Elliott is not shy and knows how to work a room with his love of performing (singing and dancing). It appears the bigger the crowd, the more excited he gets. Elliott has become quite the Hedgehog Hiker. On our hikes in the fall and winter, Elliott would ride in the wagon and practice walking short distances, gradually building up stamina to hike with his peers. In early spring, he retired the wagon and walks right

alongside his peers on our hikes.



Blake: has been one of our well-traveled Hedgehogs this year. She most recently shares stories of visiting grandma and grandpa and going to the zoo where she saw “a lot of animals”. She recently told us “mom reads me the astronaut story. It’s my favorite.” Blake is currently in the beginning stages of potty training and is doing quite well. Blake and her family are very excited to be opening their new coffee shop business soon. Blake has been helping them paint the new building and the plumbers are working there now. So very exciting. Sunnyside Coffee Company is opening soon in Fairlee VT. One review claimed they have the “best coffee in the Upper Valley”. We can’t wait to sample the coffee and foods that will be served. Hope you can make it there to check it out.



Gigi: loves to tell stories of her family and is very fond of her brother, Timmy. If he is out of the big playground when we are walking by Gigi insists that everyone stop and take note that “I see Timmy on the big playground”. She talks of family ice cream adventure in which she had a “strawberry ice cream with rainbow sprinkles”, and “Timmy had chocolate with rainbow sprinkles”. “Dad had an ice cream, no not Mommy”. Gigi is still a little reserved around live animals and the sirens from the fire engines on our trip to the fire station recently had Gigi feeling a little anxious, but she is learning to be brave and knows the fire fighters are doing their job to keep us safe.

Jonah: Balls Balls Balls...any ball will do. Football, hockey, tennis, baseball, soccer, basketball. No matter the sport, Jonah is all in. He appears to enjoy all kinds of ball sports. Jonah has a “hustle” to his step and likes to move quickly, which we are sure his sport coaches will appreciate. Jonah tells us at lunch if his cucumbers are cut into circles like hockey pucks, or long lengths like hockey sticks. Jonah continues to be very empathic and kind to all his friends, notices when a friend needs help, and is always willing to lend a helping hand. Jonah has become fully potty trained here in the last few weeks. Great job, Jonah.





Toni: talks about her baby brother “Bash” several (hundred) times a day. Toni often enjoys bringing some items/toys from home and showing her friends what she has brought. One day we observed her problem solving how to fit everything she had brought into her inside cubby. Toni seemed to really enjoy having lunch with big sister, Theda, and her baby brother, Bash, on sibling lunch day. Toni and Palmer have started to engage in more associative play together, cooking, driving in the car, going to the beach (and putting on sunscreen) or even just holding hands on the trail having a conversation. Toni loves high pushes on the swings, especially on the tire swing.

Riley: can still be found driving/pushing cars and trucks around the classroom or outside on the playground. He continues his love on learning and loves to fact check with adults about certain subjects such as the tadpoles, fire safety, and most recently, bugs. He expresses such joy in the discovery of finding bugs/worms/creatures and even certain plants and flowers. Riley tells us quite often if the tulips at his house are “open and blooming” or “closed and sleeping”. Riley found a puddle full of worms at the echo tunnel, so we took them out and brought them to the Hedgehog garden. He requested to be told quite a few times what the worms would do and how they are helpful to the plants in the garden. Riley often suggests we should go see if the worms are still there “go find worms?”. Riley has been very successful in peeing and pooping on the potty in Hedgehogs consistently.



Julian: Julian continues to show interest and engage in ball play. He can quite often be found shooting hoops or kicking the soccer ball with peers. (even some of the older children). Julian has been engaging in more structured ball games such as toss and catch, shooting balls into hoops made with peers or adults’ arms. He enjoys when adults throw the ball up on the roof as he attempts to catch it when it rolls down. Julian will be our next Hedgehog to turn three. Hedgehogs think tater tots, which Julian often has for lunch, would be a perfect birthday snack for Julian. Julian continues to explore tasting new foods and has expanded his pallet include more foods he is willing eat in the Hedgehog class. Julian is a great hugger, in which he appears to love to give and receive hugs. He is very fond of the sibling babies that visit for pick-up/drop-off in the Hedgehog class. Julian also will sometimes request an adult read a familiar book to him and currently requests the story of Abiyoyo on a daily basis. Julian is another

Hedgehog who has been very successful in peeing and pooping (aka: doo-doo) on the potty.

Mattie has been embracing her role as a big sister and practicing on the baby dolls in the classroom; she can commonly be found in the kitchen area with a baby in her arm as she prepares a bottle. Mattie takes good care of her babies and keeps a blanket close by in case they need a nap. Mattie has become more curious about nature and the living things we see on our walks and asks lots of questions about the different noises we hear. Mattie isn't afraid to get dirty either, she happily marches through deep muddy puddles on the trail and hops right back up if she falls down; and is nonetheless deterred from going through future mud puddles. On the Preschool Playground, Mattie can be found in the play kitchen or in the sandbox; creating pretend food for her restaurant. Mattie enjoys cooking Mac n' Cheese, Soup, and Pizza for her teachers and any other children that come by.



Timothy can be found digging in the sandbox and filling his buckets all the way up. Timothy spends lots of time scooping and watching the process of sand sliding off his shovel and falling into the bucket. His job doesn't stop there, next he needs to retrieve a dump truck or excavator to help transport the sand to another location on the playground. Timothy has developed an interest in big body play with his peers and enjoys flopping his body on the ground and rolling around while laughing. Timothy is quite good at rolling his body at top speed without crashing into any toys or classmates. He can be heard saying "I was careful with my body" after he maneuvers around another Hedgehog. Timothy has also been enjoying the musical instruments we have in the classroom. His favorite would be the small blue and green maracas and he can be found dancing in

a circle and shaking his maracas!

Svea told us she wants to be a Hedgehog teacher when she gets bigger and enjoys following us around the classroom to assist with any tasks that need to be completed. She happily sits beside us during diaper routines and names all the diapers to whom they belong. She tells us "teachers have to do diapers, sunscreen, circle time, make a list, and wash faces". Svea is also good at communicating and reminding us of morning notes from Parents to Teachers. Out on the playground, Svea enjoys driving the Firetruck and pretending to go to different restaurants, and even working in the "lab". Svea likes doing puzzles at the tables after lunch and commonly asks to have the 'car puzzle' out as an option. She has mastered the foam car puzzle and can quickly assemble the cars after she dumps them all out.





Rowan has been familiarizing himself with different insects we encounter on our walks along the trail. Rowan wasn't sure how he felt about bugs in his personal space in the beginning of Spring but now he is exploring them comfortably. He crouches down and watches the insects as they walk along the grass and gather food to bring back home. He moves around any flying bugs that may get in his way and continues exploring with the rest of the Hedgehogs. Rowan loves looking for worms as well and quickly grabs them up when he notices them wriggle by. Out on the playground, Rowan can be found driving the dump trucks through the sandbox and delivering rocks to his classmates. Rowan also enjoys playing on the climber and racing his peers down the slide. They have fun experimenting with different ways to go down the slide but his favorite is to slide down on his belly!

We are excited that we will be welcoming Deb Davidson as the Lead Teacher in the Hedgehog Room starting June 19! Deb comes with a great deal of early childhood experience and knows what working with toddlers is all about! It seems like it has been a long time coming and we are sure that Deb will fit right in and continue the fun that the Hedgehogs are used to!

Enjoy the warmer weather!

The Hedgehog Team



News from the Otters

Josie Byam
Lead Teacher

Megan Widli

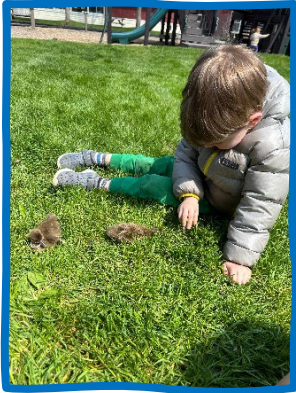
Hello otter friends and families, welcome back!

Since last time you've heard from us we have done some pretty amazing things! The Otters finished off last time with Dental week and have done so much more. Below is a list of topics we have covered in the Otter room from February till now.

- Polar bears
- Post office
- Friendship
- Transportation &
- The Dentist
- House pets VS wild animals
- Leprechauns
- Trains
- Construction
- Zoo
- Welcoming spring
- Migration
- Earth
- Space
- Dinosaurs
- Bugs
- Flowers
- Pond life
- Community helpers and moving forward into June we will be learning about
- Bees
- Ocean
- Pirates
- Spirit week!!

The Otters are very excited to announce that for the remainder of the summer and the for the next year to come we are welcoming Megan Widli into the Otter Room as our Associate II Teacher! I personally cannot wait to see the curriculum, and activities the two of us can come up with together!

During our migration week in April we talked about how birds fly back and lay their eggs, and soon those eggs become baby birds. We talked about how that process happens and the most important part of transforming an egg into a bird was incubation. The kids learned that the incubation standards had to be just right for the baby bird to make it out of the egg. I brought in



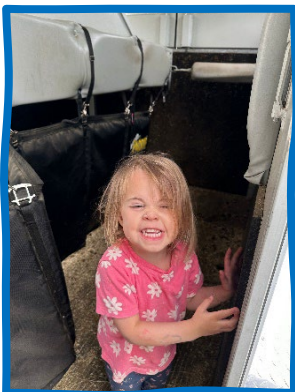
duck eggs from the farm and we placed them into our incubator and monitored closely. Each one of the Otters had their own flashlights to check in on the eggs and make sure that all of the numbers were right. They checked to make sure there were still 4 eggs and that the temperature was 99.5 degrees and the humidity was 55%. Inside the incubator there was a digital thermometer so the Otters could match the numbers written on our chart below. We had a day by day visual of the inside of the egg as well for the Otters to observe.

The incubator was only allowed to be opened very briefly, and only with good reason such as adding more water, or to candle the eggs to check for viability. After the 28 day wait period one of the ducks had pipped through the shell and on May 8th we had our first baby duck hatch in the Otter Room. The following day the second duck was out of his shell and welcomed into our class.

At the end of the 28 days there were still two eggs left with one being a known dud. The third egg was candled on Monday and presumed deceased. I left the egg in the incubator until Tuesday morning when I arrived just to be sure. It was candled again and there were still no signs of life. I then decided to use the last two eggs as a science experiment to show the Otters what it looked like inside. This was so the kids could see the inside of the eggs before the duck's hatch on their own.



We cracked both eggs open and they got to see the difference between a fertile egg and unfertile egg. The unfertile egg was just a big yellow blob of yolk, where the fertile egg had a baby duck in it that was about 85% developed. The Otters could see the ducklings bill, its feet, feathers and eyes. However, they noticed that there was a lot of "yellow stuff and blood" in with this duckling, unlike the ducklings that had hatched on their own. We talked as a group how sometimes the ducklings in the eggs just don't make it and normally the mother duck would throw it out of the nest as to not harm the other ducklings to come.



For our community helpers I reached out the Manchester Mounted Police Department (see more pictures on the first page). Where Officer Miano came with her assistant Kelly and their comfort pony Eddie. Eddie is 24 years old and was such a gentleman. Everyone in the Otter Room as able to go up and pat him and ask a question to Officer Miano, or her assistant. Once the Otters were though visiting, and checking out the horse trailer we then invited the rest of the center to come and see Eddie and his Officer to ask their questions, and enjoy this super neat experience.

Questions from the kiddos:

Amelia – Do you have other horses at home?

Charlie – What's this? (points to lead rope)

Frankie – What is he eating in that bucket?

Henry – How did you guys get here?

Keisuke – I don't have to touch him, right?

Olive – Is this where he poops? (pointing into the horse trailer)

Robin - Why does he smell so bad?

Sia – Does he make noises?

Signy – Can you walk him like Ms. Josie walks Otter Dog?

Walter – What else do you do with him, and can you ride in the trailer with him?



Now some of our Otters were too shy to ask their questions directly so we brought our list we had come up with out with us to share with Eddie's owners.

As we move into the summer months the Otters will be spending a lot of time outside, and talking about moving to their new rooms. We will be talking about this transition means with the Otters over the next few months and going over how they came to us from the Owl room and now it's time to move up again. During these transition times we understand it can be difficult on the kids to understand or simply come to terms with leaving their current classroom. We highly encourage talking about the transition at home to help it settle in easier.

Miss Josie



News from the Badgers

Cat Kaschak
Lead Teacher

Jason Clark

Elizabeth Darragh

Here we are! There's been a lot of changes in the classroom, from a change in teachers to saying goodbye to one of our Badger friends, the kids are taking it all in stride. We are so proud of them.



The Badgers are on a roll, they are cleaning the classroom without prompting and learning how to put their own sheets on and off their nap mats. We have friends that are grabbing forks, spoons, and water bottles for their friends and everyone has been so good at grabbing their

lunch boxes to set up lunch. The Badgers have the opportunity to pick out table activities in the afternoon and they help put the table choices away when they are done.

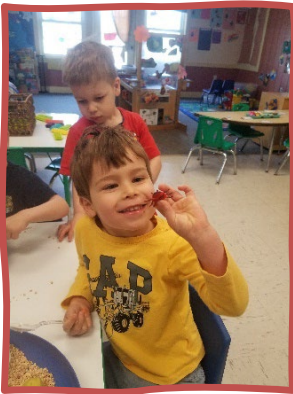
Now that we are into the warmer weather there are fewer things for the badgers to zip up and put on to go outside. They are finding out how to push friends gently but firmly on the swings, how to play nicely with the younger children, and how to handle disagreements on the playground.



Our Badgers have grown their imaginations; one second, we will be escaping from pirates and the next we are fire fighters putting out fires while also dodging and fending off the monsters that come our way. We have been taking some Badgers over to the Owl playground to play nicely and gently with the tiny toddlers and babies. The kids are very independent and are leading

activities with their peers. We even have badgers explaining to others that the long red hand on the clock is the second hand while the long black hand is the minute hand.

The amount of energy that these kids have is amazing! We love seeing them put it to use with great teamwork, making trenches, building sandcastles, playing tag, learning new games like Duck Duck Goose or hand games like “Here’s the daycare, and here’s the shed and inside... There’s no people!”

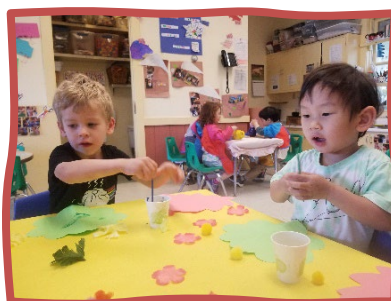


We have been doing well with the Badgers having a theme of the week and then teaching the badgers communication skills, letters, numbers, and so much more. We had a whole week of talking about the planet, how to plant a garden of strawberries and be kind to others that are also sharing that space. We have gone on lovely walks and talked to the badgers about photosynthesis and how plants use light to turn the air and water into food. At this point the Badgers are telling me what day it is and don’t need me to lead them in any of our morning songs! Most of the Badgers can spell their names and some friends can even write their names. The Badgers can count to 20 and their shape recognition is great! There has been a great interest in making art with anything they can get their hands on.



The Badgers are all ready and excited to do moving up to the Black Bears in August, and we are continuing our efforts to make them comfortable with the transition.

Elizabeth for the Badger Team



News from the Black Bears

Viviana Rodriguez,
Lead Teacher

Anna Blair

Hannah Rowland

Hello DCCC Families,

The Black Bears are so happy that spring has finally sprung! We have explored & learned so much about the world around us since the weather shift. We have gone on many hikes to pick flowers, find worms & bugs, identify different kinds of birds we see along the way & even collect our very own tadpoles to observe from the pond by the Ray school! With all this exploring your kiddos have learned a lot about the life cycle of butterflies, frogs & plants- they even created their own diagrams to document these life cycles. During our “spring has sprung” curriculum, children helped plant a variety of seeds ranging from peas, lettuce & onions to marigolds & sunflowers. We also had a spring spirit week in which we really enjoyed our Disney, Superhero & Dress Up

Day! Your children continue to be curious about nature & finding ways to keep the bugs safe by bringing them to safety & to little worm/bug houses made from sticks & leaves. They have also explored the flow of water by constructing their own river in the sand box- working as a team to dig out a path in the sand & pour water from the puddle onto the trail.

As the weather gets warmer the Black Bears have really enjoyed having many picnic snacks/lunches & going to the co-op to get some ice cream. We look forward to more of this as well as water play, especially water balloon fights as the sun gets hotter. On May 31st the Black Bears had their first field trip of the summer to Storrs Pond for a picnic lunch, a hike in the woods, swimming in the pond & cooling off in the splash pad! If all goes well, we will plan a few more trips to Storrs Pond throughout the summer. Although we have only had one birthday since the February newsletter we are very excited to celebrate all the summer birthdays coming up, especially our ice cream tie dye celebration for Viviana & Annabelle’s shared birthday.

We have had many great curriculum themes the past few months including a very fun accepting differences curriculum in which we explored a number of disabilities with some special family visitors! Children got to learn how to read & write in braille using a special braille machine & had a blast learning how to sign in sign language & read lips w/ ear plugs in. We also got to explore how people with limb differences achieve many tasks using a variety of resources such as prosthetics or electric wheelchairs & how it feels/how we can support those with autism, learning disabilities & communication disorders with interactive scenario games. Another favorite theme we did was Cinco de Mayo! Each of the kids got to make their own ponchos & sombreros, learn the Mexican hat dance & salsa dance, have a Cinco de Mayo parade around the center & do a Mexican food tasting &





burrito lunch. We can't wait to finally do our Ocean week next week & learn all about what it's like being a diver from one of our very own black bears who is a very passionate diver herself!

As the school year starts getting closer to the end, children are getting very excited about going to kindergarten & having our Black Bear graduation ceremony on June 28th. Although many of us will part ways we know we will be off to great things at our new schools & look forward to coming back for visits to share our experiences in kindergarten.

Sincerely,
The Black Bear Team





Supporting Healthy Eating Habits

Tips for Families

Monica Griffin



“How do I get my child to eat their vegetables?”

As a child nutrition expert with 13 years of experience working with families and early childhood programs, that’s the question I’m most often asked. Families know that healthy eating is important for their children’s developing bodies and minds, but how can they introduce new foods so that children will accept them?

How you feed children matters as much as what you feed them. Serving a variety of healthy foods in a positive mealtime environment can make the experience enjoyable for everyone. Try these tips to help children develop healthy eating habits.

1. **Remove the pressure.** Making your child try something they don’t want to eat can backfire, setting up a contest of wills or teaching them that they don’t have control over their eating. They should decide what and how much to eat from the foods you put on the table. To limit food waste, start by offering smaller portions.
2. **Serve veggies early and often.** The younger children are when they are exposed to vegetables, the sooner they will grow to like them. Once your child is ready to start solids, expose them to a variety of plain vegetables without any fruit or sweeteners mixed in. Once they have transitioned to table food, offer vegetables two or three times a day.
3. **Keep trying.** Children may need to see a food many times before trying it, so continue offering previously refused foods. Include them with a favorite meal (green salad next to a favorite pasta dish).

4. **Mix it up.** Do you always serve steamed vegetables? Try roasting them with different seasonings, or offer veggies raw or with dip. Many preschoolers like the crunch of raw vegetables (cucumbers, bell peppers, carrot sticks).
5. **Encourage your child to help.** Young children love to be helpers. Your preschooler can help wash vegetables, tear lettuce and greens, or arrange sliced veggies on top of a pizza.
6. **Show it or grow it.** Show what a vegetable looks like before you prepare it. Consider planting and growing seeds in a pot, planter, or garden with your child.
7. **Be a role model.** Your child notices what you eat, and they may try something they see you enjoy. It’s okay to follow your own preferences, but avoid making negative statements about the foods being served.

Children get nutrition over days and weeks, not individual meals, and it’s normal for your child to eat all their veggies at one meal and none at another. Following these tips will help children grow into healthy eaters. If you have concerns, reach out to your child’s doctor or a registered dietitian for support.

Monica Griffin, MS, RD, LD, is a registered dietitian and the assistant director of nutrition and wellness initiatives at Quality Care for Children in Atlanta, Georgia. She provides regular nutrition information and tips for families in the Georgia Parent Power blog at qualitycareforchildren.org/georgia-parent-power.

Tick Check

Yes! It's that time of year again! The ticks are looking for sources of nutrition so that they can grow strong and healthy! Unfortunately, animals and people are a great source of that nutrition. The biggest concern is the possibility of contracting Lyme Disease. Here are a few facts and thoughts about ticks and management.

First and foremost: Do not fear going outside. Children should be shown how to check for ticks but should not be taught to fear ticks. With a little knowledge and diligence, the risk of Lyme Disease can be reduced. The benefits of long walks in the woods or an afternoon at the playground far outweigh the risks.

Some facts about ticks:

- They have 8 legs (insects have six) and are arachnids like spiders.
- 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.
- Deer ticks must be attached for 36-72 hours to transmit disease.
- Not every deer tick carries Lyme Disease.
- Each tick only feeds once in its life, so they aren't prowling from person to person.
- Ticks avoid open sunny places like our playground but that doesn't mean that they will never be there.

Still, deer ticks aren't to be taken lightly. Children should be checked after outdoor excursions 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:

- 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 D4C.)
- Permethrin treated clothing.
- Wearing long sleeved shirts and long pants tucked into your socks.

The CDC is an excellent source of up to date 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 and way more information than I have shared here!

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.