



# Dartmouth College Child Care Center Newsletter

May 2016

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

**Wandering Woodchucks**  
Liz Harrington, Eileen  
Ruml, Terri Crane, Kristin  
Cole, Brian Goodness,  
Jenn Murphy

## We Planted Trees!

On Monday, May 9 we had a belated Arbor Day Celebration. The children were very excited to take part in planting two fruiting pear trees in our orchard. They were able to see some of the equipment that is used when working in trees. The kids also watched the trees go into the ground and helped to fill the holes with dirt so that the trees can grow. We can't wait for pears!







## From the Director

Dear Big Jeff,

When I dropped off my kid the other day, a fire drill was in process. You have fire drills?!

Smokey

Dear Smokey,

You betcha! Every month. This time we cleared the building in 75 seconds. You must have caught the 8:00 hour. I try to schedule drills through the year in each hour of the day so we can practice evacuation under different circumstances. Most often the teachers are notified in advance so they can prepare the children who need a gentle heads up or, in cold weather, have the babies bundled. The children's routine is never changing: when the alarm goes off line up behind the teacher, follow him/her outside to the meeting place and stay with your group.

Hanover Fire Department is on hand for each drill. Every month a different teacher pulls the alarm and calls 911, which is pretty thrilling if you've never done it before. The monthly visits give HFD an opportunity to look around and give us feedback on fire safety, too. Usually they come in multiple vehicles including a ladder truck, so we have fun waving good-bye to them.

If your child chooses to relay information about a fire drill, the most likely things for you to hear are:

- a. *It was loud.*  
That's a true story!
- b. *We went out without our coats.*  
That's right, everyone stops what they are doing and goes right outside without stopping to get anything.
- c. *We had to wait.*  
True, again. Once I have gotten the thumbs up from a teacher in each classroom, I go to tell the firefighters that everyone is accounted for and they can turn the alarm off. Sometimes we have to wait a bit while they fiddle with the alarm panel.
- d. *Big Jeff told us when we could go back in.* Yes indeed. Once the final counts are in, I give the thumbs up, we cheer and we go back in.

If you were ever to ask your child what Big Jeff's job is, you will probably hear that he tells stories, he waters the plants, he does fire drills and he goes to his office, which sums things up pretty well.

Happy Fire Drill  
Big Jeff

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **DCCCC will Be Closed**

**Monday, May 30** – Memorial Day

**Monday, July 4** – Independence Day

**Monday and Tuesday, August 29 and 30-**

**Transition and training days**

**Monday, September 5** – Labor Day

## **StoryTime is Coming!**

**Monday, May 23 at 4:00 in the big multi.**

**Come here stories by Big Jeff with musical accompaniment from the Professor of Percussion, James Burger.**

**There is sure to be some amazing beats this time!**

## **Provider Appreciation Day**

**Thank you for all of the love and kindness that you all gave to the teachers at DCCCC. The testimonials were especially enjoyed! The teachers work hard each and every day and they really appreciate being celebrated on this day of the year!**

## **Annual Baby/Kid/Maternity Yard Sale**

### **Benefit for Muscular Dystrophy**

**Goal: to raise money to fund research to find a cure for Muscular Dystrophy**

**What: Multiple sellers, Donation/Benefit table, Bake Sale for Benefit too!**

**When: Saturday, May 14th from 8:30 AM to noon**

**Where: Thetford Community Center in Thetford, VT**

**preview some items:**

**<https://www.facebook.com/BabyKidMaternityYardSaleBenefitForMD/>**



[Hanover HopStop: The Swing Peepers](#)

Sat May 21 2016 - 11:00 AM

Multi-instrument duo performs inventive and interactive songs for—and by—kids.

[Claremont HopStop: The Swing Peepers](#)

Sat May 21 2016 - 3:00 PM

Multi-instrument duo performs inventive and interactive songs for—and by—kid

## The Children Who Plant Trees: Family Program with Storyteller Michael Caduto

Sunday, June 5, 1:00pm

Justin Morrill Homestead  
Strafford, Vermont

We'll start this family program by turning someone from the audience into a tree! Come explore how trees grow through a picture show, parts of trees, posters, storytelling & music. What are the gifts that trees give to people and animals, and how do they clean up the environment? Everyone will help plant a tree to show our appreciation for the gifts that trees give to us. Presenter Michael Caduto is a storyteller, musician and co-author of the KEEPERS OF THE EARTH books.

Fee: \$5.00 admission – \$10.00 per family

Please preregister:

- by phone: 802-765-4288
- by email: [director@morrillhomestead.org](mailto:director@morrillhomestead.org) • online:

<http://www.morrillhomestead.org/news-events/2016-programs-events-exhibits/#3>

Sponsored by Bushway Insurance Agency

# News from the Chickadee Ones

Denise Ayers,  
Teacher

Judy Labrie,  
Assistant Teacher

Hello to All from the Chickadees!

Spring has finally arrived and these Chickadees are growing as fast as the grass outside! We've already started the season of watching the lawn mowers and weed whackers. The window is lined with children when the grass is being cut. It is so much fun to watch. Spring also means that gardening season is upon us! Planting and working in gardens is such a great project for kids and adults alike. Getting dirty and watching things grow is just what this age group needs. Judy and Teresa will be working with all of the Chickadee Ones and Toos to plant gardens in raised beds. We look forward to sharing the experiences together.

So many things are happening because our Chickadees are growing. We are spending more and more time outside both on the playground and venturing out for a walk now and then. We have been taking some Chickadees to visit with their older siblings and other kids both in their classrooms and in the big multi. Getting supplies from the kitchen takes a bit longer now that we have Chickadees that can walk there with us and help to carry things back – it is a long journey from one end of this Center to the other. We've been exploring different activities like drawing with markers and figuring out that they don't taste that great. And one of the biggest changes - sleeping on nap mats! This is a big step in the life of the Chickadees, moving out of cribs is such a milestone. Can you believe how much these kids have grown since September? It happens so fast but we enjoy each and every stage of their development along the way.

As you already know, Katie has joined the Otter team as their Assistant Teacher. We enjoyed having her with us for the month of April. Liz has joined us and will remain with us until we find the third permanent member of our team. The search is ongoing and we will keep you posted but in the meantime we are happy to have Liz back in the Chickadee One room for a while!

Just a reminder that because your children are growing and because the weather is changing it is a great time to look through the extra clothes that you have here. Some may be too small and some may be too warm. The weather changes throughout the day and clothes that are

appropriate for the morning may be too warm by afternoon so having extras to change into is helpful. Since we can't be sure that warm weather is here to stay it would be great to have extra clothes here for the warm and the not so warm days.

We hope that you all are getting the opportunity to enjoy outside time for yourselves as well!

The Chickadee Team



# News from the Chickadee Toos

Teresa Hahn,  
Lead Teacher

Lori Higgins,  
Teacher

Moya Stevens,  
Assistant Teacher

It feels like Spring is finally here and the Chickadee Toos are welcoming it with open arms. We are all spending lots of time outside and exploring nature. We spent last month learning about animals on the farm, how they go to sleep, what sounds they make and what their babies are called. We have had countless rounds of Old MacDonald Had a Farm and have read many books relating to farm life. We will be expanding the theme as we move on to planting and growing, vegetables, flowers and herbs. Get ready to have some garden dirt under the nails and on the knees.

By the end of May, all the children will be one. We are all mobile and that makes everyone happy to be on the move. We are experiencing a lot of teething and that is exciting and painful at the same time.

Please let Teresa know if you are planning on being away at all this summer, as people are looking for some extra days. And, speaking of summer, please make sure your child has extra clothes, a sunhat and if you would like them to use a special sunscreen, bring that in too.

Teresa has been taking small groups of children to play in the big multi. The children have such looks of glee as they move down the hallway and into the huge open space. We are getting lots of practice on the stairs in the big climber, learning to ride bikes, building with lots of big wooden blocks and big body play climbing and jumping on the mats.

Both the little and big multi are excellent opportunities for the Chickadees to get acquainted with Owl and Hedgehog Teachers. This will help with smooth transitions in the Fall. But wait... I just want to



enjoy all the little Chicks, and their newly acquired and ever blossoming independence while I can. So here's to a summer of fun and growth.

Teresa for the Chickadee Too Team.



## News from the Owls

Debbie Burnham,  
Lead Teacher

Wendy Irwin,  
Teacher

April Buchanan,  
Assistant Teacher

By the time you read this, all of our Owls will have turned two years old. We see more group play, more acting out songs and more independence. We also see more silliness at lunch and snack and more negotiating about diaper times ("Not yet Debbie") and nap times ("No back rub").

We work on setting limits at lunch with reminders that it is time to eat. We then remove the silliest child from the table for a moment when the rowdiness gets too loud. We say, "Let me know when you are ready to eat" and then bring them back to the table.

With negotiating we give a "heads up" such as "five more minutes" and then, if needed, we offer a choice. We will say, "You can come by yourself or I can help you". Having patience and humor helps!

We are also giving out more reminders about nut free notes in lunches. As you move through the center each room will need nut free notes due to allergies in the classroom and among the teachers.

Some favorite toys and activities in the Owl Room:

**Fred**-likes to cook in our new kitchen

**Jaeden**-wants the blue police car when outside

**Asher**-goes right for the shopping carts outside

**Hugo**-likes to play soccer

**Raphael**-climbs and does tumbling

**Cody**-likes to go on walks

**Sandy**-lays on the couch and reads books after lunch

**Lucas**-makes lots of toys into guitars

**Waylon**-cannot keep him out of puddles

**Katherine**-likes pushing shopping carts and carrying baskets

Parent reminders:

Please check your child's cubby to see if the sizes are correct for extra clothes. These Owls are growing!!

If you would like your child to wear a sun hat please send one in.

We hope you are having a wonderful spring and are enjoying your time outside.

Fondly,  
Debbie, Wendy and April



# News from the Hedgehogs

Jennifer Sprague,  
Lead Teacher

Jenn Boudro,  
Teacher

Anna Fuller,  
Assistant Teacher

Hello Families!

We have been enjoying the warmer weather that has arrived with lots of fun outside activities like tee ball, bubbles, fence painting, spraying water bottles, taking hikes, chalk drawing, water color painting, reading books, and having a picnic lunch. The Hedgehogs work very hard with one another during their day. They are sharing materials, waiting for turns, and communicating their wants and their needs. Below is a great article from the Zero To Three Website about how to set limits for children and help them develop self-control.



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

### **Two-Year-Olds and Self-Control**

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

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

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

**(Continuing Zero to Three article)**

**Everyday ways to nurture self-control:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## News from the Otters

Susan Quimby Young,  
Lead Teacher

Joel King,  
Teacher

Katie Robinson,  
Assistant Teacher

Welcome spring!!! It is May 11th and the sun is shining and it is beautiful out! The children are all outside on the playground running around, climbing, playing in the sand, watering beans and seedlings, checking the woodchuck hole under the shed and having a wonderful time in the perfect weather. I wanted to let you all know that we will always be applying sunscreen 30 minutes before going out and every 2 hours there after. If you have a special sunscreen that you'd prefer your child to use, please send it in. Also send in a sunhat if you want your child to wear one. I'd also give your child's cubby a regular check to be sure the warmer weather clothing is well stocked. I am sure water play is coming very, very soon (if not tomorrow!!)

We have noticed that the block area has been used with more vigor and regularity. We added a whole new shelf of unit blocks and provide a variety of items to boost interest and play. Children have built incredible structures with both the unit blocks and magna tiles. Some are homes for animals or stuffies. This involves different ways of planning. Does this stuffy need a big area or a small one? Will it fit here or do we need to change it? Does it need a door or windows? The topics of conversation evolve as do the structures as negotiations go on as to what is needed. Children usually work together and may say... "I am on the block team!" Adding only tractors and farm equipment may begin farm play. A day or 2 later, we may add some farm animals. Just yesterday, they began building a fire station. I found some activities that included adding small glass pebbles to various types of blocks. We used tree blocks with small stumps and natural planks. I put a bunch of blue rocks together and added a frog. The children took it from there and made a waterfall with the rocks as they slip down a plank. More frogs and salamanders were brought in and paper lily pads added as well. Some had tree climbing frogs and there was a snake in a tree. While I set up the activity, it was such fun watching the children move forward with their own ideas as well. There are so many different types of block building and it is always open-ended giving the children endless opportunities. The big hollow blocks have also been used in the big multi which provides a much larger construction site!

We have also started with some gardening projects. Some seeds have been planted outside and some practically grew overnight in larger pots. We have been reading "One Bean" repeatedly. I usually give each child a bean. We close our eyes and feel it. Just like

in the book, it is smooth, dry and hard! This starts us off with the children not only physically feeling the bean seed but also it gets them thinking. We will be sprouting some this week to get a more visual idea of what's going on under the ground. It will show root development as well as how the sprouts and leaves begin. You may get a whiff (or blast) of chive breath when you pick you Otter up as a bunch of kids love to just eat them right out of the garden. That is my hope..... that kids are exposed to fresh garden vegetables on a daily basis. Beans and lettuces are about as easy as it gets if all goes well. Last year, we had a couple of pesky woodchucks that liked our vegetables a whole lot and ate a bunch. We are trying hard to not have that happen again this year but time will tell. I am in hopes that my excitement for gardening with children is contagious to them. Of course some kids would prefer to play in the sandbox but all will get some time gardening. We make it fun and interesting and TASTY!!

We will be planning a couple of special days including Hat Day, Silly Hair Day and stay tuned for a date that we will be planning a cookout.

Thank you for your kind words at Teacher Appreciation Day. For those of you that have not yet set up a conference, please get in touch with me and we'll find a convenient time.

And last but certainly not least... we thank Liz for her tireless energy and support for the last several months. We miss her and will hunt her down for hugs and snuggles! She has only been gone for a few days but stops down often.

**AND WELCOME KATIE ROBINSON to the Otter team!!!**

Fondly,

Susan for the Otter team

# News from the Badgers

Terri Hollis,  
Lead Teacher

Miranda Arruda,  
Teacher

Valerie Stefani,  
Assistant Teacher

Happy Spring Badger Families!

This time of year it seems to be a natural and obvious thing to notice all of nature blooming. Grass has been exposed, buds on trees have burst, and flowers are brightly revealed. Birds are singing enough to say "Notice me, I am here."



It seems timely that this is the time of year that your children are ready to showcase and reveal all of what they can now accomplish, as in they too have bloomed. They not only can be more independent with self-help skills, they want to do it themselves, and even extend a helping hand to others without being asked to do so. Teachers often hear children say to one another, "I can help you." They are learning how good it can feel to make others feel good. Pretty big step for young ones who up until now made it all about what they wanted. Let's talk working out problems, now that's a BIGGIE. No need to hit and grab (ok it happens still on occasion but.....); we have words we can use. Huh, who knew?

One of the best things ever is watching your children allow themselves new experiences. This is such a display of the confidence that has grown. Your children have struggled, but not given up when exploring what their bodies can, or at times cannot do. Some of them are pedaling bikes, conquering the large climber ladders and monkey bars. Some have really beamed with pride as they continue practicing the alphabet letters. How about being able to take what is in their mind and putting it on paper? An actual representation, not

just marks on a paper. Their expressions show their own surprise of one self, at what they were able to accomplish.



It just seems so important to pause in this Crazy busy world and just notice. What has changed? What is different?

BLINK----- your children

Please take the time to sign up for your child's conference. This is a great time to talk about your children's accomplishments.

On behalf of the Badger Teachers

Terri



## News from the Black Bears

Amy McLellan,  
Lead Teacher

Barb Merchand,  
Teacher

Kelly Bosma,  
Assistant Teacher

Now that the warm weather is here for good, the Black Bears have taken full advantage of long mornings outside. The natural playground is busy! Turning over rocks to explore the life underneath, searching for caterpillars, digging in the dirt, balancing on tree stumps, and building tiny houses for fairies all happen out there! After a busy morning, we enjoy a picnic lunch. Sometimes other classes join us for lunch as well.

In the garden, the Black Bears have been gently caring for the plants and flowers beginning to bloom. The worms are working hard in the composter, and we will soon transfer them to the raised worm bed. Here, the Black Bears will continue to care for them by gently watering and turning the soil, and adding newspaper (dry bedding) and fruit and veggies for the worms to feast upon!

The last of the Black Bears have had Kindergarten visits, and are extremely excited to find that there are many similarities between their Black Bear room and their Kindergarten class. This will make for smoother transitions for the kids. Moms and dads may have a bit more trouble, but all will be well once you see their smiling face after the very first day! In the meantime, we will continue to enjoy spending our days laughing, playing, problem solving, inventing, creating, dancing, singing, exploring, growing, and learning together.

Happy birthday to Cleo, Ravi, Douglass, Rylie, and Eleanor. You're a whole hand!

Until Next Time,

Happy Spring from the Black Bears!

Amy, Barb, Kelly, Eileen, & Kristin





