



Dartmouth College Child Care Center Newsletter

February 2014

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Office: Jeff Robbins,
Sunnie McPhetres, Terry
Chase, Dawn Cote

Floating Asst. Teachers:
Melissa Horrigan, Moya
Stevens, Audrey Stout,
Eileen Ruml, Terri
Crane, Anna Fuller

Just In Case You Missed It Earlier: Message from Big Jeff about the Fall 2014 Transition

Dear DCCCC Families

I have lots of news. DCCCC staff is well into the planning process for September 2014 when we will transition to revised age groups, new teaching teams and different room assignments. I'll recap those changes for you at the bottom of this letter. As a reminder, the Grizzly program will be permanently phased out as Hanover implements a full day Kindergarten in the fall. As a result we will add up to 15 new spaces for children under 5.

Information you will want to know:

Fee Scale

- A new fee scale is attached that adds a bracket for the new young toddler fees.
- Small adjustments have been made to equalize the steps between income categories 7-10.

Move up dates/summer closure

- We anticipate that Hanover schools will open on Wednesday, August 27 (pending approval of the 2014-2015 school calendar).
- Children at DCCCC will move up on **Wednesday, August 27**.
- We normally close for two days prior to the first day of school. This year requires two additional closure dates in order to complete changes to the building, reassign furnishing and equipment, move the gear from one place to another, set up new classrooms , complete the preparation for the new groups and provide staff development hours needed for child care licensing.
- **DCCCC will be closed on August 21, 22, 25 and 26.** The additional two days of closure (21st and 22nd) will be deducted from your bill. **The last day of current groups will be Wednesday, August 20.**

Grizzly End Date

We have requested funds for removing the walls to the nap rooms in the Teddy rooms in order to comply with the recommendation of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the accreditation standards of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs and anticipated NH child care licensing rules for providing direct supervision of sleeping infants.

- We hope to hear in March if funds will be approved for this project.
- **If we receive funding**, 4 weeks will be needed for this project. This will require moving the Teddies to different spaces in the building which will necessitate *closing the current Grizzly program on Friday, August 1*.
- **If we do not receive funding**, the Grizzly program will *continue through Wednesday, August 20*.
- I will announce the Grizzly end date as soon as I have the information.
- It's important to let you know that this is a likely possibility while options to enroll in other summer programs still exist.
- The Child Care Project (646-3233) is available to help you explore other options for August.

Enrollment and Class Assignments for September 2014

- I have been working on enrollment and class assignments for September 2014; it is a work in progress.
- To make further progress, I need your summer and fall child care requests (form attached) returned by Friday, February 7 or sooner.
- I am working diligently to maintain cohorts of children of similar age. We will continue to group children by age, but I genuinely do not know what the age range for each group will be. I am sure, though, that they will not be the same as last year in any group.
- I will make classroom assignments later in the spring when I have a better idea of who will be here.
- Please don't assume that your child will be in one group or another or that your teacher has more information on the topic. Not even I know!

Lots of changes! The planning is never far from my mind and I'd be happy to answer questions. Sunnie is also available. Teachers are always the best source of information about your child but they are eagerly waiting to learn which children will be in which groups, too.

Wow, huh?
Big Jeff
646-6610

DCCCC Fee scale
Monthly Fees 2014-2015
Beginning September, 2014

Cat.	Gross Family Income	Chipmunks/ Chickadees (Infants)	Owls (Toddler I)	Hedgehogs (Toddler II)	Otters (Preschool I)	Badgers/ Black Bears (Preschool II+III)
1	<35,000	714	679	643	600	586
2	35,000- 40,000	795	755	715	668	651
3	40,001- 45,000	897	852	807	754	735
4	45,001- 50,000	1,010	960	910	849	829
5	50,001- 60,000	1,135	1,078	1,021	954	930
6	60,001- 70,000	1,254	1,191	1,128	1,053	1,028
7	70,001- 80,000	1,373	1,305	1,237	1,154	1,126
8	80,001- 90,000	1,503	1,430	1,357	1,264	1,226
9	90,001- 100,000	1,638	1,559	1,479	1,378	1,329
10	100,001- 110,000	1,781	1,693	1,604	1,496	1,436
11	110,001- 120,000	1,850	1,758	1,666	1,555	1,482
12	>120,000	1,914	1,818	1,722	1,608	1,544

From the Director

Dear Big Jeff,

We're from sunny southern California. We've run out of fun things to do in the snow and I hear it's a long time until Spring. What's mud season anyway?

Chilly and Bored

Dear C&B

Mud season falls between winter and spring, when the snow is melting but the ground isn't soaking up the moisture and things just aren't drying out. When the frost starts to come out of the ground things get really exciting. It's pothole season, too – those are the holes, bumps and crevasses in the pavement that you are starting to notice in the road. Typically March and April are the height of mud season. It's messy, wet and chilly and a total blast for any child who can play in the puddles and the mud. Group living is such that we can't allow the children to wallow ALL the time, but we promise to let your child get muddy and soaking wet SOME of the time! Soon enough you will hear from teachers that it's time for puddle boots and wind pants.

But back to winter. Snow is our friend. It means we can sled and slip and roll around and build snow things. I recommend that you embrace it and go outside with your child for some fresh air, exercise and some fun in the natural world. Your child's interest in going out and staying out will be much greater if you are along for the fun. Here are some things you can do together:

- Sledding on an inner tube, a cardboard box or (and check out the Koalas' photos) an inflatable mattress. On really slippery days, you can slide right on the seat of your pants and why not? The snow suits are only good for one season anyway.
- Target practice with snowballs. If you prefer not to pelt each other (and it's okay if you do – gently, of course), set up a target – a cardboard box with a bulls-eye drawn on it, plastic milk jugs or a stuffed animal sitting on upturned bucket.
- Dig out your beach toys to make a ~~sand~~ snow castle. Use the sand buckets to mold the blocks for a snow house.
- Fill spray bottles with a light wash of colored water and express your artistic self in the snow.
- Pack up a snack and dine on a beach blanket.
- Light a small fire for toasting marshmallows, hot dogs, tofu pups or apple slices. Tell stories around the campfire. Or PRETEND you have a campfire.
- Turn a box upside down to make a stove and take the plastic kitchen set outside.
- Bring a dishpan of snow inside. Set it on a bath towel on the kitchen table. Add measuring cups, spoons and a few plastic dishes for unstructured fun.
- Go for a walk. Put the children on a sled and pull them along. It's great exercise (for you). Two kids? Pull two sleds and try circus tricks like rolling from one sled to the other.
- Roll down a hill. Follow some tracks. Try hiding and tracking each other down.
- Get cold. Get wet. Take a warm bath. Have cereal for supper on a blanket in the living room and read all the way until bedtime.

Bottom line – have fun together. Pick something that you will enjoy with your child. I liked building a campfire in the driveway on top of a metal garbage can lid and taking long walks through the woods pulling two kids on two sleds, then sliding down hills as we came to them. I

was never overly keen on that spraying colored water on the snow thing, so we didn't do that. Doesn't matter – just enjoy your time together.

Big Jeff

-PS here's a nutritionally horrifying recipe from my childhood. Only once did it turn out properly, but it was a science experiment every time. Remember, when Big Jeff was a child, sugar was still a wholesome "energy food".

Snow Ice Cream

1 gallon clean white snow

1 whole cup white sugar

1 T vanilla extract

2 cups milk

Catch the snow in a chilled mixing bowl (technically you're not supposed to scoop it up for obvious hygienic reasons). Stir in the sugar and the vanilla. Add milk to the desired consistency and serve immediately. If it turns to slush you can: eat it anyway, freeze it into ice cubes or popsicles, or throw it out and have a peanut butter and banana sandwich on whole grain bread.

Thank You

Thank you for returning your summer/fall child care needs surveys. If you haven't returned one yet, it's not too late!

DCCCC Will Be Closed On The Following Days:

March 17, 2014 – staff in-service

May 26, 2014 – Memorial Day

July 4, 2014 – Independence Day

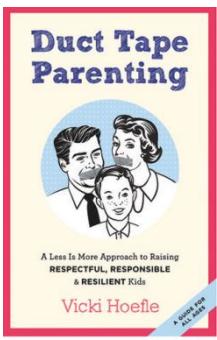
August 21,22,25,26 – Transitional days

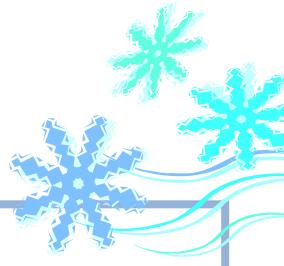
Parenting On Track Workshop With Vicki Hoefle Coming to Hanover In March/April

Discover and implement the Parenting On Track™ Program through six weekly, 2-hour classes. Instead of feeling stressed & drained at the end of the day, you'll feel a sense of peace and confidence in your kids and your parenting. Be free to really enjoy your kids – both now and as they grow and mature over the years.

For more information or to register:

<http://vickihoeple.com/hanover/>





Working Mom's Group:

Winter is upon us – but the cold, ice, and snow shouldn't stop us from getting out. Below are the dates for the winter lunches for the Working Mom's group so mark your calendars now and join us if you can:

Thursday, February 13

Friday, March 14

All lunches will take place at 12:00 at Ramunto's in Hanover

Those of you that have never come or not come in a while, please join us as you might just make a new friend, learn something, or at least get out of the office!

For more info, contact Megan Sobel

Tax Time Is Here

Dartmouth College's EIN
#02-0222111

You'll want that to claim a dependent care deduction.

Snow Days

Whenever Hanover schools close or open late due to inclement weather, DCCCC will have a late opening time of 9:00 a.m. A late opening at DCCCC will be announced on:

- WMUR TV Channel 9 and www.WMUR.com
- WCAX TV Channel 3 and www.WCAX.com, (go to weather, select school closings)

During school vacations, late openings will be decided by the Director in consultation with local authorities and will be announced in the same media as above.

Grizzlies may arrive at 9 a.m. too and pay the full day rate.

A service that may be of interest: Everyday Errands

Our goal at Everyday Errands is to help you achieve symmetry between what you want to do and what you have to do.

Let us help you accomplish the things you have little time for, or perhaps help you with the daily errands you would rather not do.

We provide services to over-extended families, professionals, businesses, senior citizens, and physically limited individuals. Our mission is to help simplify your life one errand at a time.

Website:

<http://www.everydayerrands.biz/>

Saturday February 15, 2014
Howl at the Moon (MUST PRE BUY TICKETS BY THIS THURSDAY, February 13)

The Dartmouth Cross Country Ski Center brings you the Annual "Howl at the Moon". Dinner out on the golf course lit by torches and fire pits and catered by our local merchants. Fun for all and a limited number of tickets sold.
Please purchase tickets (\$10/person; free for ages 5 and under) at the Dartmouth Cross Country Ski Center at the DOC House on Occom Pond.

More info:
<http://vox.dartmouth.edu/archive?id=18284>

Sleigh Ride Week at Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock: February 15 and 16, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m., 69 Old River Road. Visits include sledding with jack jumpers, tours of the dairy farm and samples of former presidents' favorite cookies ^ \$4-\$14, 2 and under free. 802-457-2355.

"Art With Jennie" in Woodstock: February 15, 10 a.m.-noon, ArtisTree Community Arts Center, 1206 Route 12. Studio art projects for children with caregivers ^ \$20 per adult-child pair, \$5 per extra person. 802-457-3500.

"Exploration Station" in South Royalton: February 15, 10:30 a.m., Royalton Memorial Library, 23 Alexander Place. A hands-on science program for children. Free. 802-763-7094.

Igloo Build in Norwich: February 15, 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Montshire Museum of Science, 1 Montshire Road. Participants learn how to build an igloo and then make one of their own ^ \$11 or \$14, under 2 free. Exhibits open 10 a.m.-5 p.m. 802-649-2200.

Owl Prowl in Quechee: February 15 and 21, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 6565 Woodstock Road. Explore the nighttime world of owls while snowshoeing with a VINS educator ^ \$8 or \$10. Registration required. 802-359-5000.

Stories and Marshmallow Roast in Hanover: February 23, 11 a.m.-noon, Dartmouth Outing Club, Rope Ferry Road. Stories by the fireplace and marshmallows by a campfire for children age 3-8 with caregivers. Skating, skiing and sledding if weather permits. Free. 603-643-6534.

Owl Festival in Quechee: February 22, 1-4 p.m., Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 6565 Woodstock Road. Talk to owl ambassadors, make crafts and gather around a warm fire for storytelling. Included with admission ^ \$10 or \$12, under 3 free. Exhibits open 10 a.m.-4 p.m. 802-359-5000

News from Teddy One

Debbie Burnham,
Lead Teacher

Wendy Irwin,
Teacher

April Buchanan,
Assistant Teacher

Dear Parents,

In September and January both of the Teddy Teams attended a 2 part, all day workshops on Brain Development 0 to 3 years presented by Scott Noyes. It was so fascinating. We learned a number of many interesting things and I thought that I would share some of the highlights with you.

- * Baby Sign increases a baby's cognition by 50 %.
- * Children under the age of 2 should not be put in front of a screen, television or computer/ipad.
- * Four months of aerobic activity 3 times a week for 20 minutes can increase cognitive learning 80 - 100 %. If they go one week without this it can drop off by 60 %. We always knew that children learn best by moving.

* Temperament is formed in the first 2 trimesters of pregnancy and stress of the mother can affect that temperament.

* Morning sickness is often pregnancy's way of telling mothers to slow down.

* Learning is extensive in the womb.

* Things that promote learning are talking to our children often, open-ended play, and encouraging effort rather than intelligence.

*Sleep is extremely important to children and their learning. Sleep cycles are 90 - 110 minutes. Waking a child during that time can interrupt their processing of information.

* If a television/computer is taken out of a child's bedroom their IQ can go up 7pts.

*Depth perception is developed between 2-9 months.

* Instead of saying "You are good at this." It is more of a growth mind set to say "You figured it out!" Studies have shown that children are more likely to try to do difficult things when they are encouraged and noticed for their attempt rather than telling them that they are good at it.

These are just some of the things that touched on. We also learned about:

12 BRAIN RULES

- 1) Exercise boosts brain power
- 2) Survival - stay alive, stay safe. Fight, flight, freeze. This are our natural instinct when dealing with stress or danger.

- 3) Wiring - everyone is wired differently.
- 4) Attention - We don't pay attention to boring things.
- 5) Short-term memory - repeat to remember.
- 6) Long-term memory - remember to repeat.
- 7) Sleep - sleep well, think well.
- 8) Stress - Stressed brains don't think the same. Cortisol severs brain connections and decreases brain size. Try to decrease stress in children. Examples might be not over-scheduling their days, making transitions easier and keeping routines.
- 9) Sensory integration - Stimulate more of the senses.
- 10) Vision trumps all senses.
- 11) Gender - male and female brains are different but not that different.
- 12) Exploration - we are powerful explorers.

We learned a lot, how about you? We hope you enjoyed some of these very interesting little bits of information. If you have any questions about anything just ask us. If we don't have the answer we can do our best to find out.

On another note, I would like to welcome our new littlest one, Malcolm Sharlet and his parents Jeff and Julia as well as his sister (a former T1) Roxie.

Because of a change in the Newsletter schedule we missed our welcome to Matteo and his parents Jessica and Nicola. He has fit right in and the bigger kids just love him!

We will be saying goodbye to Hans and Xaxi as they move on to the Panda Room. We know they will love their new room, but they will be missed by all.

It is extremely cold outside as I write this, BRRRRR! I just want to remind you to check your child's cubbies for appropriate clothing. An extra sweater or sweatshirt is always helpful too as we can never quite gauge the room temperature, especially in the crib rooms.

Happy Winter?

Wendy on behalf of the Teddy Team with Debbie and April



News from Teddy Too

Radoyka Garcia,
Lead Teacher

Lori Higgins,
Teacher

Denise Ayres,
Assistant Teacher



¡Saludos a todos! (*Hello to all!!*)

It has been a really cold winter; which makes it much more difficult to spend quality time outside with our infants and toddlers. However, we make things happen in the warmth of the indoors too: taking walks along the whole center, visiting other rooms, lots of gross motor and fine motor skill activities, cozying up with some fun picture books, singing, dancing and of course, endless snuggles!

This year the Teddy Too's would like to bring the feeling of the tropics inside. During the month of February, we want to bring a new theme along with Valentine's Day: "*Beach Love*" as we celebrate friendships and hope for warmer, longer, sunnier days. Everyone is welcome to bring something that reminds them of summertime, here are some ideas: a bright color tropical t-shirt, a sunshiny onesie, fun dancing music, pictures of being on a beach that we can post on our walls, or any hanging décor that you would like to add to our room.) We want the warm air to head our way soon... Also, during the week of *February 10-14*, we will wear colors that remind us of Valentine's Day: *red*, all shades of *pink* and *purple* along with hearts and cupids, etc. We'll be taking lots of pictures the whole time. However, if it snows in March, we might have to extend our *Beach theme*!!

We are enjoying these children to the fullest! They all continue to thrive and develop new skills every single day. They love coming back to their classroom as they become more independent, walking, talking, feeding themselves, playing with their favorite buddies, and spending more time awake as they grow rapidly!

And speaking of growing children, a quick reminder to: check your child's cubby daily for outdoor gear (i.e.: snow pants, boots and warm hat) just in case the temperature goes up enough to go outside; also a minimum of 2 full sets of extra clothes that fit their current size. Time goes by fast and cubbies may still have items that don't fit. *Thank you!*



...to Happy Times ahead!

Ray ,(on behalf of Lori and Denise and the Teddy Toos)

News from the Panda Bears

Jennifer Sprague,
Lead Teacher

Jenn Boudro,
Teacher

Teresa Hahn,
Assistant Teacher



Hello Families!

The Pandas sure have been busy doing all the activities on our January calendar. We have been making snow people, finding animal tracks outside, brushing our teeth on toothbrush day, coloring on snow, and doing things backwards on backwards day! We hope that you have heard all about the activities from your little Panda! Below are some pictures from some activities.

Coming up in February we will be doing some Valentine's activities. We are looking forward to our Panda Post Office in the classroom. Panda's will be able to write letters to friends and send them using the Panda mail. I bet you will be hearing a lot about the alphabet! ☺ Also,

happening in February is Jillian will be turning the big 2 on Feb. 12th! The Panda's will be baking a special snack for her celebration. Date to be announced! We will also be saying goodbye to Caterina for a little while! Caterina will be going to Italy with her family until August. We will be saying goodbye to Caterina on February 12th and will be making a special snack.

We look forward to another month of fun activities with these growing Pandas!



Backwards Day!

Coloring on Snow



Finding
Animal tracks
in the snow



Singing song Winter
Wear Hokey Pokey



Toothbrush
Painting on
Toothbrush
Day



Playing
with
Pudding on
National Pie
Day

News from the Koalas

Susan Quimby Young,
Lead Teacher

Joel King,
Teacher

Valerie Stefani,
Assistant Teacher

Wow!! We had the most fabulous Chinese New Year's celebration in the Koala room on Friday January 31st. We want to thank Xue Xu, Ya-Ling, Rong, Xiao-Xin, Wei and Song for organizing such a wonderful morning and lunch. They brought lots of red decorations and pictures including Chinese New Year's stickers of fans, Pandas, bonsai trees, children, houses, etc. We made lanterns to hang as well. We have had chopsticks available with spoons and forks for months but they brought a bunch of red ones that lots of the Koalas

used to eat the delicious dumplings that the children helped to make. As you can see from the pictures, the kids loved to help make them using the little press. I believe we need to have a few of those, even for playdough! Song showed the children how to cut the velvety red paper into snowflake shapes as well. The room was crowded but i believe everyone had a great time! Again.... thank you!!

We've had a good time meeting with you for parent conferences. For those of you that we haven't met with yet, please let us know when a good time for you is and we'll schedule a convenient time. it is always good to chat about your child and believe it or not... several of you had similiar questions about behaviors, etc.

OK... my new favorite thing at daycare is "AIR MATTRESS SLIDING"! I have several mattresses that don't hold air overnight (for camping) but hold enough to take 6 kids and a teacher zooming down the hill at the rugby house and sliding across the field. The kids loved it. I had driven my car up to the field to blow up the mattresses and was amazed at how quickly those kids got to the rugby house with sliding on their minds. The exercise from walking from DCCCC to the rugby house and back as well as up and down the hill repeatedly was wonderful for them. OK then!!

I eagerly await the next snowstorm!!

Fondly,
Susan for the Koala team





News from the Woolly Bears

Jo Brambles,
Lead Teacher (on
leave)

Barb Merchand,
Acting Lead
Teacher

Liz Harrington,
Acting Teacher

Melissa Horrigan
Floating Assistant
Teacher

Winter Greetings from Woollies,

WB Baker's Tea

At the Baker's Tea the WB Bakers received a gold star rating stamped on their baking caps. They were delighted to serve their families fresh pumpkin bread, chocolate chip muffins, and a variety of fresh fruit accompanied with a cup of hot chocolate. Some Woollies added a *spoonful* of marshmallows to their hot chocolate while others preferred a *cupful* of marshmallows with a little bit of chocolate. No matter the mix, once stirred the Baker's Tea seemed just right for sipping! Thanks to all the families and friends for sharing this special event with the Woollies.



WB Post Office & Writing Center

As the WB Bakery closed the Post Office (PO) & Writing Center opened in the dramatic play center. Signs were labeled with conventional and inventive spelling to indicate each area as follows: POST OFC (post office), ML (mail), PKGS (packages), LTS (letters), CRDS (cards), and Mailbags. Once the signs were posted the Woollies went right to work addressing envelopes, licking stamps, painting/weighing assorted packages, writing letter/cards, and utilizing some of the various methods that we transport mail (by hand, flatbed, trailer truck, jet, boat, train, seaplane and snowmobile).





In the mail center, Woollies strengthened their early learning skills in the writing process as they printed mail with scribbles, discovered they could begin to recognize the letters in their peer's names; copied meaningful words/phrases charted on the word wall, or matched letter/sounds to communicate messages. In the art department they colored, inked, and illustrated their pictorial mail. Fine motor development and coordination was demonstrated with a variety of writing tools as Woollies folded paper mail and promptly inserted them into mailboxes. At the postal scales workers stacked packages sky-high hoping they wouldn't topple before the needle registered the weight. One Woolly was quite surprised to find that "three paper dolls weighed only *one* pound!" Other workers displayed their math skills when they carefully counted 1-100 pennies to determine the cost of an envelope- not an easy feat! Language skills were extended as information was gathered from books, maps, and a "world" globe to learn about the many types of mail and how far it may travel. More importantly it was their social skills that were up front and personal when friends told friends "**YOU GOT MAIL**". Woollies did the mad dash to their envelopes and opened their mail in record time! Some letters had signatures, but more often than not the signature was missing which only increased the buzz.... who sent the mystery mail?



The Woollies are prolific writers and the WB Post Office is humming with activity. So in the near future...check your postbox for a special delivery from your favorite emerging writer!

*Warm Woolly Wishes from Barb, Liz, Melissa, and Jo
(as she prepares at home for her baby's arrival!)*



PS: The Woolly Bears have been lucky enough to meet a few of the various mail carriers that deliver mail and packages to DCCCC! They visited with the Hanover mail carrier delivering mail to the DCCCC office. Woollies also received a package from the UPS carrier and were curious about the package's weight, size, and... to see what was inside!



News from the Polar Bears

Terri Hollis,
Lead Teacher

Miranda Arruda,
Teacher

Kelly Bosma,
Assistant Teacher

Greetings Polar Families,

Well, there has been a lot going on all around since I last addressed you all. We have been busy in the Polar Room, as has the center been busy as a whole. Busy is good, right?

The Polars have been talking about and exploring the concept of building. Building with various materials. We have been asking questions such as what tools are needed, what works, what does not? What looks the same about structures and what looks different. We have made our own miniature structures with toothpicks and marshmallows, and sugar cubes with glue. The Polars made some really amazing constructions using various shaped and sized wooden pieces. The children's personality really comes through with these types of

activities. Some are very conservative with carefully placed pieces. Whereas other children have the mindset as more is better and we will think as we go.

We expanded the notion of building with materials that would allow our bodies to get in what we create. Nothing beats a cardboard box. Milk crates and large cube chairs have been used a great deal to create many things. Dog houses, people houses, school, ninja hide a ways, etc. A couple of steel climbing frames with blankets thrown over the top have also been widely used. Those silly kids still have not always figured out that just because they are partially hidden does not mean that cannot be seen and heard. Yes! Teachers have had to "re-direct" some play scenarios.

This was a great time to exchange some materials in the room. We exchanged our wooden blocks with some hollow blocks. We put out straws and connectors, small wooden table blocks. Wooden spools and dice have also been used to create tabletop structures. Duplo's have been enjoyed with the added twist of mounting Duplo's boards on the wall so that any building that takes place is vertical.

We made our trip to the library and made certain that some of the books help support our learning of tools and various building structures. The small intimate trips to the library are fun for both teachers and children alike. It is a treasured time to spend time with two children without a huge group dynamic. There is time to thoughtfully answer and ask questions. A time that the children have true input and impact on the room. A sense of pride is obvious with the library helpers as children enjoy the books they helped to choose. Another really important part of that is the responsibility of remembering and learning the social aspect of going to public places. They are so very comfortable in the room and with people that they are with from day to day that for some it takes extra effort to implement social rules. It seems as though we are not the only ones that had to use trial and error to figure out that some structures are sturdier than others. We read the story of The Three Little Pigs. This was a great and fun

opportunity to learn about what different versions mean as well as perspectives. So we read three different versions of the story. We discussed the possibility of acting out the story and making props the kids seemed pretty excited by the idea.

I also want to take the opportunity to remind all of you that our special events calendar begins in February. The activities listed are not always activities that we would not otherwise do. We feel having it on a special calendar and putting emphasis on it makes the ordinary not so ordinary anymore. One of the days that has been greatly enjoyed is show and tell day. There are not regularly scheduled days for that on the special calendar. The Polar Team would like to start having the last Thursday of every month be a show and tell time. Here are a few helpful things to remember and help guide your children with. It should be an item that they are excited and have something to say about. It should **easily** fit into their cubby space. It needs to be an item they are comfortable having other peers touch and look at. Toys from home should only be coming in on sharing Thursdays. The nature of the item should be "friendly" and nonviolent. I know that last one is up for interpretation, but do your best. I know the kids will look forward to what's ahead.

.....So speaking about the future. There are some substantial changes not too far in the future that will be taking place for DCCCC. This means for families and staff alike. If you typically pass over your E-Mails from the office or staff take a quick glimpse to make sure that it is not important information that you will need in order to schedule your life. As for the Polar Team soon to be Badgers we will make a commitment to not get swooped into the future just yet. We are committed to you and your children in making sure to stay plugged in and give your children a safe, fun space in which to explore, engage and learn.

Most conferences have been completed. Thank You for those of you I have met with. It is always a great time to touch base and explore and compare notes on your child's development. For those who are struggling to find a time, no worries it will happen. On the same vein of thought, I hope it goes without saying that if ever there is a concern or a question that needs some extra thought and consideration I will always make a time to sit and chat.

On behalf of the Polar Team
Terri Hollis

News from the Grizzlies

Brenda Metzler,
Lead Teacher

Kristin Ball Cole,
Teacher

Rosalind Myles-
Watkins
Child Care
Assistant

Practicing with Grizzlies

I think it's safe to assume that we all want our children to grow up to be kind and thoughtful individuals. Even in their earliest years, we begin to see the ways in which they *are already* kind and thoughtful. Maybe in the way they instantly switch from Super Hero play to gentle touches and soothing voice with a younger sibling. When they offer to show a peer how to hold the hole punch "just right" to make it work. How they rush to the side of a friend in tears, to inquire, "Are you alright?" as they look into his or her eyes with compassion. When they volunteer space on their sled to a classmate who's looking for a ride down the hill. And again, when they hear a peer struggling with an unknown word, and offer the correct pronunciation or spelling. These are only a few of the ways that Grizzlies daily practice kindness and thoughtfulness.

Simultaneously, Grizzlies function with brains that are hard-wired for impulse and self-interest. They are still in the early stages of learning self-control and recognizing how their behaviors can and do directly affect others. In the passion of a moment, when silly or angry or frustrated feelings are powerful, it can be extremely challenging (if not impossible) for a Grizzly to override an impulsive action that may or may not be kind. That's when the good stuff begins! Grizzlies have created an opportunity to learn and practice new ways of thinking and acting. Keeping it safe and friendly and resolving conflict are big parts of their work in this stage of development.

This developing self-awareness and self-control is evident in Grizzly play and social interactions. Sometimes they successfully navigate the sharing of stuff and power and space and friends, sometimes they need teachers to facilitate the conversation. In the same ways that we respond to children's physical needs, we acknowledge and address their emotional and behavioral needs within a meaningful time frame, as in-the-moment as possible. It is most effective to do the work while the events of a situation are still fresh in everyone's mind. To support the Grizzlies in doing *their* job, it is our job to set aside our own frustrations, listen to them, help them to listen to each other, offer support, listen some more, offer ideas, mend what needs mending, and repeat as needed.

Arriving at resolution is so satisfying, even when we know that we will, without doubt, replay similar scenarios tomorrow. Or later today. This is why we call it practice.

- Brenda

The Power of Play

"Play is the highest form of research." (Albert Einstein)

Through play, children experiment with new skills, explore their imagination, and learn how to interact with and make sense of their world. Join FitKids Childcare Director, Jenn Parker, and Clinical Psychologist, Kelly Wheaton, to explore the crucial role of play in your child's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development. By engaging in play yourself, you will gain a better understanding of your child's experience and learn how best to foster your child's natural love of play to promote optimal growth. This class is geared towards parents and teachers of young children.



Thursday, March 6th

6:30-8:00

**Women's Health Resource
Center (on the mall in
Lebanon)**

**Space is limited, so
please pre-register by
calling (603) 650-2600**