



News From the DCCCC Office

April, 2016

Jeff Robbins, Director
Sunnie McPhetres, Assistant Director

Dawn Cote, Administrative Assistant
Karen Small, Administrative Assistant
Janene Robie, Administrative Assistant

Staff

Chickadee One

Michele Estes
Denise Ayers
Judy Labrie

Chickadee Too

Teresa Hahn
Lori Higgins
Moya Stevens

Owls

Debbie Burnham
Wendy Irwin
April Buchanan

Hedgehogs

Jennifer Sprague
Jenn Boudro
Anna Fuller

Otters

Susan Quimby Young
Joel King

Badgers

Terri Hollis
Miranda Arruda
Valerie Stefani

Black Bears

Amy McLellan
Barb Merchand
Kelly Bosma

Floating Assistant Teachers

Liz Harrington
Katie Robinson
Eileen Ruml
Kristin Cole
Brian Goodness
Terri Crane
Jenn Murphy

Professional Development at DCCCC

You may have noticed that DCCCC was closed on March 14 for an in-service day! I'm sorry that I don't have pictures of that day to share but we were very busy! We spent the entire day with the whole staff in one place at one time learning more about working with children, their families and each other. We began conversations about how we can keep up with current research and continue to improve our program for children and families.

Now that we have been working with our new structure for nearly two years, we took a closer look at the things that we do in our new age groups. We looked at the things that we do well and the things that we could be doing better. We have created a work group with a representative from each team who will give up several evenings to examine things that should be consistent for children and families throughout the program.

You can help! A survey will be sent out via e-mail quite soon. All information that you provide will be used to help structure some of those workgroup conversations. Every suggestion that we receive from you helps us to chart our course for the future.

Our in-service day is just one way that teachers and administrators work to maintain their qualifications in the State of NH. Each regular staff member is required to have a minimum of 18 clock hours of training in any rolling twelve-month period. The staff at DCCCC meet those requirements in different ways. Sunnie offers many hours of training in-house each year. Most staff members also attend trainings that are offered through the Child Care Project and other Early Childhood agencies in NH and VT. We send several people to larger conferences each year in order to be able to see glimpses of

child care beyond the Upper Valley. Some staff members are taking Early Childhood courses at local colleges.

In addition to the eighteen hours that are required, each staff person is also required to complete a Child Care Licensing Orientation, and keep a current certification in CPR, First-Aid, Water Safety, Fire Safety, Medication Administration, and Bloodborne Pathogens.

So if you ever wondered why things keep changing and our teachers keep doing different and better things, it is because they make a conscious effort to stay current in their field!





Dear Big Jeff,

I'm thinking ahead (for a change!) and wondering about end-of-school-year gifting. Can you tell us what is typically done for "parents-giving-to-teachers"? Is it done? Is it frowned upon? Are there guidelines to follow (e.g., a personal gift vs a gift to the classroom, or a physical gift vs a gift card). We'd love to show our appreciation to the teachers (and staff too!) without making non-giving parents feel uncomfortable. Our child's teachers are like part of our family!

Signed,

Grateful



Dear Grateful,

What a kind thought! There is nothing your child's teacher likes to hear more. To answer your question directly before I editorialize, in keeping with my dislike of one size fits all rules there is no gift giving policy per se and certainly no expectation.

Honestly, the best way to show your appreciation is just what you are doing – saying thanks. We love to hear that things are going well. An honest-to-goodness paper and pen note has a special effect. It's important that you NEVER feel obligated or swept up in a rush of gift giving with the feeling that you must present your child's teacher with any kind of a gift. A simple thank you is always appropriate.

As for physical gifts, you might consider a handmade item from your child. If s/he draws a special picture, you can dress it up with an inexpensive frame. Self-portraits or portraits of the teacher can be memorable. A photo of your child and his/her teacher together is also special. A quote from your child makes a nice

addition. Something that your child has helped to cook is also nice, although it is a bit tricky to keep track of dietary restrictions, so you might want to inquire ahead. Flowers hand-picked from your garden or meadow may also come from the heart.

If you do choose to purchase an item, it's safe to assume that the teacher already has a couple of commercial My Favorite Teacher coffee mugs, but I bet that s/he doesn't have one that your child painted at TipTop Pottery or one with your child's photo on it. Gift certificates have a broad appeal. Teachers like to eat so a gift certificate to the Coop Corner Store or a local restaurant that delivers to DCCCC is especially appreciated on a day when the teacher rushed out of the house without a lunch. And, of course, anyone can find something they like on Amazon. Occasionally, two or more families do collaborate in gift giving. A small gift to the classroom in lieu of a gift to the teachers – a children's book, for example – is also lovely. I have one on my desk right now from a family who gave it to us in 1986. The children wrote their names inside the cover so I think of Ariel and Zachary and their parents whenever I read the books.

In sum, I'm sure you already find ways to let your child's teachers know that they are special and that you appreciate their role in your family. "Thank you" is plenty. Get out a note card and capture a favorite memory or a special moment to let your child's teacher what know you appreciate.

Thanks for asking,

Big Jeff



PS The most memorable purchased gift I ever received from a child cost less than a dollar, on sale. This was 39 years ago, so clearly it made an impression. What was it? A hat! A very inexpensive, white hat machine knit with acrylic yarn. Why was it special? Clearly Sarah had picked it out herself, for reasons still unknown. She was so convinced that it was a perfect gift that her mother, with some chagrin, couldn't talk her out of it. The hat is long gone, but the memory of an authentic gift from the heart is still with me – all for less than a dollar!

Sunnie Notes



I have a few thoughts about the Dear Big Jeff question from this month as well.

Another time that many families choose to show their appreciation to teachers is *Provider Appreciation Day* which falls on the Friday before Mother's Day each year. This year the date will be Friday, May 6. During the weeks before that day I will send out a testimonial form to all families. On that form there is space to write about why your child's care providers mean so much to you and your child. While it is perfectly acceptable to do nice things for your child's teachers on that day, I can't tell you how much the words that you write mean to the staff here at DCCCC. Each year, we post the completed forms in the multi. Teachers are very apt to spend their breaks and time before and after work standing and reading all of the comments. The smiles that are on their faces tell me how much the words mean to them. It is not infrequent for me to hear someone exclaim, "Awwwww," or "That makes me all goose-bumpy." When the forms have been removed from the multi wall, we make copies of them to give to each teacher that is listed on the testimonial so that they have them to look at again and again.

I also wanted to share stories about the two most memorable gifts that I received when I was teaching.

My second most memorable gift came when a 3 year old girl brought in a lovely blue ceramic bowl as a thank you gift. Her mother apologetically explained that she encouraged her daughter to fill the bowl with cookies or candy or something. But her daughter refused to allow her mother to place anything in the bowl because, in her words, "It was already filled with love." Who could argue with that?

The most memorable gift that I ever received came on a Provider Appreciation Day. A 4 year old boy in my class watched as other children and their parents brought gifts in for the teachers. He asked me why they were bringing gifts. I explained that it was teacher appreciation day which is a day when some families say thank you to the teachers for taking such good care of their children. I explained that there are many ways to say thank you and that some families chose to say thank you by bringing gifts. The boy looked very serious for a few seconds. I could see that he was really thinking about what I had said. He then looked directly into my eyes and simply yet strongly said, "Thank you." That was an eye-mister and my absolute favorite gift of all!

News and Events



[Hanover HopStop: Companhia Urbana de Dança](#)

Sat Apr 09 2016 - 11:00 AM

Brazilian dancers perform their athletic mash-up of hip-hop and modern dance.

[Claremont HopStop: New Inca Son](#)

Sat Apr 09 2016 - 3:00 PM

World music group showcases the ancient melodies and folklore of the Inca culture.



Week of the Young Child

Coming to DCCCC April 11-15

Music Monday

Taco Tuesday

Work Together Wednesday

Artsy Thursday

Family Friday (complete with a sing-a-long
with Big Jeff in the afternoon)

If you haven't received the e-mail from Liz about this exciting week, please ask your child's teacher about the activities that they will be doing that week.

City Center Ballet presents Peter and the Wolf, Prokofiev's exciting tale about Peter's antics to catch a wolf. Originally intended to cultivate musical tastes in young children, Peter and the Wolf continues to educate and delight children nearly 80 years later. The 25-minute narrated ballet performance will delight ages 4 to 94!

Shows times are 4:00pm and 5:30pm at Lebanon Opera House on Sunday, April 3. A suggested donation of \$5.00 at the door.

Sponsored by The Couch Family Foundation, Lebanon Ballet School and Lebanon Opera House.

For more information contact us at Dance@CityCenterBallet.org or call 603.448.9710.

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