



CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

FEBRUARY 2021 243RD EDITION

From the Director . . .

Hello families! Although my time with my family, especially during the holidays, was much appreciated, I am very happy to be back! I have enjoyed seeing all those familiar faces again. I gave birth to my second son, Ronan, on Friday, November 20th at 7:06pm. (After only leaving the center around 4:15pm that day! Whoops! Some of you probably saw me heading out!) He was 8lbs 4 oz and 21.5 inches long. Ronan has been great and Anders has been happy to have his little brother! Ronan has also been diagnosed with hearing loss in his right ear, so he will soon be the little baby with a hearing aid if you see him around the center!

On to some less exciting updates:

-As stated in our COVID Health and Safety Plan that I sent out in October, if a child is sick they must stay home until they are symptom-free for 48 hours.

-After talking to some other professionals in the field and reviewing CDC and DHS guidelines, we have determined the following procedures relating to positive COVID tests:

If a child is suspected to have COVID, has a positive COVID test, or has a family member with a positive COVID test, then the child (& siblings) must quarantine for 10 days. The date on which I am informed is Day 0. Then ten days will be counted out from there and the return date will be on the eleventh day. ****As long as the parent and child are symptom-free (which, after the first ten days, needs to be 24 hours symptom-free).****

These are just our rules about quarantining. If a child tests positive, then we have to report it to DHS and they will direct us from there. There seems to be at least a 24 hour closure for cleaning.

-I know a lot of our one-year-olds' birthdays are coming up which means that

they will start to wear a mask at school. We do ask that as their birthdays get closer that you have them practice wearing a mask and get used to the idea of wearing one. This could be having them wear one for a bit around the house, or seeing their family members wear one. It has been suggested to read books or watch shows where the characters wear masks or even have their favorite stuffed animals wear a mask! Anything that helps them realize wearing a mask is "normal". Though we do ask you to have your child practice before they turn two, we cannot have them practice and wear masks here at the center before their birthday, as it could potentially be a suffocation hazard. Their "practice" at the center is being able to see their friends and teachers wear masks!

-Lastly, as always, please keep your kids home when they are sick. This helps keep the other kids and staff from getting sick as well, and possibly contracting COVID.

Valentine's Day is just around the corner! We will be allowing the kiddos to bring in cards and treats for their friends. However, due to the pandemic, there will be a few adjustments. Please bring only prepackaged treats (no baked home goods). Also, we are asking families to bring in the cards and treats a week early to allow them to "quarantine" and avoid the passing of germs. That means instead of bringing them in on Friday, February 12th (the day of the party), we ask to have them in on Friday, February 5th. Thank you!

During the week of 2/22-2/26 you will be asked to stop by the lobby at pickup time to review your child's file. This is a mandatory requirement that the Department of Human Resources asks us to do every 6 months. This is a time to update your phone numbers, addresses, work info, health ins. info., and who is permitted to pick up your child. If all this has been updated as it changed then all you will have to do is sign your name and date the form. I will have a table set up to the side. You can stop by when you enter, as you are waiting to go down the hallway, or on your way out.

I know it is only February but we are starting to work on our summer camp program. This program is for children that have completed kindergarten through 6th grade. If you know someone interested please have them give me a call or email me at kshipman@sumc.info. I would be happy to send information out to them. I already have a few new families interested and waiting to enroll, so if you are a returning camper please make sure to return all the completed paperwork, as well as making sure your balance is good. If you applied to our summer camp last year, you should have received an email the last week of January about early enrollment. This is only for returning families.

MANNERS MATTER

02/01/21 - If you need to leave the table, ask to be excused.

02/08/21 - No matter the circumstances, always be honest

02/15/21 - Do not talk with your mouth full.

02/22/21 - Respect other people's comments, opinions and ideas.

THEMES:

- Groundhog Day/Woodland Creatures
- Valentine's Day
- Transportation
- Art Week

Staff Birthday

2/23 - Miss Alyssa

In case you missed it:

12/3 - Miss Amy

12/5 - Miss Starr

12/12 - Miss Penny

1/2 - Miss Carol

1/3 - Miss Karen

1/27 - Miss Debbie

Special Events: Mark your calendars!!

February 12th - Valentine's Day Parties (just for the kiddos)

February 15th - Circle of Friends will be closed for an in-service day.

February 22nd-26th - Update your child's file.

March 1st - Open enrollment for S.U.M.mer Camp.

MISS KAREN AND MISS JILL'S INFANTS

Miss Karen and I would like to thank everyone who bought us new toys or a gift card from the Angel Tree. The kids have really been enjoying all of the new toys. Towards the end of January we welcomed back Miss Kelly from maternity leave. We also welcomed her new son, Ronan, to our room! He loves taking in all of his new surroundings in our classroom and he's doing great with holding his head up.

Tyler really likes being in the saucers to watch all of his big friends play. He's getting better with grasping toys. Hayden is working on sitting by herself and making sure that we know she's there with her loud, happy squeals! Emmett has mastered the backwards scoot, and he loves being on the floor with his friends to work on figuring out how to go forward. Jules loves to sit by the toy shelf to



play. She's doing the first step in pulling to stand, by getting up on her knees. Caymi crawls all over, and she loves picking up table food to feed herself. Declan has mastered pulling to stand, and he keeps up with Caymi with crawling around the room. We are saying good-bye to Izzy, as she moves up to the Young Toddler room. She's walking great, and she likes to be our greeter at the gate, watching everyone come and go, and waving. We'll miss her, but we know that she'll love being with the "big" kids!

Have you noticed how fussy your child gets as they struggle to learn something new? Try not to take away the learning time by helping or doing it yourself just so your child will stop fussing. We want them to develop and learn new skills, and this takes real work. Each new thing they learn is built upon what they already mastered. If children get into the habit of thinking we will do everything for them, we have defeated the chance for them to happily learn and grow. This means that we need to give them the time and space to experiment and make messes. Children need to gain confidence in themselves, and it's up to us to facilitate situations where they can do so. Break out of your comfort zone so you and your child can both have some fun!

Happy Valentine's Day to all of you! It's wonderful to think about the ones we love and how to make them happy. While the infants don't worry about gifts, they do try hard to please the adults in their lives at a very early age. They can also recognize when those adults aren't happy. This is a good time to decide what your discipline plan is going to be so you can be consistent. Consistency is very important for every child. If the rules keep changing, or there are no rules, children never learn what acceptable behavior is, and what is expected of them. This leads to the "who's really in charge" syndrome!

We will be doing a Valentine exchange on Friday, February 12th. Please send the Valentine's in the morning of Friday, February 5th and we will pass them out for you on the 12th. This is a cute way to remember all your child's first friends. You can even make them into a simple book by placing each one on a piece of cardboard and covering it with clear contact paper or packaging tape. You can use yarn to bind it together. Also, please dress your child in red on February 12th for a class picture.

MISS PENNY AND MISS AMY'S YOUNG TODDLERS



Hello Young Toddler friends and families,
We hope you all had a great holiday season. Thank you to the families that were able to help be Angels this Christmas, we truly appreciate it! We have used the

Gift cards to get a few new nap CDs as well as a very fun Halloween CD, and the kiddos really loved the new purses.

Brrrrrrrr its cold out there. We are attempting to go through the Extra Clothes each of your children have in the closet, and replace warmer weather clothes for appropriate winter attire. As always, please be sure to look at their daily sheets DAILY. We will let you know on those what your child needs.

We know this is a very mixed age group this year, but ONLY our 2 year old classmates are required to wear face masks. We can be cited by DHS if anyone under the age of two is wearing one as it poses a suffocation hazard. Thank you for your understanding of these tricky rules. We DO encourage parents to supervise practice mask wearing at home for those children getting ready to turn 2 so it is an easier transition for your child.

February's Star of the month is Elliyanah. Elli is going to be 2 in March and loves to dance and sing. She has an older sister and an older brother. Elli is very good at helping all of her friends around the room with many different tasks!!

The young toddler room is very happy to announce a new member to our crazy crew. Isabella H. is moving on up from the infant room starting Monday February 1st. We are excited to watch her learn to be a big kid!!

MISS DEBBIE AND MISS JENNIE'S OLDER TODDLERS

Focuses

Pink

Heart

Grouping similar objects together

Kicking a ball

Rotation skills

How to show love to each other

Using words to talk to friends

Showing love towards God

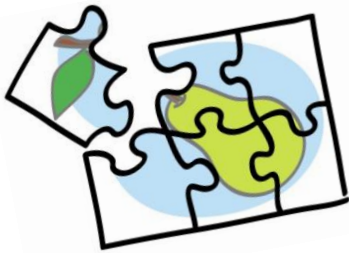


We can't believe it's February already! We hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and all are healthy. We enjoyed the holidays with our kiddos but it's been really nice to slow down and get back to our normal routines. We would like to thank everyone for your thoughtfulness during the holidays. We will be using our gift cards to buy lots of new toys for our room. We have several friends that are working on potty training and we have several birthdays coming up in the next few months so more will be added to our potty training list real soon!

Coming up this month we will be learning all kinds of new things like Groundhogs and their shadows and we'll learn about other woodland animals. All month long we will be talking to the kids about how we show love to each other and one way we will do that is at our Valentine exchange party. A list of our class and info on the date will be sent home soon. This month during transportation week our friends will get a chance to go out and sit in the big yellow school bus and see what it's like to actually be in it and not just look at it as Miss Jennie zooms by!! Our last theme of the month is Art week so we'll experiment and venture out of the normal coloring and painting that week to see what cool art we can come up.

We know drop off and pick times are to be kept short so please feel free to write us a note if you have any questions or concerns. Also remember to read your child's daily paper for any information we may need to tell you or for any items your child may need. Thank you for remembering all of your child's snow items on snowy days.

Have a great month and Happy Birthday to Grayson A. and Elliot!!!



MISS SHELLI'S PRESCHOOL

FOCUSES

Mental – Letters M, N and O / color pink / number 6 / heart shape

Physical- Jumping over low objects / cutting practice

Emotional-Dealing with sad things

Social-Sharing with others

Spiritual-Jesus' helpers / Jesus stills the storm / Jesus feeds the thousands / Miracle at the Sea of Galilee

HELLO AND HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!

I hope that everyone had an enjoyable and healthy holiday season and that 2021 is going well for you!

We are slowly getting back to our regular classroom schedule, which has included getting back to letter introduction and academic reviews.

We will be looking forward to our valentine card exchange, which is scheduled for Friday, February 12th. Your child is invited to bring in a valentine card for each of their classmates. Everyone will be sent a valentine list home, so that no friends are missed. If you would like to attach a treat or other small item to the cards, you may do so as long as the item that you choose is individually wrapped and is store bought. Due to the pandemic, we cannot accept any home - made items.

We will also be celebrating Mardi Gras this month! Our children's Mardi Gras celebration is scheduled for Tuesday, February 16th! Everyone is invited to wear the colors green, yellow, and/or purple on that day!

I would like to remind everyone that we still go outside on snowy days. Please make sure that your child is supplied with the proper outdoor items on those days. This includes snow pants, a warm coat, a hat, gloves, extra socks, and snow boots. If we go outside on a snowy day and your child does not have the appropriate outdoor items, they will still have to go outside but will not be permitted to play in the snow.

Our star of the month for February is Gemma! Gemma's favorite food is hot dogs. Her favorite color is purple. She enjoys reading the bunny book and singing "Let It Go". Gemma's favorite activity is coloring!

HAVE A GREAT MONTH AND A HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!

MISS CATHY'S PRE-KINDERGARTEN



Greetings from the Prekindergarten room! I hope that your holiday season was wonderful, in spite of all the changes we all had to make this year.

We need to make some COVID-related changes to our Valentine's Day celebrations, as well. This year, treats will be supplied by the center instead of the traditional sign-up sheet. Please place all of your child's valentine cards to friends together in a Ziploc bag and label the bag with our class name, hand it in at the front check-in table. Please have the bag of cards here by Friday, Feb. 5th. They will be "quarantined" for a week before being distributed to the children. Thank you for your cooperation as we strive to make holiday celebrations festive AND safe.

Please remember that, at end of day when our classroom is closed and the children have shifted to Miss Shelli's room, no one should be entering the classroom to use the bathroom. Children may use the bathroom in Miss Shelli's room or the lobby restrooms. It is important that toddlers not enter the classroom/use the bathroom so that we can maintain our "bubbles" of children (Prek/Pres, Toddler 1/2, Infants) as much as possible.

Can you believe that our school year is almost half over? That means that the time for entering Kindergarten is looming closer and closer. Self-help skills are extremely important for a successful kindergarten (and beyond!) experience. Children should be working on opening and closing food containers and packaging, both at home and at school. They should be dressing themselves, asking for help when needed. All of them can put on and zip/fasten their coats and other winter gear; let them do so at home, too! It is also time to start tying

shoes. Hint: older siblings can be a big help with this! Another hint: if your child's shoes do not have shoestrings, let them practice on one of your shoes! Mastering self-help skills help with self-esteem; it's so much fun when a child shouts "I DID IT!"

Have a lovely Valentine's Day...and spring is just around the corner!

Until next time, Miss Cathy