

Bright Horizons at High Ridge Park News

July 2014



From the Director

Happy July High Ridge families!

Already two months have flown by since I joined the Center, and I continue to be humbled by the warmth and kindness of everyone at High Ridge Park.

June ended with a wonderful Kindergarten Prep graduation ceremony, and thank you to Miss Mary, Miss Lisa, Miss Liz and Miss Cindy for all of their efforts. The room looked beautiful and the K-Prep class delivered a poignant and joyous celebration of their past year!

We have a full July calendar ahead with many events happening, including a 'Breakfast to Go' for parents, and a Summer Celebration with a pot luck picnic and music from Tom Weber. More details of these events will follow.

I am also excited to share that the K-Prep classroom will be having a 'Smartboard' interactive whiteboard installed this month, which will be a wonderful addition to enhance an already strong program.

I am also happy to share that we have gained two new registrations through our Parent Referral program, and the two referring families will be receiving a \$150-\$200 tuition credit! More info about the program can be found in the lobby!

Happy holidays and have a great July!

Mr. Chris

Dates to Remember

Wednesday July 2nd: Tom Weber visits Toddlers

Friday July 4th: Center Closed – Independence Day

Monday July 14th: Breakfast to Go for Parents 6:30AM – 9:00AM

Tuesday July 15th: Tom Weber visits Preschool

Tuesday July 22nd: Parent Partnership Meeting.

Wednesday July 23: Family Matters Series webinar

Friday July 25th: Summer Celebration 6:00pm-7:30pm

Monday July 28th - Friday August 1st: K-Prep Open House Week.

Reasons to Celebrate

Sam F – 7/5 – 2 yrs old – Toddler 3

Alex B – 7/7 – 3 yrs old – Toddler 1

Edosa O – 7/10 – 1 yr old – Infant 3

Kenley H – 7/11 – 4 yrs old – Preschool 2

Tyler C – 7/19 – 4 yrs old – Preschool 2

Reva J – 7/20 – 4 yrs old – Preschool 2

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Classroom Highlights



Infants

Our Infants have been practicing their balancing skills with our **Movement Matters** curriculum, as they continue to explore both indoors and outdoors.

Climbing is a great way for them to work on balance and large motor skills, and here Miss Maxine and her group are working on moving up and down the small stair set in infant 2.



Toddlers

It's summertime and the Toddler 4 classroom has been busy making sand playdough, to bring a little of the beach into their room! Toddlers love to be a part of what they created, and this is a great hands-on project to help them explore texture.

Not only is this a great sensory activity but it also incorporates all aspects of our **Science Rocks** and **Math Counts** curriculums, through measuring, estimating and predicting.

Preschool

Summer Camp is in full swing and Preschool have been taking more of their classroom activities outside.

The outside water table is filled with summertime toys, funnels, buckets and scoops. Exploring with these different tools and filling and pouring from different containers is a great way to explore volume and cause and effect as part of our **Science Rocks** curriculum.



Kindergarten Prep

Graduation is over for K-Prep and now Summer Camp has begun!

Kindergarten Prep have their swimsuits and water shoes on, and have been busy enjoying some outside **Movement Matters** time in the sprinkler and out on the playground. As well as working on their large motor skills, it is a great way for them to cool off!

READY for SCHOOL Parent News--Executive Function: What Is It and How Can I Support Its Development in My Child?

The term, executive function, is an educational buzz word that's getting a lot of attention these days. Executive function has been compared to an air traffic controller in the brain. Through executive function, we manage the myriad complex tasks and challenges facing us daily. Executive function encompasses several skills, such as working memory, inhibitive control, and cognitive flexibility which are defined below.

Working memory refers to the ability to remember important facts or details, and call them up as needed. Through working memory, you remember to pay bills, take your child to a doctor's appointment, or perform tasks at work.

Inhibitive control allows you to make reasonable, measured choices, rather than responding to every whim or desire. You also learn persistence and focus. You clean the house when you'd rather watch television. Inhibitive control allows you to forge strong social relationships. You learn when to "bite your tongue," and when to be honest.

Brain flexibility refers to the ability to change course, admit a mistake, or see another's perspective. Flexible thinking is a necessary skill for any interactive relationship, including school projects, team sports, or assignments at work.

Executive function skills are critical for later success in school and social settings. Teachers sometimes refer to executive function skills as "getting ready to learn" skills, because without these traits, children have difficulty focusing, prioritizing and persisting at a task. Early childhood is the ideal time to boost these skills. Below are a few suggestions for building executive function skills in the early years.

- Establish predictable routines and schedules. Use visuals or charts to help children understand your expectations. Spend time teaching children how to complete simple jobs, such as picking up toys, washing paint brushes, or setting the table at lunch. Learning to follow through and complete tasks helps boost working memory and inhibitive control.
- Play games, such as "Simple Simon," or "Red Light, Green Light." These games teach children to listen and follow directions.
- Offer open-ended toys, such as wooden blocks, to build problem-solving and cognitive flexibility. How many ways can you make a tower?
- Encourage dramatic play activities, such as playing house or playing store. This type of open-ended play boosts problem-solving, language development, and focus. Scaffold play initially for young children by assigning roles or offering props. Say, "I'll be the waiter and you can be the cook. Let's pretend that we're making spaghetti." As children mature, their play becomes more independent, as well as more abstract. Children may assign roles or extend the play over several days. They may also use objects symbolically. For example, a child might use a block to represent a camera.

Resources:

Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2011). *Building the Brain's "Air Traffic Control" System: How Early Experiences Shape the Development of Executive Function: Working Paper No. 11*. Retrieved from www.developingchild.harvard.edu

Galinsky, E. (2010) *Mind in the Making*; William Morrow Publishing

Family Matters Series Webinar

Bright Horizons® partnered with Ellen Galinsky, author of the highly acclaimed bestselling book *Mind in the Making* (Harper Collins 2010), to bring families a parenting webinar about executive skill development in young children.

You can watch the recorded webinar at www.brighthouse.com/execwebinar.

Bright Horizons News



Parents Magazine Spotlights Bright Horizons Expert

Bright Horizons was referenced in an article from the July 2014 edition of *Parents Magazine*. In the article, Potty Pressure, Linda Whitehead, Ph.D., vice president of education and development, offers thoughtful tips and advice about how to get your little one on track when it comes to potty prep. Linda advises that although the path to potty training varies from child to child, a little support from parents, teachers—and even from the other students—can go a long way.

Parents

Read the full article at <http://www.brighthorizons.com/pottypressure>.

A separate *Parents Magazine* article features feedback from Dr. Linda Whitehead, where she discusses the benefits of family-style dining. A large part of the Bright Horizons curriculum, family-style dining not only helps children develop healthy eating habits, but also enables children and teachers to enjoy a meal together in a calm, respectful atmosphere. According to Linda, family-style dining also boosts self-confidence, teaches children mathematical concepts and builds fine motor skills.

Read the full article at <http://www.brighthorizons.com/mealstyles>.

SAVE THE DATE: July installment of the Family Matters Webinar Series!

Family Matters

A Bright Horizons Webinar Series

Seize the Summer: Fitness for Busy Families

Presented in collaboration with PHA
Wednesday, July 23, 3:00 pm est

Keep checking www.brighthorizons.com/webinar for the latest information as it becomes available!