

Lawrenceville Ledger

July 2014



From the Director

Summer is in full swing and the children have been enjoying the summer weather.

From building sandcastles in the sandbox to riding bicycles in the bright sun, everyone has enjoyed spending time outside. Even the infants love strolling in buggies around the playgrounds and down to the lake!

The warm weather always brings everyone's favorite activity – Water Play! Please remember to provide your child with a bathing suit, towel, water shoes with a secure back, and sunscreen! Your child's class will notify you of when these fun days will occur within the week.

For further details regarding upcoming summer activities, please refer to the large board in the main hallway. Here you can find up-to-date calendars that will inform you of events that will be taking place throughout the summer. You can also refer to the clear frames outside of your child's classroom for specific classroom events and activities.

We look forward to a fun-filled summer with you!

Important Dates

July 1 – Parent Partnership Meeting 12:15pm

July 3 – Camp Explorations visits Kids Castle

July 4 – Center Closed: Happy 4th of July!

**July 10 – Camp Explorations visits
Giggleberry Fair**

**July 17 – Camp Explorations visits Home
Depot**

July 23: Family Matters Series webinar



Connect with Bright Horizons



Well Aware



Infants

Well Aware for infants ensures that their health and safety is a primary consideration and focus of the classroom. Teachers guide infants in a developmentally appropriate environment that encourages safe explorations. It also offers babies opportunities to develop the ability to make good choices that will build a foundation for lifelong good health.



Toddlers

Well Aware for toddlers provides an environment enabling children to gain an understanding of how their bodies work, what they need, and how to protect them. Using the Well Aware resources, teachers provide rich learning experiences that help toddlers develop strong bodies, become self aware, and lay the groundwork for a lifetime of healthy habits.

Preschool

Preschoolers are provided with varied opportunities and materials to develop concepts of wellness, as well as the knowledge and skills to practice healthy lifelong habits. Using the many Well Aware resources, teachers help children to develop their physical abilities, enhance their self-esteem, and nurture healthy habits- all of which continue to a readiness to learn and the confidence to master new challenges.



Kindergarten

Well Aware offers activities focused on movement, nutrition, and safety, from jump-rope-a-thons and cooking projects, to safety visits from police officers. By acknowledging individual interests and preferences, and ensuring each child benefits from physical engagement and development, kindergarteners are able to develop respect for physical wellness, and nurture responsibility for their lifelong health.



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

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

Seize the Summer: Fitness for Busy Families

Presented in collaboration with PHA

Wednesday, July 23, 3:00 pm est.