

Parkway North News

July 2014



Happy Fourth of July!



Important Dates

July 3- Fourth of July Parade @ 10 AM
(Wear red, white, and blue)

July 4- Center Closed

July 11- In House Field Trip (Hi Touch Hi Tech for 2's and up)

July 15- K Field Trip to Sunshine Crafts

July 17- Parent Pick Up Activity: Wind Chimes (4-6 PM)

July 22- In House Field Trip (Dot Kane for Toddlers and up)

July 23- Family Matters Series webinar

Reasons to Celebrate

July 1st- Happy Anniversary Ms. Kasia

July 4th- Independence Day

July 12th- Happy Birthday Ms. Ruqia

July 22nd- Happy Anniversary Ms. Victoria

July 27th- Happy Birthday Ms. Janaye

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Classroom Highlights



Infants

In June the Infant Room did a variety of activities. Some of the children's favorite activities were playing outside on the deck and finger painting for the Art Show. As the children were creating their art they use simple tools such as paint brushes to develop their small muscle skills.



Toddlers

In the month of June, the Toddler unit conducted many science experiments. They concentrated on science experiments because the children love watching things happen. One of the experiments the children did involved color mixing. The children watched as yellow water and blue water created green water!

Young Preschool

In Young Preschool 1 the children participated in a letter hunt activity. The children were asked to identify different colors and then point to the letter of that color. As the children were learning about their colors, they were also introduced to their letters.

Young Preschool 2 did a fun math activity in the month of June. At their group time the teachers helped the children make a boy girl pattern with their bodies! After creating this pattern they counted all the children, then counted all the boys and all the girls. The children learned about counting and become familiar with the terms more and less.



Preschool

Preschool 1 created some yarn art in the month of June. To do this, the children were given mini easels, string, and paint. Instead of using paint brushes the children used string to decorate their canvas. As the children decorated their canvases, they learn to use art tools purposely and creatively. They also are experimenting with different art materials.

During the month of June, the Preschool 2 got to go camping! They set up a tent in their dramatic play area and everyone got to camp under it. The children got to feel and experiment with nature, using sticks, leaves, and dirt in our sensory table and in our artwork. They also brought in sleeping bags and used them at their group time and nap time. The children's favorite activity was making s'mores and eating them for snack. By learning about camping, Preschool 2 are expanding their knowledge about nature, outdoor safety, and recreational activities.



Kindergarten Prep

This month Kindergarten Prep 1 learned about dinosaurs. One night a dinosaur came and left behind its footprints! The children learned dinosaurs were bigger than cars. As a class the children estimated how many children could fit inside the footprints. With Miss. Cathleen and Ms. Victoria's help the whole Kindergarten Prep 1 class could fit inside.

During the month of June, the Kindergarten Prep 2 class focused on cooperation. Together they learned that in order to work cooperatively, they must interact in a respectful manner. The children demonstrated team work and cooperation as they created a bridge out of blocks. They even created a marble maze using paper towel rolls! Through cooperative play, the children will strengthen their ability to interact respectfully, work patiently, and follow directions.

Kindergarten

On Tuesday, June 17th, the Kindergarten room took their first field trip of the summer to Lamb's Farm. Upon arriving they toured the farm to view all of the animals in their pens. Then the class took a train ride around the park followed by a visit to the petting zoo where they interacted with sheep and goats. Kindergarten ended their visit with a picnic lunch outside. By participating in this field trip the students are becoming familiar with the properties of living things.



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.brighthorizons.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.

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

Parents

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!