

Bright Horizons at Cranberry

October 2015



From the Director

For kids, Halloween is a time to dress up and get free candy, but the holiday actually has a rich history. October is the perfect time to teach your kids about the origins of Halloween and help them to understand some of the facts behind the traditions. It's also a great way to sneak in a little history that kids can get excited about.

Halloween may seem like a kid-friendly, holiday but you should keep it light for smaller children who could get scared. Older children, are probably ready to hear all about the history but all children can learn about the harvest holiday aspects of Halloween.

Many of the harvest traditions, such as pumpkin patches and hay rides, are a fun way to incorporate family bonding. Take your kids to a fall festival or a pumpkin patch and spend the day with them. They can have fun getting their faces painted and picking a pumpkin. Then take the party home and make jack-o'-lanterns.

A great way to discuss Halloween history is through old photos and stories. Dust off the old photo album and talk about traditions from generations ago. What were some of your family's traditions when you were growing up?

Halloween is also a great holiday for kids with huge imaginations. Everything from making decorations to choosing costumes allows their minds to roam free. Another way to help teach your child about the holiday is to use your backyard or community garden to talk about how Halloween used to make the end of the harvest season- and what that meant for people. Help your kids pick any leftover autumn vegetable and make a heart harvest feast together. (The veggies are also a great complement to the overdose of Halloween candy your kids are probably consuming!)

Important Dates

October 30: Annual Halloween Parade in Building I Café at 10:00am

October 22: Read for the Record

November 18: Fall Festival from 4-6pm

November 16-20: Art Show and Book Fair

Halloween Parade

Our Annual Halloween Parade will be on Friday, October 30 in the Building I Café at 10:00am! Family and friends are more than welcome to come to the parade. ALL non-Westinghouse visitors MUST sign in at the security desk to get a visitor's badge and must be escorted by the Westinghouse employee at all times. We look forward to seeing all of the children in their fun and scary costumes! ☺

Connect with Bright Horizons

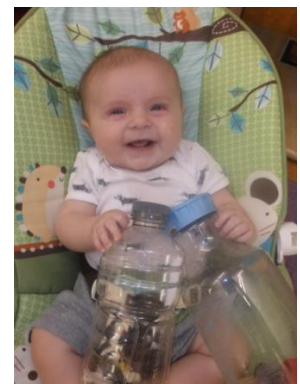


Classroom Highlights



Infants

In Infant I we began our farm and apple themed month by exploring sensory bottles filled with farm animals and one filled with tractors! While the infants were exploring the sensory bottles, Miss Mariann and Miss Karen told them all about what they were looking at and sang *Old McDonald's Farm* and *The Farmer in the Dell* to them. Some of the infants got ahold of the animal filled bottle and shook it so hard and fast that it was a big blur in some of the pictures! Some of the other infants couldn't pick which bottle they liked best so they just hung onto both and loved when we sang to them!



Toddlers

In September Toddler I experimented with mystery dough! The toddlers were Well Aware as they learned to strengthen and refine small muscles by using their fine motor skills to maneuver a spoon to stir together corn starch and water. The toddlers also put their Art Smart skills to the test as they learned to investigate the world through their senses by exploring the corn starch and water that engaged their senses.

Preschool

Happy birthday Preschool! Preschool celebrated turning three by building cake towers in a STEM inspired activity. We used engineering, Math Counts and Language Works to construct our towers. First, we learned to use writing to communicate by drawing our blueprints for our towers in our journals. Once we drew our blueprints, it was time to build. As we were building, we asked open-ended questions like, "How can we keep the cake tower from falling?" One friend said, "Put the heavy pieces on the bottom!" We experimented and found out that the big rectangle block on the bottom was a good idea. Another friend used prior knowledge to try and build the Taj Mahal! Some built tall towers and some built small towers. In the end, we learned that heavy pieces on the bottom made our towers sturdy.



Kindergarten

During the month of September, the Kindergarten students used their SCIENCE ROCKS skills to learn about trees, fall and apples. During a fall walk, they learned about OUR WORLD as they looked for signs of the season changing. Their fine motor skills were used to hammer and screw together bird houses while learning about things we have that are made from trees. Last they practiced MATH COUNTS skills when sorting, classifying and weighing apples and recording their results.

The Process of Art

Loris Malaguzzi, founder of the highly regarded Reggio Emilia preschools, coined the phrase, “the 100 languages of children,” meaning that children express their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences through many vehicles, including writing, symbolic play, dance, verbal expression, music, and of course, art.

If art is a form of expression for children, then what should art look like and what is our role as teachers and parents? What are the goals and purposes of art in the early childhood classroom? In this article, we explore what art is — and what it isn’t — for young children.

First, art is a pleasurable sensory experience. Consider the joy a toddler feels squishing his hands through play dough or a glob of finger paint. This type of art experience is soothing and peaceful, encouraging participants to fully embrace the present. Learning how to use art materials builds a sense of confidence and focus. The exploration of textured papers or fabric increases tactile awareness; experimenting with color fosters an understanding of pattern, shade and tone, as well as the basic elements of design.

For many children, art serves as a precursor to writing. Children use art to communicate their ideas to others. For example, a young child may draw a picture to explain why she’s feeling sad. Children paint pictures of themselves, their pets, or their families. These pictures often have deep meaning for children. Children create stories and illustrate them long before they can write their stories in words.

But what happens to this organic, spontaneous vehicle of expression when adults introduce “crafts” — products prepared ahead of time by a teacher and designed to look the same? A bulletin board with 20 identical snowmen might seem whimsical, but where in this display is a child’s voice? These types of craft projects might be appropriate occasionally to reinforce a skill, such as patterning or sequencing, but they are not art because they are not a form of self-expression.

At Bright Horizons, we believe that children need ample opportunities for **process art** — **art that focuses on process and personal expression, rather than an end product**. We believe the benefits of process art lie in its simplicity. When children are allowed to create art spontaneously and independently, they are strengthening their own unique voices.

Because process art is a form of self-expression, we believe that children’s art should be labeled and displayed with respect. As you visit your child’s center, look for examples of process art. Think about what the children are “saying.”

Bright Horizons News

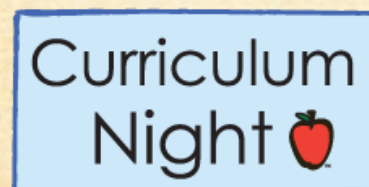


Curriculum Night 2015: “A Day in the Life”

Join us for our Curriculum Night event, where families from all age groups will have the opportunity to experience a *day in the life* of their child and learn about the upcoming year with **Bright Horizons®**.

During the event, you and your family will have the opportunity to:

- explore our curriculum, *The World at Their Fingertips®*
- discover how literacy education is woven into our curriculum
- learn about your child’s daily classroom schedule and activities
- connect with teachers to ask any questions you might have



Share in your Bright Horizons experience and invite your friends and family to join you at Curriculum Night. Please see our Center Director or your child’s teacher if you have questions or would like more information about Curriculum Night. We will see you there!

Help Set a World Reading Record!

Join us on October 22nd



Bright Horizons invites you and your family to participate in the 10th anniversary of JumpStart’s *Read for the Record®*.

Join us and pledge to read Kelly Bennett’s *Not Norman: A Goldfish Story* with your child on Thursday, October 22nd. Help us to break the record (again!). *Read for the Record* brings together millions of people to celebrate literacy and high-quality early education by breaking the world record for reading the same book on the same day.

Find out more and get involved in our center’s exciting *Read for the Record* activities.