

Kidopolis News

March 2015



Bright Horizons was Recognized for its Leadership in Fighting Childhood Obesity at Partnership for a Healthier America's Summit in D.C.

Bright Horizons and Dave Lissy were recognized last week at the Partnership for a Healthier America's (PHA) Building a Healthier Future Summit for taking a leadership role in the fight to end childhood obesity and promoting children's well-being. Dave had the distinct honor of introducing First Lady Michelle Obama, who delivered the Keynote address during the plenary session on Thursday, February 26.

The Summit is one of the nation's premier gatherings of health experts, policy makers, and business and industry leaders committed to ending childhood obesity.

Bright Horizons was recognized as an organization that has led the way in providing early childhood settings that foster and encourage the development of healthy habits. As the first national early care and education provider to collaborate with PHA in 2012, Bright Horizons has served as an open model for child care centers nationwide by undergoing a full evaluation of its corporate policies and center practices surrounding nutrition and physical activity. Through the Bright Horizons' Well Aware curriculum, children gain an understanding and awareness of how their bodies work, what their bodies need, and how to protect themselves.

Important Dates



Tuesday, March 17th –
Michelle, 12 years of service



Friday, March 20th –
Bridgette, 15 years of service



Sunday, March 22nd –
Angie, 15 years of Service



Sunday, March 22nd –
Miss Andrea's Birthday

Tuesday, March 24th –
[School Readiness: Beyond the Basics](#) at 12:30p

Friday, April 3rd -
Good Friday, Center Closed

Reasons to Celebrate:



Connect with Bright Horizons



Classroom Highlights



Infants

Although they are our youngest citizens, infants can certainly begin to understand basic concepts that provide a foundation for becoming happy, contributing members of society. This "Our World" activity encourages an infant to explore the world around him. The teacher has provided the infant with a mirror and inspires him to take a look, and asks open-ended questions like "Who is that in the mirror?" "Can you point to your eyes and nose?" This is a great activity for infants because they learn to recognize their own body, identify themselves in mirrors or photographs, and develop a sense of self as separate from others.



Toddlers/Twos

Young children are scientists by nature. Toddlers display scientific behavior throughout their days, from stomping in puddles, to investigating a sandbox, to intently watching a butterfly in flight. For this science activity, we demonstrated a rain cloud. We use a mason jar, shaving cream, and food coloring. The Tulane toddlers watched as the food coloring slowly seeped through the shaving cream, then finally when it got to heavy the food coloring broke through and fell into the water, the same as a rain cloud would. The children learned to understand the basic concept of balance and weight.

Preschool

The preschool years are an exciting times of robust language development. Vocabularies blossom from a few hundred words to a few thousand and word comprehension takes off. Literacy and language experiences in our preschool classrooms collectively contribute to development of a child's emerging speaking, reading, and writing skills by continually nurturing and challenging each child's language development. Aria, age 3, traces over the dotted line with a a pencil, then uses child safe scissors to cut the lines. The preschoolers are learning to strengthen and refine small muscle skills, draw pictures, and make purposeful marks and letters.



Kindergarten Prep

Children in Kindergarten Prep are fascinated by numerical concepts and mathematical thinking. They are enthusiastic mathematicians, engaging in math regulatory as they build block towers, make patterns, complete puzzles, or measure a length of a shadow. For this math activity preschools are placing the correct numbers of beans in each column. They are given the numbers between eleven and twenty. These preschoolers are learning to demonstrate knowledge of numbers, solve simple number problems, create and sort by set, estimate with increased accuracy, and match sets to the corresponding numerals 11-20.

READY for SCHOOL Parent News: Caring Matters- Building Healthy Social-Emotional Growth

At Bright Horizons, we take a holistic view of children's development. We recognize that every area of a child's development – from literacy skills to motor skills to social-emotional growth – is important. *Caring Matters*, our curriculum for social-emotional development, offers teachers a solid, research-based program for nurturing children and fostering the skills they need to communicate with others, establish and maintain relationships, and identify and express emotions.

Caring Matters is based on both the classic work of early childhood theorists, as well as current research on children's social and emotional growth; in particular, we value the work of the Center on Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Learning at Vanderbilt University and noted expert, Dan Gartrell. Below you'll find information on some of the most important components of the *Caring Matters* curriculum:

Nurturing Relationships

Nurturing relationships forms the foundation for children's social and emotional development. At Bright Horizons, we understand that children are most likely to achieve their potential when they feel safe, valued, and respected. We strive to understand each child and each family's strengths, needs, and cultural values. Teachers place special emphasis on "prime times," those moments during the day when teachers can connect with children individually.

Warm, Comforting Spaces

The next step in fostering healthy social and emotional development is developing an environment that feels safe, comfortable, and engaging. Every Bright Horizons school is unique, with its own design and layout. However, in general, supplies, furniture and equipment are clearly organized so children can use them independently. We use documentation boards and other forms of communication to increase a sense of connection and community. The classroom layout includes both active and quiet spaces to meet children's needs throughout the day.

Integrated Social Skills Learning

Learning social skills is a process that takes years. Children learn social skills through many avenues, such as parent/teacher modeling and real-life learning with other children. Our *Caring Matters* curriculum offers teachers an added resource with ideas and solutions for teaching social skills directly to children. Teachers can use puppets, role plays, and many other activities to teach children specific skills, such as asking for help or taking turns. Research shows that children who receive direct social skills teaching show less aggression and do better academically, as well.

Direct Intervention and Positive Guidance

Being part of a group child care setting provides many daily opportunities for children to learn give and take. Children are still learning how to share, and conflicts are an inevitable part of the day. At Bright Horizons, we view these moments as teaching opportunities. Our *Caring Matters* curriculum offers teachers simple, effective strategies to help children learn the skills they need to work with others. We believe that behavior is communication – a young child's way of expressing his needs and wants. Teachers learn how to respond with caring and kindness, offering children solutions that empower them.

We know that as children enter elementary school, the focus is more on academics than social-emotional development. We believe strongly that the early childhood years are a critical time to build children's social and emotional development. When children feel confident, happy, and valued, they're more likely to reach their full potential throughout their school years and beyond.

Bright Horizons News



See How We Prepare Children for Kindergarten – and Beyond!



Each year, Bright Horizons welcomes new families to our community. And, year after year, we've found that the best way to meet these families is through you!

This April, we are hosting an Open House week to welcome new families to learn more about our center. If you have a friend or family member that might be interested in joining the Bright Horizons family, we would be happy to provide information for you to share with them!

Please see your Center Director for details.

Join us for the next installment in our Family Matters Webinar Series in March!

Family Matters

A Bright Horizons Webinar Series

School Readiness: Beyond the Basics
Coming in March 2015

School readiness is so much more than knowing colors, shapes, and ABCs. It's also about social/emotional development, motor skills, and self-expression—which are especially important during those critical first five years, and can determine how well a child does in school and in life. A school-ready child is engaged, eager to learn, willing and able to follow directions, and happily adjusted to group life in a classroom setting.

The next *Bright Horizons Family Matters* webinar will explore how parents and teachers can work together to shape early experiences that provide the foundational skills for confidence and school success.

Registration details will be available in the next couple weeks. You can sign up to be notified when registrations open by visiting www.brighthorizons.com/schoolready.