

Bright Horizons at Long Ridge News

From the Director

Holiday Service Projects

Many non-profit agencies have a special need for help during the holidays, when so many families face difficult circumstances. There are many ideas for projects that can make a big difference for needy families during the holiday season.

Collecting food, clothing, and/or toys is a good way to help children understand that not everyone has enough to eat or to wear; toy drives could be a wonderful way for children to learn the joy of sharing. Even very young children can imagine what it would be like to need a house or be hungry, and fairy tales or fables can help them understand. The goal is not only to provide assistance for people who need it, but also to provide a fun and meaningful experience for our children, teachers and parents as they volunteer together.

**Thank you for participating in our
Holiday Food Drive for The Food
Bank of Lower Fairfield County!**

Important Dates

Friday 12/16 from 7PM-9PM
Community Shopping Night

The center will be closed
December 26th and January 1st
We wish you and your family a happy
holiday season!

Reasons to Celebrate

Happy Birthday!

Preschool

Adrian L-12/17

Peter R- 12/20

Kai D- 12/26

Toddlers

Olivia H- 12/22

Grant F- 12/29

Nursery

Nicolas M-R-12/21

Teachers:

Miss Christy-12/7

Miss Cristina-12/8

Bright Horizons at Long Ridge

778 Long Ridge Road, Stamford, CT 06902

203-461-8653

M-F 7:30-6:30



CLASSROOM HIGHLIGHTS

Infant

Our babies began sensory exploration with sensory bottles. With these bottles the children can observe how the materials in the bottle look and move, sound when moved and shaken, and how the sound vibration feels while they are holding the bottle while moving and shaking them. Concrete thinking is supported by exploring the effect of shaking, rolling, and dropping the sensory bottles.



Toddler

Young toddlers explore materials by how they look, feel, and smell. Making art for them is largely a sensory experience. What adults can perceive as scribble is really an depth exploration of how materials work. Toddlers may sometimes tell us what they have made but at this age art is not so much about representation but about process. Rather than asking “what did you make?” we can encourage creative development by saying “please tell me about your picture.”



Preschool

During a week talking about food and cooking, the children worked on their understanding of volume when using measuring cups in the sensory table. For a different type of sensory experience they explored with flour and other tools. The class used plastic spoons and measuring spoons to fill up and dump the cups. They would fill up two different cups and try and compare how much flour was in each. They also dumped flour into different sized containers and would notice if the flour overflowed because it was smaller, or if they needed more to fill it up, because it was larger.



Kindergarten Prep

Fostering their fine motor, emergent literacy, language, and school readiness skills the children practice writing in their *My Work Journals* as they learn new vocabulary relating to the curricular theme of the week. The children also engage in discussions with their peers as they brainstorm ideas for how to illustrate their new word.



READY FOR SCHOOL NEWS

Literacy Tips for Parents

Most children develop literacy skills predictably, just as they learn to walk. In the early years, they gain language, vocabulary, and an understanding of story. Older preschoolers may show an interest in letters and their sounds; they understand that those odd little squiggles on the page make words and can be used to communicate ideas. Children then move on to understanding phonics rules and blending sounds to make words. This stage is followed by fluency and finally, comprehension, or reading for knowledge.

To some degree, learning to read is a developmental skill and the age and timeline when reading occurs varies from child to child; but to become successful readers, all children need lots of experiences with books and reading in the early years. Below we've offered a few ideas to try at home:

- Make reading a part of your family culture. Build times into your day to read together or listen to audiobooks. Keep a book in your bag to read while you're waiting for an appointment. Stash books or magazines in the car for when you're out and about.
- Teach print concepts. As you look at books together, occasionally point out aspects about reading. For example, to a very young child you might say, "See how we hold the book? We start at this side and turn the pages to the end." Older children can understand that print moves from top to bottom and left to right. Show children that words are made up of letters and have spaces in between them.
- Play games to build early literacy skills. Young children love nursery rhymes and songs; these activities are more than an entertaining diversion. They help children hear the sounds in words and begin to understand language patterns. Point out "environmental print" – traffic signs, familiar store signage, or product labels on packages in your pantry. Play rhyming games, e.g., "Can you think of a word that rhymes with cat?" Another simple game is the rubber band game in which you say a word, stretching it out so your child hears each sound distinctly and separately. Then "snap" the word back, saying it quickly. Try clapping your hands for each syllable you hear in a word.
- Celebrate early reading attempts. Many children enjoy thumbing through a familiar book and retelling the story. They're not necessarily reading each word, but they do feel a sense of pride and accomplishment. Encourage these early efforts. They show that children understand the purpose and essential nature of books and reading. Children are also developing vocabulary and a sense of story.
- Teach skills through playful means. If your child shows an interest in learning alphabet letters, try reading alphabet books, demonstrating each sound. Roll play dough into letters or write them in a tray of sand or cornmeal. Use refrigerator magnets to make simple words together, saying each sound and blending the sounds to form words.

BRIGHT HORIZONS NEWS



Striking a Balance: The Work/Life Equation

Next Live Webinar: Tuesday, December 13th at 3:00 PM ET

Parenting, marriage, career, social life, and community: are you managing the facets of your busy life or are they managing you? Join Bright Horizons and mother-daughter duo Drs. Marti and Erin Erickson, co-hosts of Mom Enough for strategies to find calm in the chaos.

Register: www.brighthorizons.com/strikingbalance

Making A Difference With Your Holiday Shopping

Without spending any additional money, you can make a big impact on the life of a child experiencing homelessness or other crises. When you buy books, toys, music, and more as part of your holiday shopping, 8% of your purchase will be donated to the Bright Horizons Foundation for Children from Amazon.com using this link.

Just click on [this Amazon link](#) and shop as normal. Visit our [FAQ](#) for more information about this program.

Make sure to save this Amazon page as a favorite and then share it with your family and friends! It works all year.

Looking for a great gift idea for someone on your shopping list? Make a donation to the [Bright Horizons Foundation for Children](#) in their honor and [send a special holiday ecard](#) to let them know. Each time you send an ecard, not only are you sending a personalized message of love, hope, thanks, or support to your friends, colleagues or family, you are also helping make a difference for children and families in crisis.

The Bright Horizons Foundation for Children is a nonprofit organization focused on brightening the lives of children, youth, and families in crisis, especially those who are homeless.



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