

Bright Horizons at Wilton

April 2015



From the Director

Hello everyone.

Welcome to Spring! We are all thrilled that we are able to spend time outdoors again. Please note that the children do get warm as they are running around on the sunny playground and may need a lighter jacket for this time of year.

We have a lot of exciting activities coming up at Bright Horizons at Wilton. Next week is our Open House week, in addition to the Week of the Young Child. We have a busy week planned for the children and look forward to experiencing it with them. Please let your friends know about the Open House, as well. They are welcome anytime between 9:00am – 5:00pm all week. You are welcome to attend any of the activities, too. Please let me know if you need any additional information.

On Friday, April 17th, we will be participating in the MDA Hop-a-Thon. Please look for information in your child's cubby regarding this special event.

Thank you for being a part of our family.

Cindy

Important Dates

Open House Week /Week of the Young Child – April 13th – 17th

April 13th – Librarian Visit

April 17th – HOP-A-THON for MDA

April 20th – Tom Weber Visit

Reasons to Celebrate

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Maddy Mierkiewicz – April 4th – 3 yrs old

Robert Rahilly – April 5th – 3 yrs old

Molly Mercer – April 23rd – 5 yrs old

Riley Metz – April 26th – 3 yrs old

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Classroom Highlights



Infants

As part of “**Language Works**”, older children practice their early literacy skills. They practice turning pages as they look at the pictures. They also listen to the words the teacher says as they play puzzles. Other major milestones are happening in “**Movement Matters**”. Some older children have started walking, while others are on the verge of crawling and rolling.



Toddlers

Toddler One children created a “Rainbow Explosion” of colors, as part of “**Science Rocks**”. They measured and poured colored Koolaid with water and baking soda. Then they watched the explosion of colors, as the mixture bubbled up.

For “**Language Works**” they listened to the story What Makes a Rainbow? by Betty Ann Schwartz. They named each color as the ribbon rainbow was formed in the story.

Preschool

Preschool Three children practiced their “**Math Counts**” skills, while sorting, making patterns, and counting colored eggs. They took turns and placed the eggs in a pattern on an egg carton tray. For “**Movement Matters**”, they practiced shape recognition. Each child jumped on shape squares as they shouted the corresponding shape name.



Kindergarten Prep

As part of the “**STEM**” program, Kindergarten-Prep children experimented with food. Over the week, they observed how skin can protect the inside of an apple. They observed two apples, one with skin and one without. They created a “Daily Observation” Sheet and drew a picture of what they saw. The apple without skin quickly began to turn brown and rot.



READY for SCHOOL Parent News - Purposeful Play: A Child's Work

At Bright Horizons, we believe that play has tremendous value in the lives of young children. Through play, children learn language skills, such as vocabulary and conversational turn taking. They learn to compromise, listen, and work together. Play builds self-regulation, focus, and impulse control – important skills for later learning. Play helps children master potentially unsettling experiences, such as going to school, moving, or bringing home a new baby.

But what exactly is play and what does it look like? Play is more than merely handing a child a few props or blocks. By observing a child's play, thoughtful teachers and parents can gain valuable insights into children's developmental levels, fears, and interests.

The Stages of Play

Babies and toddlers use play as a vehicle for exploring the world and mastering their own bodies. At this stage, they touch, smell, and taste toys. They may bang toys together or pound them on the ground. Babies are curious about how the world works, which is why kitchen cupboards are so enticing. Babies open drawers and cupboards, dump and pour liquids, or stack objects and knock them down.

Older toddlers and preschoolers engage in more symbolic play. Objects and toys become meaningful. For example, a toddler pushes a car across the floor, making revving sounds as she goes. A preschooler might "cook" you a pretend meal.

As children develop and gain language skills, their play becomes more mature. They may assign roles ("you be the mom and I'll be the baby") and they may continue the play for more than one day. At this age, children are able to give symbolic meaning to random objects. A pinecone, for example, becomes food.

Supporting Children's Play

We know that play is critically important for children's development. How then can we protect and nurture children's play? Below are a few suggestions for fostering purposeful play both in the classroom and at home:

- Create both indoor and outdoor spaces for play. These spaces don't necessarily need a lot of toys, but they should be areas where children feel safe to explore and even make messes.
- Offer open-ended toys and props, such as wooden blocks, simple clothing, and dishes.
- Scaffold (support and build) children's play with picture books or additional props. For example, perhaps the children are acting out a theme of dragons and knights. Read a few books about dragons or make cardboard shields.
- Add paper and writing materials so the children can make signs, menus, crowns, or other props.
- Allow plenty of time for play. Children often need at least 45 minutes to 1 hour to really engage in and deepen play. They're less likely to dig into complex play themes if they're accustomed to frequent or abrupt transitions.

Resources

Tools of the Mind (2015) Supporting Make Believe Play. Retrieved from <http://www.toolsofthemind.org/parents/make-believe-play/>.

Bright Horizons News



Join Bright Horizons in Celebrating Earth Day on April 22

Mark your calendars – April 22nd is Earth Day!



We encourage you to celebrate the holiday by making one pledge or one change to be more environmentally conscious this year. We have many suggestions for green projects on our [Bright Horizons Going Green board](#) on Pinterest. Small changes can lead to a big impact! So remember to bring your reusable bag to the store, plant a flower with your child, or bring in some supplies from home for your center to reuse for an art project.

Interested in learning more about how you can celebrate Earth Day with your child(ren)? Check out our eFamily news article: [Earth Day Activities for Families](#).

However you choose to celebrate, we hope you have a wonderful Earth Day.

Help a Friend Discover Bright Horizons during our Spring Open House Week!



This April we will be hosting an Open House Week for families to learn more about our programs and how we educate children to become successful lifelong learners.

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! See Center Director for details.

COMING SOON: Teacher and Staff Appreciation Month



Teacher and Staff Appreciation Month is coming!

Each year, we take the month of May to celebrate and recognize staff whose hard work and dedication help us accomplish great things and make Bright Horizons a wonderful place for children and families. Please mark your calendars!