



December 2018 Newsletter

Dear Parents,

Soon we will be experiencing the natural phenomenon that Mother Nature sends our way each winter - SNOW! As adults, we often take the wintry wonderland for granted or we may even complain of the inconvenience that it sometimes brings. However, young children are often in awe of this event, as many preschoolers are just old enough to be observant of the properties of snow and its ability to change the way their world looks by transforming it into a beautiful, quiet, and blanketed place. Each snowflake is unique and has six sides! At Greenbelt Children's Center, we delight in having the opportunity to share in the experiences that Mother Nature provides for our children.



Remember to dress your child for the weather each day, so that he/she will be comfortable exploring the outdoors this season. **Your child will need a hat, mittens (best), boots and a warm coat.** Be sure each is labeled with your child's name! The best way to keep up with gloves/mittens is to attach them to the sleeves of your child's coat with fasteners. If you will be purchasing **snow suits or pants, be sure to get the ones with zippers at the ankles** so that they can slip on easily over shoes or boots. (The time taken to get the children dressed to go outside is often longer than the time spent outdoors!) We thank you for your help with this. Our goal is to help each child to have 60 minutes of vigorous play each day to combat childhood obesity and support good health. Please support the teachers in their efforts to do this!

(Reminder-GCC follows PG County Public School closings/delays for emergencies/bad weather.)

Remember to sign up for our new emergency notification and reminder procedure! We are using Remind.com and you can sign up by going to www.remind.com/join/gccpar or text (202) 517-9047 with this message: @gccpar. It is a simple way to get updates of things that GCC parents may need to know! Snow or Ice! Power or Water Outage! **Please sign up!**



Remember the Lending Library!

No excuses! We have recently received many **wonderful books** for our lending library – please come and check them out! There are just so many benefits that come from reading good books to young children.



You are your child's first role model for early literacy experiences. You show your child how to hold a book properly, which way to turn the pages, and you spark interest with your fluency and enthusiasm! We know you want these great experiences for your child and so do we.

Remember, if **EVERY FAMILY READS 10 BOOKS** or more, the classroom will be rewarded with a special treat! Also, some families in the past have donated a book to the lending library in honor of their child's birthday. **We encourage other families to make this a tradition to honor their child's birthday. It is a lasting gift when a book with your child's name becomes a legacy for many parents to read to their children for years to come. Thank you!**

GCC will participate in **National School Choice Week January 20-26, 2019** with a special event that will take place at our school.

In honor of all the families that achieved reading lending library books to their child, we will celebrate and congratulate each

family by giving their child a free School Choice Scarf! We are happy that our families have made the choice to support the program at GCC and together we will do great things for our children! We hope you will join us!



National School Choice Week is a non-partisan, non-political effort that raises awareness about the importance of effective education options for students. Nearly 20,000 events are being planned across the country to celebrate National School Choice Week. (<https://schoolchoiceweek.com/>).

Reminder Parents - we need you!



We need a **picture of each family** for your child to display in the classroom. This is a best practice for accredited centers to reflect the diversity of our community of families. Please be sure that your child's teacher has received this from your family! Also, we learn from families too! Please let teachers know when you might be available to come in the classroom for a presentation of your culture or occupation so teachers can include you in their plans!



Thank You! Thank You! Thank you!

Thank you to Denise Dyke (Tyler-Rm 1) for the lunch for the teachers and to Bryan Cortez (Bryan-Rm 1) for the coffee from Starbucks for the faculty and for the tech support for the classroom tablets! We love random acts of kindness! Deep and sincere thanks to the parents, grandparents, and other family members for reading books to the children and helping with the book distribution at the recent Book Club Event.

More Thanks!

Food, Toys, and Coat Drive: Thank you for all the canned/dry foods! It was given to the local food bank in Prince Georges County. We want to keep up the efforts. This is a great ongoing community service project for our children to think of others in need. We are collecting new or gently used toys for the month of December until 12/20/18 so if you are clearing out space for new holiday gifts, bring us the toys your child may have outgrown or no longer plays with! Thank you for the random acts of kindness!

Let's keep the giving spirit in mind throughout the holiday season and into the New Year. This is one example of how you can work with program staff members on a community project!



HELP!

Sign In & Sign Out Sheets

An observation of the daily sign in/out sheets in the classrooms is of concern to the Director and staff. Some parents are faithful and sign in and out, with written instructions every day about who is to be expected to pick up their child at the end of each day. Please write in **names** of family members instead of Grandma or Uncle!

ALL PARENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS ARE REQUIRED TO SIGN IN/OUT WITH ALL INFORMATION EVERY DAY. Mrs. Gee has circled missing information to bring this to the attention of some families. ***As you read this, please plan to have a conversation with all the adult members of your family including your extended family, to make sure everyone knows what is expected. This is for the safety of your child.*** Please help us with this and please remember this form is a legal document.



TUITION AND CALENDAR REMINDER

Charges for tuition apply to each week of the school year. Please remember that tuition MUST be paid for the time the center is closed for Winter Holiday (December 24, 2018-January 1, 2019) in accordance with our published calendar. This is an important benefit for the faculty at GCC and we are sure that you have experienced the kindness, dedication, and joy that the GCC teachers & staff give to your child.

Payment due for the week of December 24th can be paid on or before January 2, 2019 when school resumes. Please mark your calendar now so you are prepared for this. Thank you for your support of our program and faculty.



Winter Holiday Celebration & Book Club Event!



Each classroom is planning a Music 4 Life,
**Holiday Party and Book Club Event for
Thursday, December 13th at 10:30 am**

Please check in your child's classroom for a sign-up sheet for families to help with contributions of healthy goodies, and to join in the fun by helping with holiday crafts, reading to children, individually or in groups, and distributing books!! We have also invited Ms Tiffany, from Music 4 Life to bring in holiday music for all of us to enjoy! Sign up to join us if you can!

Congratulations to GCC! We have achieved national re-accreditation with the National Association for the Education of Young Children through 2023!



Not only did we achieve accreditation, we scored very high! The two classrooms (they randomly choose 60% to observe) chosen: Room 1 scored 98% and Room 3 scored 96%! Both are A+ ratings! The full report card is posted on our classroom bulletin boards and our Face Book page! Be sure to friend us there!

From Child Care Information Exchange: In the news: In a *New York Times* article, Madeline Levine describes two research studies on parenting styles, one by Diana Baumrind, a clinical and developmental psychologist at the University of California-Berkeley and one by Carol Dweck, a social and developmental psychologist at Stanford University. As Levine explains, both studies lead to the conclusion that: **"The happiest, most successful children have parents who do not do for them what they are capable of doing, or almost capable of doing..."**

"The central task of growing up is to develop a sense of self that is autonomous, confident and generally in accord with reality. If you treat your walking toddler as if she can't walk, you diminish her



confidence and distort reality. Ditto nightly 'reviews' of homework, repetitive phone calls to 'just check if you're O.K.' and 'editing' (read: writing) your child's college application essay."

Source: "[Raising Successful Children](#)," by Madeline Levine, *The New York Times*, August 4, 2012

DID YOU KNOW?

- **That a note is *required* for any absence of three days or more?** It can be a doctor's note or note from parent, but it must state why your child was absent, that your child may resume regular activities and is not contagious. It is suggested that a note be written for **each** absence so that you will get into a habit required for elementary school. If an outbreak of chicken pox occurs, anyone not immunized must be excluded for 21 days!



- **That learning for young children is a combination of play, maturation and experience?** Young children learn best when they are actively involved in concrete learning experiences. This means that the best teaching materials allow the child to see, touch, manipulate, explore, dismantle, reshape, listen to, or taste. (Keep this in mind when buying toys!) Play is how young children learn best!



- **That pre-school is a time for establishing good habits for later years of school.** We are helping to prepare your child for success in school, so **we ask that you bring your child in by 9:00 am daily**, as they will be expected to come on time to school. *Children who arrive late miss so much of the enriching curriculum teachers have planned. Good attendance every day is a very good habit to learn at an early age.*

- **That our Federal Tax Identification Number is 52-1689271** for your income tax purposes! Yearly summaries will be given to you in mid-January to assist you in documenting child care expenses for your income tax filing. This number also appears on every receipt you receive!
- **That director, Mrs. Gee**, has served on the Public Policy Committee of the MD Association for the Education of Young Children for over twenty years, advocating for children, families and staff at the local, state and federal levels. She was first appointed by Governor O'Malley and again by Governor Hogan to serve on the Maryland State Early Childhood Advisory Council that is doing the work required for the MD State Department of Education, as well as the local Early Childhood Advisory Council that includes the Lead Interagency Council for Infants and



Toddlers. She is required by Memorandum of Understanding with the PGCPS for the public-school Pre-k grant to serve on the Judith P. Hoyer Center Steering Committee for Prince George's County. **If you would like the opportunity to advocate for children and families of Prince George's County or at the state level, please see Mrs. Gee. There are Parent Leadership opportunities!**

- That between the ages of 3- 5 years old, **children should be screened for Hearing and Vision.** Grant funds will pay the nominal fee for the Public Pre-k students in Room 1. All other families can attach payment to the forms to receive the screenings on December 4, 2018 by Maryland Hearing and Vision, with a make-up day on 12/11/18.
- **LOST ITEMS!** If you find unidentified objects in your laundry basket at home, there is a good chance that another family is searching for it! Don't be shy about returning things that have accidentally made their way into your home! This is a no judgement zone! Labeling all items brought from home, helps all of us to return items to the rightful owner! Look up at lost items hanging on the ceiling racks! We do not know who these items belong to! Please label all items brought from home!

Healthy Living

To combat the ongoing health challenges of the obesity problem, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) has issued their report on kids' nutrition, physical activity, and sedentary behaviors. Here are some of their recommendations:



During every pediatric visit, a health care professional should monitor the child's weight and height. They should take into consideration whether the kids are above the 85th percentile curves, the kids' weight gain and parents' weight status.

- **Toddlers and preschool children should be encouraged to be physically active throughout the day.** They should have outdoor playtime, access to a playground or open grass and an adequate indoor play environment too.
- **Children's sitting or standing time should be limited to no more than 30 minutes at a time.** IOM also advised against withholding physical activity as punishment.
- It advised that children **spend less time in front of a TV, computer, or other screen device.**
- **Children should be fed a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and low or non-fat dairy** that is age-appropriate and in healthy portions. Since food preferences can be shaped during infancy, it is never too early to begin.



Regulation for licensed child care programs in Maryland: we are not allowed to serve any drinks containing any type of sugar additive, even if a parent sends it in with their child! We may only serve milk, water and 100% juice even for parties! Please do not send anything that we can't serve! We love our children so much and we want them to be healthy for now and into the future! Our goal is for our community to eat healthy foods and never smoke.



FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD



The month of December is centered on the theme of children who live all around the world. Our goal is for the children to experience food, songs, dress, and customs of children from many lands, **especially those represented by the places that our families, community partners, and staff are connected to by birth or family history.** We will also be discussing the traditions and holidays that are celebrated by others.

Families are invited to share in our plans by scheduling with teachers for a date and time to come into the classroom and tell about your holiday or family tradition. This helps to present a multi-cultural curriculum that broadens children's knowledge and understanding of other cultures. Our goal is to help children to become comfortable and knowledgeable about the diversity of their world. The best way to do this is authentically, by members of our diverse community, who have personally celebrated their own special traditions and have history, passed to them through family as well. It makes sense that this is the very best way to try to accomplish our goals. If you can help, *please* tell your child's teacher! We believe this is a very important part of our program and extend this invitation to other-than-holiday times as well. We love hands on cooking, crafts, clothing and activities!

You are each the experts of your culture and we ask that you help the teachers to convey accurate and reliable information for a tradition about which they may not have much knowledge. **This is one way that we ask you to tell us about your family's background and beliefs and to make your child's learning experiences more meaningful.** This is truly a gift you could give!

Additionally, we will use this time to talk about the meaning of **friendship** and how to be a good friend to others. This is one of the ways that we work to promote the development of good social skills and peace in our world. We ask that parents help by reinforcing this concept at home. One way would be



to ask your child to think of good ways to solve a problem that he or she might experience with a friend or ways to be helpful and kind to another child.



We believe **it is important for you as your child's first teacher** to tell your child that you expect him or her to solve problems without violence (i.e., using words to express anger or frustration rather than hitting) and that you expect that your child will show kindness toward others each day. Make it a point to discuss this with your child each night. Children at this

young age are very egocentric and feel that everything should revolve around them. It is very difficult for them to see things from anyone else's perspective. Without the help of the important people in their lives (family and teachers) it is hard for them to really think about other people's feelings.

Together, we can help to make a contribution towards peace in our children's world.

Thank you to those who attended the Parent-Teacher Meeting on Challenging Behaviors last month with Claire Lerner, LICSW. You can find a copy of her Power Point Presentation on the Parent Information Boards in the classrooms. She has a blog and a newsletter that parents can sign up for click on this link: [Subscribe to the Lerner Child Development Newsletter](#) and here is a link to an article from NPR, <http://www.pbs.org/parents/expert-tips-advice/2018/10/helping-sensitive-kids-manage-their-emotions/> on helping sensitive kids.

Wishing all our families a happy and safe holiday season!

The Greenbelt Children's Center Faculty

