

November 2018

Greenbelt Children's Center



# November Newsletter



Dear Parents,



The month of November is a time to be thankful and we certainly have much to be thankful for at GCC. Many thanks to all of you who have taken an active role in your child's program since the start of the first semester. We appreciate your volunteering to read at Book Club Events and send in goodies and classroom materials. Family support and engagement is an important component of our program. **Parents and grandparents, you have simply amazed us!** A special thank you to: Bryan Castillo (Bryan, Room 1) for the wonderful books purchased through the Scholastic Book Club and donated to the GCC Lending Library; for the School Picture Day Volunteers: Valerie Collins (Harrison-Rm 3), Taquitha Crabbe (Ryder & Raine-Rm 3), and Nelly Morin (Fabian-Rm 2); for attending the Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee, Jason Arcido (Isaac-Rm 2), Nelly Morin (Fabian-Rm 2) as well as faculty members: Ms. Donna, Ms. Christine, and Ms. Mary. We also thank Ms. Maria B. for arranging for the visit from the Greenbelt Firefighters for the educational program and the trucks to explore in the parking lot! You can view this on our Face Book page. Firefighters dressed up in full gear to show children what they look like so children will not fear or hide from firefighters in an emergency. Thank you to all parents and volunteers who chaperoned on the field trip to Cox Farm! There were too many to name-which is a very good thing! We appreciate each and everyone of you! Congratulations to ALL the ROOM 2 Families for making the targeted TEN BOOKS read from the GCC Lending Library in October! They earned a Halloween Pizza Party! Room 1 also made the TEN book achievement! Thank you to the volunteers signed up to read to the children at the Fall Book club Event. Please remember that we sincerely welcome and encourage you to come and visit your child's class anytime. For anyone who can, bring a brown bag lunch and come join your child at lunch time! We guarantee the children will treat you as a VIP, and your child will feel very special to have you visit at lunchtime.



## November Means Nutrition

November means the end of the harvest and the children will be spending the next few weeks learning about nutrition and healthy habits. They will be involved in units about the good food guidelines, My Plate, where foods come from, and discussions about healthy foods vs. junk foods. Let's pack healthy lunches to go with our daily discussions! The four and five-year olds in Room 1 & 3 went on a Field Trip to Cox Farm, which connects to the theme of nutrition, and farm to table.



**Canned Food Drive:** Our center will participate in the canned and boxed food drive as an ongoing mission with the Greenbriar Community Center. **In November, you may have your child bring in a donation of canned or dry goods to drop in the designated box at GCC until November 20, as part of our efforts to have the children participate in ongoing community service and to show compassion for others.** (Please check for expiration dates!) All foods donated will go to Thanksgiving/holiday baskets for local families throughout PG County who are less fortunate and/or to help stock a local food pantry. We will also participate in the Greenbriar **Coat Drive**, during the month of November so you may donate clean and usable coats through November 19-December 3rd. A **Toy Drive** will take place from December 3rd through 14th. Please help if you can!



**Parent-Teacher Conferences** will be available later in this month for the parents of our three to five-year olds. Look for a sign-up sheet in your child's classroom to schedule a parent-teacher conference. Please be aware that conferences are scheduled tightly, and that you must be prompt so that time allotted can be used productively. Teachers will need your help on several things. **Parents PLEASE complete and RETURN the Ages and Stages Questionnaire developmental screening tool for your child**, in advance of scheduling the conference so that teachers may score and share the results with you. At the conference, teachers will share a Summary of the fall Early Learning Assessment. Teachers will also want to know from you what your child is interested in and talking about at home. They plan for individual/differentiated instruction and incorporate that information into their lesson plans for each child. When you come for a Parent-Teacher conference, you will also view items that teachers have gathered for your child's portfolio to show work samples of writing and drawing, and artifacts of where your child is performing in Early Literacy, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science. Most importantly, remember that you have the role of being your child's first and lifelong teacher! We believe that one of the most important components for early education is the relationships between children, teachers and parents. Come for a conference and build that relationship!

### **Free Occupational Screenings for each child will take place on November 2nd from our colleagues of MyKidsTherapy.**

These OT screenings will give you and teachers detailed information about gross and fine motor development, postural control, motor planning and much more. Parents will receive a written report detailing children's strengths and any areas of concern for follow up.





## Hearing and Vision Screening

Hearing & Vision Screening is available on Tuesday, December 4th at 10 am.

Make sure that you complete the required form in December. Room 1 PGCPs

Pre-K children will have the nominal fee covered by the Public Pre-K grant.

Parents of children in Rooms 2 & 3 will be required to pay a nominal fee to have your child screened. Parents will receive notice if your child fails a screening.

### GCC will be CLOSED on

- **Monday, November 12** for Veterans Day
- **Thursday and Friday, November 15 & 16**, for Teachers to attend the NAEYC Conference in Washington DC
- **Thursday and Friday, November 22 & 23** for the Thanksgiving holiday.

We wish you and your family a safe and



## Learning to Listen

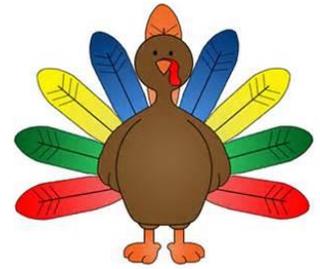
Here is a common parental fantasy: the kids actually listen to what we say. What a concept! But why does such a simple thing sometimes seem so far out of reach? Part of the problem may be that we often forget that listening needs to be learned. Babies are primed to watch and listen: that's how they pick up language, expression and just about everything else. But as the little ones grow, parents need to nurture and attend to this crucial skill so that our kids can keep up with the ever more complex instructions, concepts and questions to which they must respond at school and at home. So how do we go about exercising those listening muscles? Just listen to the great ideas below....

### Active Listening for Active Kids ~ Eliza Clark

Getting children to listen is one of the biggest challenges for parents. How many times have you heard one parent moan to another, "They just don't listen!?" And how many times have you heard yourself bark at your kids, "You need to listen!!" or the old classic, "Don't make me repeat myself!!"? And yet repeat ourselves we do, over and over.



This standard parent-child struggle has taken on a different cast in our current "age of inattention." With grown-ups ever more distracted by the buzzing and blinking of our various devices, we need to focus more of our own attention on helping our kids learn to regulate theirs. This is important enough now during the early years (how much happier family life would be if our kids listened better!), but really becomes critical to success later in school and life. Fortunately, there are many simple things we can do to give our kids a good start as they learn to regulate their own awareness and attention. Some of these ideas are absolutely basic, and yet they can't be emphasized enough.



- **Consistent limits and routines matter.** If implemented in a positive, gentle manner, children will internalize and learn to value them (most of the time!).
- Keep television and screen-time to a minimum. And it's also important to diminish or eliminate background noise from adult radio or TV.
- Teach kids to use their "indoor voices" in the house—a tired mantra to be sure, but also an important first step in self-regulation.
- Plenty of outdoor exercise and **plenty of sleep** are crucial.
- Make sure there is a quiet space to which a child can retreat to look at books or play or daydream.

Lots of time for self-directed play teaches kids how to focus better than anything else.

## Parent-Teacher Meeting Tuesday, November 27, 7-8:30pm!



**Please mark your calendar and come and meet one of our newest Team Members at Greenbelt Children's Center!**

Claire Lerner, L.C.S.W.-C, is Senior Parenting Advisor at ZERO TO THREE, focusing on outreach and engagement with parents.

Ms. Lerner is a licensed clinical social worker and child development specialist. She served as the Director of Parenting Resources at ZERO TO THREE for over 18 years, overseeing the development of all parenting content, print and digital. Recently she has taken on the position of Senior Parenting Advisor to focus on expanding the organization's reach directly to parents.

Ms. Lerner is the author of numerous parenting publications and articles in addition to podcast and video series for parents and professionals. Ms. Lerner writes a column for PBSparents.org and has also written columns for Parenting: The Early Years and American Baby Magazines. She is frequently quoted in other Parenting publications and has been a source on early childhood development for NPR and numerous national daily newspapers such as The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Los Angeles Times, the Boston Globe and the London Times.

In addition to creating content at ZERO TO THREE, Claire has directed several professional development projects designed to build strong, trusting, collaborative relationships with families of

young children. Ms. Lerner has also been a practicing clinician for 30 years, partnering with parents to understand the behavior and development of their young children. She also provides consultation and training to local preschools and pediatric residents.

### Claire Lerner, Senior Parenting Advisor

**The purpose of the meeting** is to help parents and teachers learn various problem-solving approaches when children have challenging behaviors. We want our parents and teachers to be on the same page when we work together as a team for the benefit of each child at GCC. We will have limited child care that evening because our teachers will be attending with parents. Try to arrange child care at home if possible or sign up for the limited spaces available.



### GCC Snow Closing Policy

Yes, we realize that very few of us want to think about snow yet, but as winter weather approaches, please remember our snow closing policy. Greenbelt Children's Center will follow the **snow or other Emergency closing announcements made over the radio and television for Prince George's County Public Schools.**

If the public schools announce that they will be opening late due to emergency conditions, we will open late also. For example, if public schools open 1 hour late, GCC would open at 8 am. If public schools open 2 hours late, GCC opens at 9 am. If the public schools close early, we will specify an early closing time for the center after contacting all parents. We ask that parents pick up their child as soon as possible and we will close when the last child is picked up.

Mrs. Gee created **GCC Parents on Remind.com**

### What is Remind?

**Remind** is a simple way for you to stay informed and up-to-date with what's happening at GCC. By joining Mrs. Gee's class on Remind.com, you're choosing to receive GCC messages via push notifications, SMS, or email. Don't worry, your phone number will not be shared with the GCC or anyone else in the group.



### Follow these steps to join!

1. Download the Remind app. It's free!
2. Enter the class code: **@gccpar**
3. Or visit this link to get messages via email or text: [www.remind.com/join/gccpar](http://www.remind.com/join/gccpar)

Through Remind, we send out a group alert to families if we have an emergency or need a reminder. Parents must sign themselves on to the GCC Parent Group and you decide to be alerted by text or email or both. Note: If you no longer wish to receive alerts from GCC, you must take yourself off/remove yourself from the program. **GCC can't sign you up or remove you from the group.**



### Lending Library Reminder:

Please aim to borrow and read **10 or more** books with your child every month! Help the class earn the monthly reward!

### Drama and Literacy Programs

The children are enjoying the Creative and Dramatic Arts program of **InterAct Story Theatre**, which is supported by a matching grant from the Maryland State Arts Council. This residency program which started in October continues through Tuesday, November 6.

