



December Newsletter

Dear Parents,

We may soon 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 have 60 minutes of vigorous play each day to combat childhood obesity and support good health, especially during the pandemic. Please support the teachers in their efforts to do this!

Reminder-GCC will be making announcements for closings/delays for emergencies/bad weather, if needed. **Remember to sign up for our 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! COVID required closing...** Please sign up! School Choice Week with Special Event

Remember the Lending Library!

We have many **wonderful books** in our lending library – please read to your child daily! There are just so many benefits that come from reading good books to young children.



December 2020

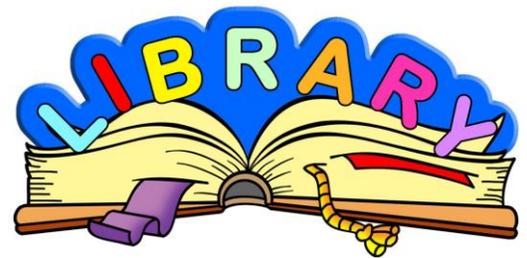
Greenbelt Children's Center



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. Thank you to Henning, Room 2, for the donation on his third birthday of Little Blue Truck, a story about the community coming to help a member in need! 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!



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, through Zoom, for a presentation of your culture or occupation so teachers can include you in their plans! We are working on the Cultural Competency Achievement through MD EXCELS. There is much research about the importance of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy for Cultural and Language Diverse children.

We share great articles about how to navigate challenging behaviors, teach consistent routines, toilet learning and more, written by our favorite Family Social Worker. Thank you to Claire Lerner, LICSW who has a blog and a newsletter that parents can sign up for. Click on this link: [Subscribe to the Lerner Child Development Newsletter \(rb.gy/nytb2t\)](https://rb.gy/nytb2t) and here is a link to an article from NPR, on helping sensitive kids titled "[Helping Sensitive Kids Manage Their Emotions.](#)"



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, 2020-January 1, 2021) 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 28th can be paid on or before January 4, 2021, 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!**



Wednesday, December 23rd at 11am

There will be a classroom for a sign-up sheet for families who may contribute commercially prepared in a nut free process healthy goodies, and to join in the fun by helping with reading to the children through Zoom, in your child's classroom at 11 am. GCC teachers will be distributing a free book chosen by your child as a gift from the center to keep and build the home library. We will also have a special musical program for the children on video by Leroy Hyson, Edutainer!



Congratulations to GCC!

We have maintained our national accreditation with the National Association for the Education of Young Children through 2023!

Not only did we achieve accreditation, we scored very high on each validation visit! 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 website! You will find a link to our Facebook page there also. **Parents be sure to friend and follow us on our Facebook page!** Especially during this pandemic, it is how we can share lesson plans, pictures, and information with you. **Our Facebook page: facebook.com/GCCwebsite**



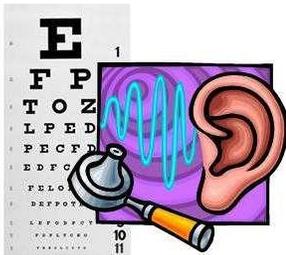
DID YOU KNOW?

- **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.
- **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! Virtual learning is not the best option for young children...



- **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. And during this pandemic, it is very helpful to free our teachers from doing Daily Health checks after 9 am.*

- **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 childcare 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 thirty 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. Recently advocates in Maryland were able to get an increase to the Child Care Scholarship Voucher from the 30th percentile to the 60th! **If you would like the opportunity to advocate for children and families of Prince George's County or at the state or national level, please contact Mrs. Gee. There are Parent Leadership opportunities!**



- That between the ages of 3- 5 years old, **children should be screened for Hearing and Vision.** Unfortunately, we have had to cancel these due to the pandemic. Check with your child's physician about these screenings for your child.

- Colgate Bright Smiles Bright Futures will not be able to send the dental van here to screen the children this year for dental health. However, they will present a Virtual Educational Workshop in each classroom and send home a toothbrush and dental health goody bag with your child on December 9th.
- Labeling all items brought from home, helps all of us to return items to the rightful owner! 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 childcare 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 cannot 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 through Zoom 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 in 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 absolute best way to accomplish our goals. If you can help, *please* tell your child's teacher! We believe this is an especially important part of our program and extend this invitation to other-than-holiday times as well.

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 culture and traditions to help make your child's learning experiences more culturally relevant.** 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 way 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 appropriate 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 exceedingly 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 contribute towards peace in our children's world.**



Wishing all our families a happy and safe holiday season!
The Greenbelt Children's Center Faculty