

November 2020

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 and have followed all the protocols to keep each other safe during this pandemic. We appreciate your efforts, and we are so grateful that we have not had to close due to COVID. We are so thankful for the good health of our children, faculty, and families.

Family support and engagement is an important component of our program. **Parent-Teacher Conferences held last month had 100% participation!** Parents completed and returned the Developmental Screenings, Ages and Stages, for scoring by teachers. Results were shared at conference time. Teachers completed formative assessments using the Early Learning Assessment tool to share with families. This tool is best used to help teachers and families to plan goals and individualize instruction for each child in the areas of Early Literacy, Mathematics, Social Foundations and Science. Conferences are a way to invite families to share information about their child and to develop positive relationships with teachers. This is so important this year because of COVID restrictions that prevent parents from entering the Center. We hope that your conference helped you to connect with our faculty and our program.

## Thank You Parents!

A special thank you to: Seyi's family (Room 3) who dropped off Apple Pastries for the teachers! They were delicious and so appreciated! Thank you to Jeremiah's family (Room 2) for another donation of Lysol Spray and Wipes! We go through supplies unbelievably quickly! Thank you to Julia's dad (Room 3) for taking the time to write a **5 Star Review** on the Winnie App! Having positive reviews from parents is tremendously helpful, especially during the pandemic when new parents cannot come inside the building. Please consider doing this for us.

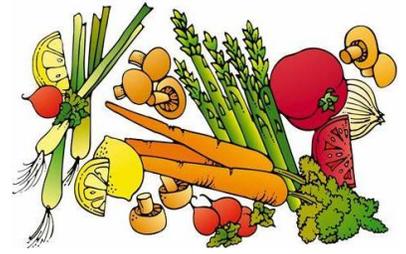


*We are still woefully under enrolled for four-year olds and any help parents can give by sharing things from our Facebook page, writing reviews on social media, as well as recommending our program to friends and family would be extremely helpful!*

**From now until December 23<sup>rd</sup>, we will be happy to reward any GCC family that refers a new four-year-old that enrolls and attends, \$50 cash or credit to your account at GCC, your choice!**

## 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! Be sure to include a protein based main food and two servings of vegetables/fruits every day! We will provide the milk!



**Remember to VOTE**  
**November 3<sup>rd</sup> or earlier!**

**GCC will be CLOSED on:**  
Wednesday, November 11 for Veterans Day  
Thursday and Friday, November 26 & 27 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." (Not to mention Virtual Learning). 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. And so very important at school!
- 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.<sup>4</sup>

## Autumn

*Rhyme*

Autumn winds begin to blow; *(blow)*  
Colored leaves fall fast and slow. *(fall motion with fingers)*  
Twirling, whirling all around. *(turn self around)*  
Till at last, they touch the ground. *(fall to the ground)*



**Introducing Claire Lerner, L.C.S.W.-C, who is also 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.

She joined us at GCC two years ago to support the teachers and parents with social and emotional development for young children. We often share links to articles written by Claire that are immensely helpful to parents. She has been a valuable resource to many parents as well as early childhood teachers and directors. We hope that you have found what we share with families to be helpful.

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 PBS Parents 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. She has a link to her archive of parenting newsletters at [www.lernerchilddevelopment.com](http://www.lernerchilddevelopment.com).



**Greenbelt Children’s Center  
Snow 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 make decisions and alert everyone through Remind.com if closing or having a delayed opening would be safer.

If we announce that GCC will 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. Have your plan in place!



## 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)

Please sign up for [remind.com/gccpar](http://remind.com/gccpar). This is how 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. You must also take yourself off if you leave the program once you no longer wish to receive alerts from GCC.

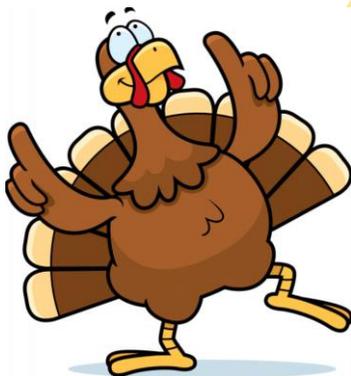
## Drama and Literacy Programs

The children will enjoy the Creative and Dramatic Arts program of **InterAct Story Theatre**, which is supported by the Prince George's County Public Schools through our Pre-k grant and a matching grant from the Maryland State Arts Council. This residency program will start soon, and we hope to hold it outdoors with physical distancing.



This program has been implemented at GCC for three decades and supports our curriculum goals in all areas. Benefits include introducing young children to the performing arts.

**Congratulations to Ms. Sonika :: Ms. Sonika was just awarded the Administrator Level 4 Credential and is now director qualified!**



### If You're Thankful and you Know It

*Tune: If You're Happy and You Know It*

If you're thankful and you know it, clap your hands.  
If you're thankful and you know it, clap your hands.  
If you're thankful and you know it,  
Then your face will surely show it.  
If you're thankful and you know it, clap your hands.