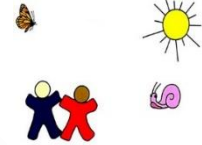




# The Children's Greenhouse

The Child Care Center at Nassau Community College  
Sponsored by the Faculty Student Association



## March 2018 Newsletter



### FROM THE DIRECTOR

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Dear Parents:

February break is over and we are ready to roll up our sleeves and get down to the business of learning and having fun! The remaining weeks of the semester will certainly be busy as we introduce the children to a variety of curriculum themes and involve them in many exciting activities.

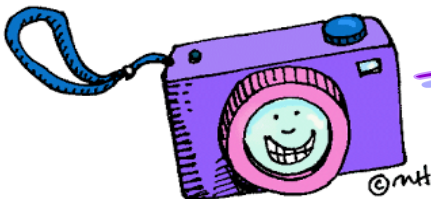
Please read this brief newsletter to keep up-to-date on what's going on at the Greenhouse and, as always, do not hesitate to stop in the office and speak with us if you have questions about the program, your child or if you need help with anything!

Thank you,  
Janet Walsh



As you might imagine, safety is an important topic of conversation for us and the Parent Advisory Committee has been working closely with College officials to improve safety in front of the Greenhouse, on Hospital Road, and we need your help as well. Here are a few important reminders regarding traffic safety:

- ❖ **PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN THE CROSSWALK AT ANY TIME!**
- ❖ **PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN THE AREA WHERE YOU SEE THE CONCRETE BARRICADES!**
- ❖ **FOR THE SAFETY OF YOUR CHILDREN, PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN THE 15 MINUTE SPACES IN THE FACULTY/STAFF PARKING LOT!**
- ❖ **PLEASE DRIVE SLOWLY AS YOU APPROACH AND PASS THE GREENHOUSE!**



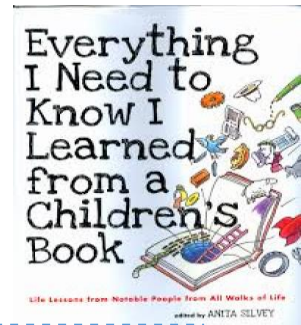
*Picture Days Are Coming!*

Photographer Joyce Bayer will be at the Greenhouse on March 19, 20, 21, and 22 to photograph the children, individually and with their groups. Although this is a fundraiser for the Greenhouse, there is no obligation to purchase photos and when the proofs arrive you will have the opportunity to decide if you want to order. We have used Joyce for more than 16 years and she gets great results! More details will be in your child's mailbox this week.

## ***It's Books and Author's Month***

**We love books and reading so much that we have dedicated an entire month to the curriculum topic of Favorite Books and Favorite Authors! Each group is reading books by favorite authors and we would like you, our parents, to be a part of this topic.**

**Can you take a few minutes to read to your child's group? It's fun and they will love it! Please speak with caregivers about it and sign up in the office!**



***The first seven weeks of the semester went by quickly but they were filled with many learning opportunities and, regardless of their ages, the children participated and had fun. Read on for a brief summary of what happened, and what is about to happen, in each group:***

### **What's happening in Infant One, as reported by Ali Roman, Head Caregiver...**

It's been a terrific start in Infant One and it has been great watching as your babies grow and reach some very important developmental milestones. We have been very busy familiarizing ourselves with your precious babies, their schedules and routines. It is important for the babies to build trust with their caregivers and our staff works very hard at establishing relationships with the babies right from the start. As a result, there has been very little separation anxiety and all of them are doing very well; they are happy, smiling, funny and adorable.

An important part of the babies' day is floor time. While having the babies on their stomachs on the floor by age three to four months can help them develop motor skills, it also helps the babies develop their neck and shoulder muscles, which help with sitting up, rolling over and crawling. While the children are on the floor picking up rattles or other small toys they work on developing their fine motor skills. In addition, language and cognitive development are fostered throughout the day. We reinforce language by naming objects in the room and in books, playing music, singing songs and by talking to the babies! Social and emotional development is important for infants and they learn by being with other children and through the attachments they form with caregivers. Of course, a good part of the day is spent meeting the babies' basic needs, which include feeding, changing and sleeping.

Our January curriculum topics were Snow and Winter and the babies had fun sponge painting their snowflakes and decorating mittens to hang on the mitten tree in the Preschool Gym. The infants also discovered snow in a discovery tube. For February our curriculum was Friendship and Valentine's Day and we hope you loved the special Valentines the babies made just for you. Infant One received a special Valentine from our friends in Preschool Two; it was exciting to have them visit. Each baby also decorated a special heart with a handprint to add to our Friendship Quilt displayed in the entrance; please be sure to check it out. We also had visits from Matt the Music Man and the babies got to play the drums with the other infant group and the toddler groups.

For March our focus is Favorite Books and Authors and we will be focusing on a different author each week. Eric Carle is our center wide author for the first week. We will read very popular stories by Eric Carle including Brown

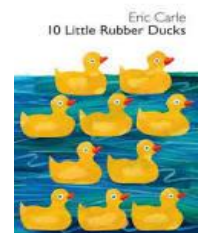
Bear, Brown Bear, The Very Hungry Caterpillar and 10 Little Rubber Ducks and create a poster, representing one of his books, to hang on our Eric Carle mural in the preschool gym. For our Discovery/Science activity we will have rubber ducks to play with. For the second week Dr. Seuss will be our author. We have board books of Horton Hears a Who, One Fish, Two Fish Red Fish, Blue Fish and Put Me in the Zoo. The infants love his silly stories and will make a puppet based on one of his books for you to take home! Our third author is Margaret Wise Brown. Her very popular books Goodnight Moon, Runaway Bunny and My World are favorites. For our final week our Author is Helen Oxenbury. Her stories include Clap Hands, I Hear, I See, and I Can. Part of the fun is singing favorite songs like "If You're Happy and You Know It" and "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes". Also this week we will set up an Infant Sensory Crawl. This is where different textures and fabrics are set up for the infants to explore. Be sure to check it out it's always a favorite for them. As always, we welcome your questions and Kathy and I are happy to address any concerns you may have about your child. Thank you!

### **What's happening in Infant Two, as reported by Danielle Cerna, Head Caregiver...**

Tricia, myself and the rest of the staff helped the children settle in to the group quickly and then started the semester by teaching them about winter and the weather cooperated with snow; the children loved looking out the windows and watching the snow fall! We talked with them about snow, snowflakes and clothing we wear in the cold weather and then the children wore mittens and played with snow in the water table; they then decorated mittens for the mitten tree and snowflakes for the winter mural. Valentine's Day flew by! We talked about our friends, family, and all the people we love. Where Is Baby's Valentine? by Karen Katz was a favorite classroom book that we read over and over. We made our friends a valentine with crayons and fun stickers and we hope you enjoyed the special valentine that was made for you!

Since the beginning of this semester we have been challenging the children with some new activities. We introduced the children to playdough and they are loving it! We made green and pink colored playdough and next is purple! The children just love the colors and texture. Using cookie cutters and different tools with the playdough helps to develop fine motor skills as does playing at the sand table. Water table is a classroom favorite; the children just love splashing the water and playing with the water toys. Tent and tunnel time is another favorite. For some of them it takes a little bit of time to feel comfortable crawling through the tunnel but little by little they became pros! Our group also loves music and each day we sing, play instruments, and dance; Infant Two has some great dance moves! We are starting to sit for circle time to read stories and sing songs with hand and finger motions, and the children are doing great. We can't wait for some nice weather so we can make it outside to our playground. In the meantime we've been playing in our indoor gym and the babies are working on their gross motor skills using the stairs and ramps in the gym.

There is so much more fun to come. The current curriculum topic is Favorite Books and Authors. Infant Two is illustrating The Very Hungry Caterpillar for our center wide author, Eric Carle. The babies will practice putting "caterpillar" pipe cleaners into a container "cocoon" with different sized holes. We will be filling our water table with water colored blue and rubber ducks while we read 10 Little Rubber Ducks. Dr. Seuss, Karen Katz, and Todd Parr will follow as some of Infant Two's favorite authors. Stay tuned for more fun! If you have any questions or concerns please let Tricia or myself know. Thank you!



### **In Toddler One, as reported by Samantha Graci, Head Caregiver...**

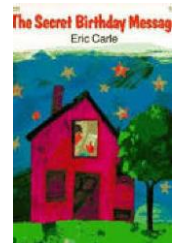
Time is flying by in the Toddler One room this semester. From children moving up from the Infant Two room to brand new families to the Greenhouse to familiar friends who were here last semester, it is great to see how quickly the children have adjusted. We started the semester talking about snowflakes and the fun things we can do in the winter weather. We brought in snow and put it in the water table for the children to play with while wearing mittens. The children had so much fun decorating mittens for the mitten tree and snowflakes for the winter mural in the preschool gym. A favorite time of day for the children is Circle Time where we sing songs and read books. Valentine's Day may have come and gone but it was so much fun to talk about; we hope you enjoyed the special valentine the children made, just for you, with their footprints! The children had a blast painting and decorating a large valentine heart we exchanged with the Toddler Two group. On Valentine's Day we shared a yummy breakfast of heart shaped foods, which both groups enjoyed!

When the weather gets warmer, we will be spending more time outside; the children love playing on the playground and exploring all the exciting things we see outside. We love looking up and seeing the airplanes flying overhead and seeing the squirrels running up the trees. Playing outside is a great way for the children to increase their gross motor skills as they climb up and down the slide, throw and kick balls and they especially like to drive the cars around the playground.

This semester has already been so enjoyable but we have more exciting things planned for the weeks ahead. The curriculum topic we will be exploring for the next several weeks is Favorite Books and Authors. The first week all groups focused on the author Eric Carle. We love to read Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?, the book we've chosen to illustrate by creating a poster that will be displayed in the preschool gym. Make sure to watch for it! Another favorite is James Dean, author of the Pete the Cat series. The children will be decorating their own Pete the Cat, picking out which color shoes they want him to wear and then gluing them on. As the semester moves on, we will continue to keep up with our daily schedule of activities. Sand and water table is a great way for the children to use their always developing fine motor skills and this type of play improves their sensory development. We will also do a variety of creative art activities as a way for the children to express themselves. Make sure to check your children's folders for all their beautiful artwork and other notices that are sent home! Enjoy the next few weeks and be sure to speak with Sandy or myself if you have questions or concerns. Thank you!

### **In Toddler Two, as reported by Carey Zinn, Head Caregiver...**

The children have enjoyed many activities during the past several weeks. We started the semester talking about winter, snowflakes, cold weather and what clothing to wear outdoors. The children enjoyed making and eating their own pizzas on National Pizza Day and they also had fun making homemade heart-shaped sugar cookies which they had for a special Valentine's snack. On Valentine's Day morning we got together with Toddler One and shared a special snack of heart shaped toast with cream cheese and strawberries. We also exchanged big valentine hearts we made for each other. Matt the Music Man is always a highlight and the children have a great time when he comes to do interactive music including singing, dancing, puppets and drum playing. Some of the children's other favorite activities include playing with the trains and putting on all kinds of dress-up clothes and dancing around in their favorite outfits. The group loves stories and some favorites are Brown Bear, Five Little Ducks and Five Little Monkeys, all stories that we tell using felt pieces. They enjoy moving to "Going On a Bear Hunt", "Silly Dance", "Freeze Dance" and more.

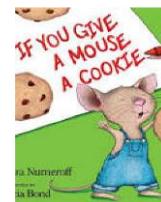


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The next big theme we are doing with the children is Favorite Books and Authors and we started it off with the whole center reading books by Eric Carle. The children will help to illustrate his book Little Cloud and once complete, it will be on display in the preschool gym. The other books we are planning on reading by Eric Carle are From Head to Toe, 10 Little Rubber Ducks, Today Is Monday and The Very Busy Spider.



To go along with the books we put rubber ducks in the water table, we talked about body parts and danced to songs like “Body Rock” and “Hokey Pokey”. We are also planning to read books by Mo Willems whose books are about Pigeon driving a bus, and Pigeon needing a bath. Laura Numeroff is another author we love and her books that we will be reading are If You Give A Pig A Party, If You Give A Cat A Cupcake, and If You Give A Moose A Muffin and to go along with this story, we are planning to make homemade muffins. The last author we are going to read is Alan Baker. His books talk about concepts like shapes, numbers, and colors and to make it more exciting, the children are going to make their own books to go along with this author. We are looking forward to all these and more fun activities. As always, please speak with Jen or myself if you have questions or concerns. Thank you!



### **In Preschool One, as reported by Dina Guarino, Head Caregiver...**

With the spring semester in full swing, our Preschool One group has been keeping pretty busy and enjoying the winter! The theme of winter was the main focus of our January curriculum. We began with the changes in the weather that we can see and feel, learning about the colder temperatures, what the weather was like outside, and how we would dress for it. We continued with snow and snowflakes, which brought in a bit of science where we talked about freezing and melting. The topic came to an end with fun winter activities we can do from building a snowman to skiing, tubing, and sledding. We practiced our “skating” during music and movement time and pretended to make snowballs with the playdough.

From winter blues and snow, we moved into reds, pinks, and hearts and celebrated friendship and Valentine’s day! This curriculum theme was very important to help the children along with their social development. We used circle time to talk about what the children thought it meant to be a good friend and how we treat our friends. We also learned about including new friends in activities, taking turns and sharing, as well as using kind words to one another. Getting ready to celebrate was fun with the children so excited to make valentines for their loved ones and making valentines to share with Preschool Two. Our two groups shared the story of the Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry, and the Big Hungry Bear and then a yummy snack of heart shaped toast and strawberries.

The whole month of March is ahead of us with our Favorite Books and Authors theme. We will be covering four different authors starting with a center wide favorite, Eric Carle. Look out for the Reading is Fun mural where our book cover illustration of Draw Me a Star will be posted. The following weeks will cover Eric Litwin and James Dean, authors and illustrators of another beloved favorite, the Pete the Cat series, author Mo Willems with the adventures of Pigeon, Gerald and Piggie, and Knuffle Bunny, wrapping it up with Eileen Christelow and the Five Little Monkeys series. Reading to the children is very important and this group definitely loves a good story. We also look forward to you visiting us to read a good book or two! Thank you!

### **In Preschool Two, as reported by Sandra Horan, Head Caregiver...**

January and February have been very exciting in the Preschool Two group! Our theme for January was Winter and Snow and we started out by discussing what winter feels like and how we should dress for it. The children enjoyed reading The Jacket I Wear in the Snow by Shirley Neitzel. They also created a collage of winter clothing which hung on our line in the classroom. The chilly weather also brought us some real snow. The children were very excited to bring the snow inside to play with and they made snow people and snowballs. The freezing temperatures gave us the opportunity to talk about liquids and solids. We froze water to create different shapes then watched them melt as we played with them in the water table. Working on our snowflakes was also fun. We created them using coffee filters with drops of water colors and watched the colors blend. They looked beautiful hanging on our winter mural in the gym. As we concluded our topic on winter and snow we discussed what our favorite things to do in the snow are and the children’s choices were tubing, sledding, skiing, building snow people and more.

During the month of February the children were excited to celebrate Valentine's Day and Friendship. They created valentines for their families and one for a friend in Preschool One. We discussed friendship and what it means to be a good friend and we talked about why Valentine's Day is a special day. On Valentine's Day Preschool One shared a special snack with us; we ate heart shaped toast and strawberries and exchanged Valentine's Day cards. Fun was had by all!

As we move into spring we look forward to warmer weather and getting outside more. During the month of March we will be celebrating some of our favorite authors. We started out by learning about Eric Carle and his collection of wonderful children's books. We've had the opportunity to focus on weather, days of the week, insects and seeds, all of which topics are part of his stories. Watch for our illustration of Eric Carle's book The Tiny Seed as it will be posted in the next few weeks on our Reading is Fun mural. Some of the other authors include Dr. Seuss and his fun rhyming books, Mo Willem's funny books about the Pigeon, Piggy and Elephant and last but not least, Audrey Wood. Some of her books include The Napping House, Quick as a Cricket, Oh My Baby Bear and many more. The children will also have the opportunity to become authors and illustrators themselves as each child writes his or her own story. Reading their stories is always an adventure! Please consider taking a few minutes to read a favorite book to our group – the children love it when parents, siblings and special friends join us to read! You can schedule a reading time in the office. Thank you and please speak with Maureen or myself if you have any questions about the program or concerns about your children.



# **Family Night**

## **Friday, April 27 - 6 to 7:30 PM**



**Please plan to join us for:**

- **A free supper for parents and children**
- **A concert with Matt the Music Man**
- **And more fun!**

**Check out our website for up-to-date information on what is happening:**

- 1. Go to NCC.edu, click on Campus Services, click on Child Care**
- 2. CTRL+Click to follow this address or copy and paste it in your browser**

**<http://www.ncc.edu/campusservices/greenhouse>**

Stay up to date with Greenhouse info, parenting resources, and more!

### The Children's Greenhouse at NCC

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