



Newsletter March 2020

A Note from the Director's Desk

Have you filled out the Doodle Poll Survey that was emailed to you last week? If not, please do so at your earliest convenience. This is how you will reserve a time slot for Parent Teacher Conferences.

It is with a heavy heart that I inform you Petra's employment with ZALA ended on Thursday, February 27th. Please take the time to talk with your child about how this may impact them. Petra was loved by all. We have made sure the children know Petra loved them in return.

As you may recall, last month I wrote a Developmental Tidbit on Oral Health. The write-up prompted Summit Dental to contact me about sponsoring and implementing an oral health program at ZALA. They will be at ZALA on March 9th to kick-off that program with the staff and students to make it a part of our everyday routines here at ZALA. As a part of the sponsorship, each child will receive a "goodie bag" with a toothbrush and floss. We are so thankful to have Summit Dental support us.

Lastly, it is that time again, our annual update of Enrollment Paperwork will begin this month. This is a requirement for State Licensing for childcare. Thank you for your cooperation.

Rhiannon

556-7439

Dates to Remember

March 2nd-6th: Dr. Suess's Birthday-Read Across America Week.

March 3rd-13th: Parent Teacher Conferences, times announced via email.

March 9th: Summit Dental will be on site for an Oral Health presentation.

March 18th: Scholastic Book Orders Due by 5 pm.

April 8th: Zoot Health and Wellness Fair 1-4 PM. ZALA families welcome to visit.

Zoot Adventure Camp (ZAC/PIR)

March 6: PIR Camp, **National Dentist Day**

March 16-20: PIR Camp, **Spring Has Sprung**

April: 2nd & 3rd: PIR Camp, **Wonderful World of Children's Literature**

April 13th: PIR Camp, **Easter**

Weekly Happenings

Music with Mrs. Rachel every Monday morning, except March 16.

Yoga with Miss Kristen every Tuesday morning.

Gymnastics with Mrs. Shelby every Thursday morning.

Bookmobile on March 13th and March 27th

A Recap of Last Month

First Contact

February was such fun and loving month! The month flew by, but we were able to do some fun crafts and experiment with our cute little thumbprints. We have really been into the poppers lately and seeing how high they will fly! Our dear friend Albert transitioned into the Bridge Classroom and he loves it! So many new toys that he is able to experiment with. We welcomed sweet Parker to the First Contact crew and we are absolutely loving his sweet snuggles. Thanks to our parents that were able to attend the Valentine's Day party. That was fun for all of us!

– Miss Marisa

Bridge

Hi families! Wow February was an eventful month to say the least. We sadly said goodbye to one of our favorite teachers Mrs. Katie and have welcomed Mrs. Malerie with helping out in Bridge until the Lead Teacher position is filled. The children have been having so much fun with our newest friend Albert, who has been transitioning into the class so perfectly, as well as saying our goodbyes to our other friend Bina who will be joining Warp Drive. We've been learning how to communicate with our friends through sign and shared our creativity with lots of love, friendship and sensory crafts. We had so much fun sharing it all with our families at the Valentine's Day Party. We dove into assessments and are looking forward to conferences soon. We participated in a fire drill with Mr. Ryan and we all did great! This coming month we will be celebrating Dr. Suess's Birthday with Read Across America in which Ms. Kristen and Ms. Megan have scheduled some pretty exciting activities for each day that week. We will continue to build on our skills of friendship and will be introducing the alphabet, with each week focusing on one letter and things associated with that focus letter. We will also start to melt away from snow and start introducing some spring colors and a new season into our classroom, come the end of the month. I can't thank the families enough for sharing their little loves with me and look forward to continuing to learn and grow with each and every student.

-Mrs. Malerie

Warp Drive

February was a blast in Warp Drive. We enjoyed doing several art projects and the kids love seeing their work hung up in the classroom. We hope you loved the valentine's gifts the kids made for you!

March has a lot of fun in store for us with Read Across America week and St. Patrick's day. We are excited to have theme week for Dr. Seuss' birthday and see all the silly, wacky, colorful, and future career themed outfits. Keep an eye out for Miss Laura's art work on the Warp Drive window-she is so talented!

-Miss Katie

Holodeck

Hello Families! February was a month filled with so much LOVE! We talked about all the wonderful people and things we have in our lives that we are grateful for and should show kindness to: our parents, family, pets, teachers, classmates, community, and world! These discussions brought forth such sweet acts of daily kindness in our room. We all had a blast exchanging valentines and celebrating at our Valentine's Day Party. Miss Kristen deserves a big THANK YOU for all her work to make the party so spectacular. To end the month, we are doing a refresher on our four classroom rules: "We take care of..." 1) Ourselves 2) Each Other 3) Our School 4) Our World. To add to the joy in our room, Ruby will complete her transition to Holodeck in March and will be our newest preschooler. Cheers to a great month ahead!

– Miss Megan

Developmental Tidbit

Health Eating Habits from zerotothree.org

Parents and caregivers' job are to provide children with healthy food choices and provide a pleasant meal time. The child's job is to decide how much and what foods to eat.

Each child differs in size and weight. Some eat more than others. How much food a child needs to eat is dependent on their height, activity level and metabolism. If you are concerned about your child's growth, ask yourself if your child enjoys eating and whether your child has the energy to play and interact with others. Your child's health care provider is the person to talk to if you have concerns.

Parents of "picky" eaters worry their child is not getting enough of the right nutrients to grow when, in fact, the babies and toddlers in this category are getting the right nutrition. Below are some reasons parents believe their child is a picky eater and some tips on how to get them to eat.

1. Some children are sensitive to smell, taste, and texture of food. Offer three to four healthy choices, with one of those options being something the child likes to eat. When your child does not want to try new food encourage them to lick it. Licking will introduce them to the taste of that food. It can take up to 10 times before a child will eat it so don't get discouraged too soon. Offer a new food for the first time so it looks like something familiar. For example, fish with breading so it looks like a chicken nugget instead of baked fish. Once the child approves of the new food, you can begin offering it without the breading.
2. Some children's temperament makes them less likely to try new things. It's no surprise children like to play with their food. Let them dip their vegetables, fruit and even meat in a dip, such as hummus, ketchup, mashed avocado, salsa, yogurt, and low-fat salad dressing. Encourage him or her to touch, smell, lick or taste the new food. Make silly faces using fruit and vegetables or hide fruit in the bottom of a cup of yogurt. The more fun they have the more willing they are to try new foods.
3. Some children may come across as picky because they want to eat foods they are able to feed to themselves. Offer safe finger foods or a utensil to hold while feeding your child so they feel in control.
4. Some children are very active and may have difficulty sitting for long periods of time. Set the child's meal out before he or she sits down. Keep mealtime to 10 – 15 minutes and let your child get up if he or she indicates he or she is done eating. Provide 2-3 healthy snacks per day, this way children that do not eat a lot will have options to eat often throughout the day.

What does food mean to you? Your childhood experiences with food can affect the way you feed your children. Being aware of your own body image is also important. It helps you decide if you will do things the same way your parents did or differently. Culture also plays an important role in mealtime. Some cultures encourage independence at an early age where other cultures believe children should rely on parents and caregivers for feedings and don't encourage self-feeding. The foods shared during family traditions make children feel safe and loved. These meals may not be nutritious so making small changes to family recipes keep the traditions going but can be a teaching opportunity about healthy choices or substitutions.

Avoid forcing children to eat. It generally leads to them eating less and teaches them to rely on others to tell them how much to eat and what they feel. Also avoid making deals about eating like, "If you eat two bites of peas you can have dessert." Children learn to make deals and ask for rewards. Soon rewards are the only way the child will do anything, like brushing their teeth or going to bed on time. Lastly, children who eat in front of the TV become so focused on what is on the television that they do not pay attention to whether they are hungry or full, causing them to overeat and may lead to being overweight. Mealtimes are an important time for families to talk and interact with each other. When the TV is on the chance to bond is lost. Physical activity goes together with healthy eating so make it a part of your everyday routine. Go play, go for a walk, go to the playground, or dance to your favorite music.

MusikNote

Circle Dances and Singing Games

Toddlers

Circle dances are some of the best remembered events of our childhood; who among us doesn't have some memory involving Ring Around the Rosy, London Bridge, or some other childhood singing game? Circle dances naturally appeal to our very human desire to be part of a bigger social community, and what better community to join than one where everyone is happy – singing, dancing, and usually laughing! The circle itself generates a very special energy, one of sharing and cooperation, and the fact that this is a circle made up of teachers and children adds an element of security as well. We usually save our circle dances until just before our goodbye song, so they take on special meaning in terms of the ritual of our class. However, sometimes by the end of class, some children are tired out, so I will try to gauge our energy levels and insert them when they will be best received. If a child does not want to participate in the circle, it is okay for him/her to opt out, but I will encourage the child to still sing and dance independently. This way, we are not forcing the child to participate, but we are also not allowing him/her to set the agenda either. A child is always welcomed back into the circle at anytime!

Preschoolers

Singing Games in circles are a delightful way for your child to make music with class-mates. They are a joyous way to experience melody, rhythm, and form (the organization of the music). Many singing games take on the shape of a circle, providing your child the sense of community and energy that comes from being part of a group. Moving in circles either by holding hands or using a prop, children are developing body control, peer communication and team work. Also, because circle dances are part of our history, both our collective history as a culture and many of our personal or family histories (as I date myself....remember the scene from *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* when they are all doing a circle dance at the wedding?), when we engage in circle dances with children we are passing down a treasured tradition from one generation to another.

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Mrs. Rachel

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A Note from our Hospitality Coordinator

Nutrition Decision

Over the past couple months, ZALA has been testing out a tasty variety of milk. We tried out organic cow's milk, almond milk, and oat milk. Now that our taste buds are tingling, we will always offer the choice between organic 2% cow's milk and unsweetened vanilla almond milk. If there is no concern of allergy or intolerance, 2-5 year olds will have the fun decision of which milk to pick each day. The newest cow-milk drinkers (those from 12-24 months) will receive organic whole milk, unless otherwise preferred.

I am excited to be able to offer this opportunity to develop decision-making and communication skills. These are skills that empower young children and help them grow in their independence, which is especially important when it comes to advocating for their own nutrition. If you have any concerns or preferences please contact me! –Miss Kristen

