



Newsletter February 2020

Notes from the Director's Desk

Ages & Stages Questionnaire Screenings are being distributed this week to all families of ZALA. The ASQ: SE 2 addresses social-emotional development, while the ASQ3 focuses on physical development. The questionnaires are for different ages from 1 month up to 6 years old. You know your child best, therefore it is important that you complete the questionnaires about your child. Once complete, return the questionnaires to your child's teacher for them to score. At the Parent Teacher Conferences the results will be shared with you, showing your child's strengths and any areas where your child may need additional support.

Parent Teacher Conferences are a great time for parents and teachers to come together to discuss each child's social-emotional and physical development and address any concerns there may be. Early intervention can provide the skills a child needs to overcome challenges and be successful in school.

It is with mixed emotions that I inform you that Mrs. Katie T's last day at ZALA will be Friday, February 21st. We will miss her and wish her the best. The lead teacher position in Bridge is open. I will inform you when the position has been filled.

Rhiannon Reardon

556-7439

Dates to Remember

February 12: **Scholastic Book Orders** Due by 5 pm.

February 14: **Valentine's Day Party** in the cafeteria, 4:30-5:30 pm.

February 17: **President's Day**, Zoot Holiday. Kitchen Closed. **Sack lunch from home.**

March 2-6: **Read Across America Week**

March 2-13: **Parent Teacher Conferences**, times to be announced.

March 17: **St. Patrick's Day**

Zoot Adventure Camp (ZAC/PIR):

February 17: PIR camp, **Random Acts of Kindness** theme, 8 am-5 pm.

March 6: PIR camp, **National Dentist Day** theme

March 16-20: PIR camp, **Spring Break**, 8 am- 5 pm.

Weekly Happenings:

Music with Mrs. Rachel every Monday morning except February 17.

Yoga with Miss Kristen every Tuesday morning.

Gymnastics with Mrs. Shelby every Thursday morning.

Bookmobile: February 14th and 28th.

A Recap of Last Month

First Contact

January was such a wonderful start to a New Year in First Contact! As a class we began to really focus in on new lessons and exploration. We have enjoyed this and even though the lessons can be short lived at times the kiddos dive in deep for that time! Outside time has also been incorporated more and we have loved that. We are striving to get out as much as we can. Our dear friend Annabelle transitioned to Bridge very well. We will miss her silliness and cheesy grin! First Contact is excited for Valentine's Day and the extra day in February for the Leap Year!

– Miss Marisa

Bridge

Hello families! It is with mixed emotions that I inform you that my last day in ZALA will be Friday, February 21st. Thank you for all the wonderful times with your precious children. I will miss you all. I know all the children will do great things in life. I am confident there will be fabulous opportunities for Bridge in the future. In the month of January Bridge welcomed Annabelle. She transitioned so smoothly. Our favorite art projects were polar bears, painting with white paint to create them or gluing on white felt. Our favorite song was the Snowky Pokey. The children showed a new interest for sensory. Their sensory bin favorites were water beads and rice with big beetles. We enjoyed adventure walks to the playground and stroller walks to the park close to Elliotts bakery. We loved getting to know our newest addition to ZALA's teaching staff, Ms. Malerie. February is the start of Albert's transition to Bridge and Bina's transition to Warp Drive. All the best for February.

– Mrs Katie T

Warp Drive

What a fun month January was in Warp Drive! With the warmer than expected weather we've been getting outside a lot and playing some fun games on the playground. We completed several art projects which the kids are really enjoying! Most of them are hanging in our classroom so be sure to take a look! February will bring more art, fine and gross motor activities, and of course our Valentine's Day party. A month of moves and transitions. We will miss Gus as he moves into Holodeck, but we know he will thrive! Ruby will begin her transition into Holodeck and Bina will begin her transition into Warp Drive!

– Miss Katie C

Holodeck

What a wild and wonderful January it has been! The kiddos in Holodeck were sad to say goodbye to our friend Hunter, but were all so excited to welcome Gus into our class from Warp Drive. All the students are going into such amazing role models for the younger children at ZALA and they love helping and showing them how to do things "the preschool way" any chance they get. This month, we focused on learning about the season of winter, especially on winter clothing, snowman, and snowflakes. Students and teachers alike were a little bummed we didn't have more real snow to accompany our learning, but we made do without. We are gearing up for a new surprise theme in Pretend Play Area as well as lots of Valentine's fun going our way. Thank you!

– Miss Megan

Developmental Tidbit

Topic: Oral Health

Dental visits are an important part of every person's oral health. Parents and caregivers play an important role in preventing tooth decay in young children. It is imperative to teach them how to take good care of their teeth between dental visits. It is recommended that children begin with a dental visit by age 1. The goals of dental visits are to prevent tooth decay and find oral issues early to treat them before they are a problem.

A child's first dental visit is typically short. It is designed to be as pleasant as possible. Depending on the dentist, they may ask the child to sit on their parents lap in the dental chair. Other dentists may ask to sit knee-to-knee to allow for a good look into the child's mouth. A dental visit often includes:

- A dentist to parent discussion of what to expect during the visit. Parents are encouraged to ask questions about their child's or health.
- Using a small mirror, the dentist will check the child's lips, cheeks, gums and roof of the mouth for any problems, noting any sign of tooth decay.
- The child's bite and jaw are examined for proper growth. The dentist may also explain what to expect in the next few months for the child's oral development.
- The dentist may provide oral care to prevent tooth decay. This may include brushing the child's teeth and applying fluoride varnish, which is painted on the teeth to prevent tooth decay or stop early signs of cavities. The fluoride can be applied up to four times in a year.
- Oral health professionals will inform parents about healthy habits at home. They may show parents how to brush their child's teeth and how much toothpaste to put use. Some professionals may teach parents how to floss a child's teeth. Timing of the next dental exam may also be discussed.
- Questions about foods, drinks and habits that can lead to oral problems may be discussed. This helps the dentist figure out if the child is at high or low risk for tooth decay. Habits like thumb sucking, use of pacifiers, and sippy cups may also be addressed.

Even if a child is fearful or doesn't cooperate during the dental visit it is still helpful. The child may enjoy going up and down in the dental chair, seeing how the air and water tools work. Beginning dental visits early, children learn that visits are not generally associated with pain or fear and more likely to feel good about dental visits and dentists.

Taken from The National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness

A Note from Mrs Rachel at Musikgarten

Musik Note: Traveling Movement

Most people think that you get the children up and moving to get all the wiggles and giggles out of them. While there may be some truth to that, it is also true that in music classes, there are times that we get children up and moving to teach a specific spatial or musical concept, and there are times when we engage your children in traveling movement activities to give them the mental energy necessary to attend to the next activity, such as a listening game or sensory game. So, not only are traveling movement activities enjoyable for most children, they are also energizing to your child's brain.

Toddlers

Traveling Movement activities are fun and particularly appealing to toddlers. Most of them have only recently started walking and they are anxious to practice it as much as possible. Add to that all the possible variations, such as marching, stomping, and running, and the attraction is obvious!

Favorite traveling movement activities are ones that involve various ways of moving that alternate with stopping on cue. However, you should be aware that although these activities are included in the toddler class, I really do not expect your child to have mastered the art of stopping until around the age of 4. They are included in the toddler class because children need to practice before they can be expected to reach mastery. You see, your toddler's language center in the brain is not as well developed as his/her impulse to move. Therefore, once s/he is moving it is very hard to stop on cue. Just as the brakes on your car take a certain amount of time to stop your moving vehicle, your child's "brakes" are not yet fully developed and need practice and adult understanding.

Preschoolers

Traveling Movement activities are exciting and energizing experiences for children as they combine moving their various body parts in specific ways with the added challenge of moving through space. Whether we are doing a circle dance, a line dance, or an expressive movement activity, we are challenging your child to control his/her body, understand its placement in space in relation to other class members, be able to stop and start with ease, and understand spatial concepts such as in and out, directionality, high, and low.

Favorite traveling movement activities involve various ways of moving that alternate with stopping on cue. They are probably so popular because children instinctively seem to know what they need, and what they need is to practice stopping!

Your child loves to move and once s/he is moving, whether the movement is walking, running, or jumping, it is hard for your child to stop on cue. It takes a few seconds – or more – for him/her to stop. This is because your child's movement center is better developed than his/her language center. *Impulse control* is when a language cue overrides a motor cue, and your children need to have many opportunities to develop this skill.

– Mrs. Rachel

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A Note About Gymnastics

Hello families!

The gymnastics showcase was a huge success; thank you to all families who were able to attend. We had a few kiddos who were nervous to perform in front of so many parents, and that's okay! We talked about how it is normal to feel that way, and nothing to be embarrassed about. We are excited to have another showcase in a few months.

This month in gymnastics, Holodeck gymnasts will be working more on cartwheels, back-bends, and handstand forward rolls. We've also been practicing skipping and jumping jacks (feel free to practice these at home!). They have been working really hard, and it shows!

Warp Drive will continue working on forward rolls, "monkey jumps" (cartwheel drills), "donkey kicks" (handstand drills), and balancing. They've also been practicing staying in line and keeping their bodies safe. They get better every time!

-Mrs. Shelby

A Note About Yoga

ZALA kicked off 2020 by adding yoga into our weekly schedule for Warp Drive and Holodeck. We open every practice by greeting the sun with a flow, then pose through a yoga song or story, and close by going into our Peaceful Place to rest. The little yogis know "Namaste" means all the good things in me see all the good things in you. It has been fun to watch the kids figure out new ways to move and appreciate their bodies. Ask your little yogis how to do the "peace begins with me" calm down mantra!

-Miss Kristen

