

BECKY'S BULLETIN

The Newsletter of the Becky Gates Children's Center

March 2019

From the Director...

HOWDY FAMILIES AND FRIENDS!

Wow, March sure came in like a lion! We are hopeful for more sunshine and warmer temperatures soon; we want to go outside and play!

Since conferences are right around the corner I have attached two references for you to review. The 16-page brochure tells you all about the COR assessment we use to assess the children and the COR Desk Reference lists the Key Developmental Indicators (KDIs). I highly encourage you to read the article, *It's Conference Time!* The article gives great tips to prepare for meeting with your child's teacher and setting the stage for a great partnership!

Another great article that is included in this newsletter discusses the six key principles of Waldorf education every family can adopt. If you enjoy the material in the article you can follow the links to learn more. When is the last time you told a story?



Erica Ritter, Director



Just in time for Saint Patrick's Day is our avocado apple smoothie recipe. This recipe is super easy and fun for the children to make – it's green! If you cannot have milk I would suggest using a substitute like almond or soy milk.



Becky Gates
Children's Center
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

We had a wonderful turnout for our Read Across America Day. Several volunteers from the Division of Student Affairs read to the children throughout the day. You can see some of the pictures if you follow our Facebook page <https://m.facebook.com/TAMUChildrensCenter/>.

This past Saturday all of our teaching staff participated in professional development. Our keynote speaker was Mrs. Sharon Jackson, Director of Early Education Services at College Station ISD. She presented on Understanding and Implementing Effective Teacher-Child Interactions. The afternoon was divided into four breakout sessions. Our Doctoral Fellow presented on Cultural Sensitivity. I presented on Curriculum, Lesson Plans, Nutrition, Planning for Special Needs and Respecting Diversity, Instructional Formats and Approaches to Learning. Mrs. Debbie Almand presented on Warm and Responsive Interactions, Language Facilitation and Support, Play-based Interactions and Guidance, and Support for Children's Regulation. Lastly, Mrs. Krista Van De Flier presented on the Indoor and Outdoor Learning Environment. It was a long day but we gained a lot of valuable information to better the outcomes of children.

Lastly, I hope you are enjoying our garden curriculum. We have been so impressed by all the parent volunteers and donations. We couldn't be successful without you! Have you checked out what your classroom is growing? I walked into a classroom recently and thought the teacher had bought plants - but no - the classroom had grown the plants from seeds and they are around 12 inches tall! We definitely need warmer weather so we can put the plants outside to grow bigger! We are eagerly waiting on our final draft drawings of our playground redesign currently being done by a MLA stu-





Spring 2019 Events

Thursday, February 14, 2019	Friendship Classroom Celebrations
February 18-22, 2019	Engineering Week
February 26-28, 2019	Individual, Group and Graduate Pictures
Friday, March 1, 2019	Read Across America Day
Saturday, March 2, 2019	All Staff Professional Development
Thursday, March 7 & Wednesday, March 20, 2019	Pictures Available for Purchase Beginning at 4 p.m.
March 18-April 5, 2019	Family Conferences
April 8-12, 2019	Week of the Young Child (Family Workshop) Student Employment Week
April 12-19, 2019	Scholastic Book Fair Spring Classroom Celebrations
April 22-27, 2019	Staff Appreciation Week
Friday, May 3, 2019	Pre-K Graduation
Tuesday, May 7, 2019	Teacher Appreciation Day
Saturday, May 18, 2019	Family Picnic at Tanglewood Park
Friday, May 24, 2019	Pancakes with Parents
TBA	Aggie Spirit Bus Day

Spring 2019 Closing Dates

Monday, January 21, 2019	In Observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Friday, March 15, 2019	Spring Break
Monday, May 27, 2019	In Observance of Memorial Day



Recipe of the Month



AVOCADO APPLE SMOOTHIE

It might seem weird to add avocado to a smoothie, but trust us: it's the secret ingredient that turns this fruit shake into a creamy-dreamy treat.

Hands-on time: 5 minutes | Total time: 5 minutes | Makes 2 Servings

KITCHEN GEAR

- Sharp knife (adult needed)
- Cutting board
- Measuring cup
- Measuring spoons
- Citrus squeezer (if you have one)
- Blender (adult needed)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ripe avocado, peeled, pitted and cubed
- 2 small apples, cored and diced
- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup cold water or ice cubes
- 1/2 overripe banana
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon, lime, or orange juice








Monthly Activity Calendars

MARCH

Get Moving Today!

ACTIVITY CALENDAR






Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Start the month off with a game of follow the leader. Move around your house in different ways as someone copies your movements.	Chair Exercise Move around, under, and over a chair; sit down and stand up using a chair; turn on music and wiggle it stretch while sitting in a chair.	Loud and soft – first walk on your tip toes trying to be really quiet, then stomp using your whole foot trying to be really loud.	Tear newspaper into long strips – crunch them up into balls – throw the balls into a basket – Rip-Crunch-Throw.	Be a superhero! Think about all of your favorite superheroes and then spend some time moving just like they would.	Ask someone to go for a walk with you and as you walk, make up a little song about moving and having fun together!	Take a few minutes today to lie on the floor and stretch your body from head to toe. Take some deep breaths and relax as you reach and then relax.
Using paper plates as pretend stones, make an indoor nature trail through your house. Walk through the nature trail by only stepping onto the make believe stones.	Make a pile of paper balls by crumpling recycled paper. For one minute throw these balls all over the playing space – making a bizzard of balls. Collect them and do it again.	Using the balls from yesterday put them in a pile. Crab walk with one ball at a time on your tummy, carry it across the room. Move all the balls to a new pile.	Get outside and pick up trash in your yard.	Take a "spring is here" walk. Swing your arms as you walk quickly. Notice all the signs of spring! 	How many different ways can you carry a sock as you move around the house?	Crawling is a great way to work on the muscles in your arms. Try to crawl around your home for a few minutes – take a break and do it again.
Turn on some music and take turns choosing a way to move. 	Leaping! Put pillows on the floor and practice your leaping skills. Push off of your back leg and reach with your front leg.	Work on your locomotor skills – go outside and practice walking, running, galloping, skipping, jumping and hopping.	Pickup marbles with your fingers and toes. Lie on the floor and blow the marbles across the floor. 	Pull a wagon around outside as you pick up sticks. Create and obstacle course with the things you find.	Make it backwards day. Move from room to room backwards. Try to high and low, fast and slow.	Make a trail of paper plates through your home and pretend that you can only walk on the plates or you will fall in the water.
Get outside today and play "I Spy". Each time one of you says, "I spy", you have to all walk, run or gallop to that object.	Animal Action Fun! One person says the name of an animal and the other person has to move around the house like that animal would.	Using a scarf or handkerchief, practice your self-toss and catch skills. Watch the scarf with your eyes and move your body so the scarf can land in your hands.	Have an adult write your name really big on a sheet of paper, and then put your body into the shapes of each letter. Can you do this standing up? Can you do this laying on the floor?	Make up a nonsense word. Now make up a movement to go with that word.	Twins – for 2-5 minutes pretend as if you are connected to someone else and the two of you have to move exactly the same way.	Go on a walk through your home. Each time you get to a new space you have to change the way you are moving. 
Pretend to have a beach party. Turn on some beach music and dance. Pretend to surf and swim as you work your body. 	Pretend your arms or foot or elbow or nose is a crayon and draw a big picture of a rainbow in your home.	Put a sock puppet on your hand and have it travel high, low, fast, slow, curvy and straight.	Pretend to be a balloon – first without air, then being blown up, then floating around the room, and then being popped!	Work on your tossing and catching skills with someone. Toss it right to their hands. 	Balance on two body parts. How about three parts or four or even five body parts?	Repeat your favorite activity this month!

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APRIL

Get Moving Today!

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Have fun on April Fool's Day. Act out an emotion and see if someone can guess what you are feeling.	Pretend you have a farm. Act out the different things you would see, like a horse galloping, a pig rolling in the mud, and a farmer picking apples high in a tree.	Get down on the floor and roll around – roll in a straight line, roll in a tire ball, roll across the room.	I spy something red! Run and touch something red. I spy something yellow! Gallop and touch something yellow. 	Using an empty paper towel roll and a balloon, work on volleying the balloon so it does not touch the floor.	Work those muscles by crawling, bear walking, crab walking, and slithering like a snake across the room.	Jump 13 times – hop 13 times – march 13 steps – reach up high 13 times.
 Can you do a jumping jack? Give it a try.	Work on your bending, twisting, shaking, reaching and crunching. Can you think of other ways to move while staying in one spot?	Time to march! Pretend to have your favorite instrument and march as you play. Can someone guess what instrument you are playing?	Practice your walking today – swing your arms, keep your head up, shoulders back. Do this outside!	Pretend that your home is full of mud puddles and your job is to jump over them without getting wet and dirty.	Help out in the kitchen – sweep the floor and wipe down the counters. Use great big movements to work all your muscles.	With a ball that bounces work on bouncing and catching skills. Drop the ball and catch it after it bounces.
Get outside and run, gallop, and jump all over. Feel your heart when you are done – what is it doing?	Find lines on the sidewalk or driveway and jump over them. Remember to land softly on two feet. 	Have fun rolling around your home. Work on rolling in a straight line and a curvy line.	Try to wiggle and shake every part of your body, one by one. Then wiggle or shake your entire body.	Roll a t-shirt into a lasso and move it in circles above your head, in front and behind and to the side. Do it with the other hand too.	Practice your hopping. Remember to take off and land on the same foot. Hop near and far, high and low.	Turn some music on and move to the beat. This is more fun if someone does it with you.
Sit on a t-shirt, roll up another t-shirt and hold on to one end as someone else holds on to the other end and pulls you around the room. Your turn to pull them.	Running is a great way to make your heart healthy. Try to run for 2 minutes without stopping.	Pretend to be a seed that is planted in the ground and then grows into a big, strong tree.	Find a ball and practice kicking. How far can you make the ball go? How high can you make it go? 	Find four pillows that are different sizes. Can you balance on each one without falling off?	Ask someone to practice tossing and catching with you. Keep your eye on the ball as you move your body to the ball.	Wad up a tissue. Lie down on the floor like a snake and blow the tissue across the floor.
Put a paper plate on your head and walk across the room without it falling off. Can you bend down and get back up without it falling off?	Transport me! Put one small item on a paper plate and carry the plate on your palm to the other side of the room. Can you carry two items? How about three?	Go on a walk through your home. How many steps does it take to get from one space to another?	Time to stretch and reach. Turn your body into different shapes and hold each shape, as you squeeze your muscles. 	Using kitchen tongs, practice picking up wash cloths and carrying them to the other side of the room, run back and do it again.	Time to get outside and move. Ask someone in your family to come out with you.	What was your favorite? Go back and repeat your favorite April activity.

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Here are six key principles of Waldorf education every family can adopt

1. Childhood isn't meant to be a race

Steiner once said, "Where is the book in which the teacher can read about what teaching is? The children themselves are this book. We should not learn to teach out of any book other than the one lying open before us and consisting of the children themselves."

Children do not all develop in the same way, nor do they develop at the same rhythm. Waldorf education teaches us to be attentive to the needs of each individual child and to stop expecting our kids to be what they're not.

2. Become a storyteller

It is said that Einstein once said, "If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales." Waldorf education shares this view.

Rudolf Steiner believed that storytelling was a gift, and storytelling has remained a central feature of Waldorf education.

Stories help children to connect, they teach them new words, and they take them to places they've never been. Waldorf education emphasizes the importance of telling stories rather than reading stories. Storytelling builds a child's imagination.



Making up stories can be difficult but it gets easier with time. You can also tell simple stories you remember from your childhood. Going through the story before you tell it will make the storytelling experience more fulfilling for both you and your child. Young children like to listen to the same story several times so they'll be happy with the same story repeated for a while.

3. Connect with nature every day

Children thrive on physical activity. Playing outside also spurs their creativity. Connecting with nature means teaching our children to be more attentive to the world around them. It means teaching them to take the time to smell the flowers and observe the different things and people in their environment. Nature also has a calming effect on children.

Opportunities to connect with nature abound: smell flowers, pick flowers, collect pebbles, take pictures of insects, pick leaves, paint or draw still life objects, play with sticks, build forts, dig, play with sand, scavenger hunts, etc.

4. Teach your kids to play

Waldorf education is based on the principle that the simplest toys foster the greatest creativity. Steiner emphasized the need for the most natural toys and argued that toys should provide children with sensory experiences. He believed that when toys are simple and open-ended, they spark children's creativity because children can then use their imagination to create other objects.



Waldorf education favors simple and eco-friendly toys to which everyone has access: pinecones, shells, acorns, yarn, silk rags and handkerchiefs, sticks and branches, wooden blocks, acorns, stones, cardboard etc.

5. Establish routines

In Waldorf education, each morning begins with a special moment during which children come together to sing, recite verses, do movement exercises, and do finger plays based on specific themes (for example seasons).

There are many benefits to establishing routines. The authors of the book *Simplicity Parenting* (incidentally, one of the authors is a Waldorf educator) are convinced that rituals and routines give children a sense of security and provide them with roots. They believe that establishing routines can simplify parenting and make parenting a more fulfilling experience.

6. Make room for art

Art is an important aspect of Waldorf education.

Making room for art means providing our children with unstructured moments in which they can practice creative play. It is in these moments that they develop their creativity. Steiner believed that fewer and simpler toys helped children develop greater creativity. He also believed that organized spaces (toys arranged tidily in baskets or shelves rather than in piles) played an important role in child development. The importance of organized spaces is an aspect shared by Montessori schools.



This quote by Rudolf Steiner pretty well sums up his philosophy: "Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who are able, of themselves, to impart purpose and direction to their lives. The need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility – these three forces are the very nerve of education."

Sanya Pelini

Sanya Pelini holds a Ph.D. in educational research. She transforms educational research into practical tools and [resources to inform](#) parenting choices.

Retrieved from: <https://www.mother.ly/child/6-waldorf-inspired-principles-every-family-should-adopt>





This message is meant to be cut out, photocopied, and sent home with children as a resource for parents. It is also available online at NAEYC.org/tyc.

MESSAGE IN A BACKPACK™

It's Conference Time!

Use these tips to prepare for meeting with your child's teacher and setting the stage for a great partnership.

Before the conference

- › If the conference day and time don't work for your family, reach out and ask for an alternative. Teachers will sometimes arrange an online video chat if scheduling becomes too difficult.
- › Make a list of your questions and concerns, and prioritize them—you'll want to leave plenty of time to hear the teacher's thoughts.
- › Think of examples to share with the teacher of how your child plays and learns at home.

During the conference

Share information about your family

- › Let the teacher know about your family's special characteristics and circumstances—this helps the teacher support your child's learning.
- › Talk about changes or challenges that might impact your child at school (like a new living arrangement or a morning schedule that means your child needs to wake up extra early).

Build a partnership

- › If you're wondering how specific school activities connect to your child's learning, or if you don't understand what the teacher is describing, ask!
- › Ask about activities and ideas you can try at home to support your child's learning.

Communicate openly

- › If you have concerns, ask how you can problem-solve together. Staying calm and collaborating are the best ways to support your child.
- › Ask about the best ways to continue communicating with the teacher and how to stay up-to-date with class news throughout the year.

After the conference

- › A conference is not the only time to ask questions or express concerns—be sure to follow up if there's something you're worried about.
- › Stay in touch! Whether you have a new question or want to share what happened when you tried a different learning activity at home, your child's teacher wants to hear from you.

Photograph: © Getty Images



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