

BECKY'S BULLETIN

The Newsletter of the Becky Gates Children's Center

October 2019



Erica Ritter, Director

HOWDY FAMILIES AND FRIENDS!

We will **CLOSE at noon on Thursday, October 3, and not reopen until Monday, October 7. No lunch will be served on Thursday, October 3.**

We have quite the training schedule planned for the teaching staff during our professional development, October 3-5. Topics planned include: HighScope, Project Approach, art/sensory, "Lessening Challenging Behaviors: Teachers and Classrooms as Partners in Facilitation Pro-Social Development," parent communication and relationship building, brain development, encouragement, and more. **We want to thank you for being supportive of our professional development.** It is so important we have opportunities to have thoughtful, intentional planning with our teachers.



Special Guests

We are expecting special guests during the week of October 21. **Mrs. Becky Gates and Mrs. Dorothy McFerrin will visit us during the week.** It is always a fun day when they come to visit. The children enjoy interacting and telling Mrs. Gates and Mrs. McFerrin about their classrooms!



See your child's picture!



We survived picture week! Lasting Memories will be back to show you the pictures on **Tuesday, October 1, and Wednesday, October 9, from 3:30-5:30 pm in the Multipurpose Building.** Picture cost varies from **\$19-\$120.** They accept cash, check, and credit cards.

Friendly Reminder



We have had an increase in children getting picked-up past 5:30 pm. **Be sure to have your child picked-up by 5:30 pm.** If you cannot be here to pick-up your child by the time we close, please make alternate arrangements for pick-up. Thank you for understanding!

Scholastic Book Fair!

October is a busy month at Becky Gates! **The Scholastic Book Fair will be here October 21-25.** It will be open every afternoon from **4:00-5:30 pm.** If you would like to shop at another time, please stop by the front desk and we will open it for you. Remember, classrooms make a wish list for books they would like to have in their classroom. **Be sure to check-out the wish lists if you would like to purchase a book for your child's classroom.**



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Fall Family Fun Night



Thursday, October 24 is our **Fall Family Fun Night!** From **5:30-7:00 pm** come prepared to have some fun. Classrooms will have games and activities set up for children to participate in. **Children may come in costume if you wish.** Be sure children can safely see and the costume is appropriate for young children. **Book Fair will be open during Fall Family Fun Night.**

Fall Classroom Celebrations

Classrooms will host fall celebrations on October 31. **Please see your classroom teacher** for more details.

Signing-in and Out

THANK YOU for remembering to sign your child in and out every day at the kiosk! Since you no longer do this task in the classroom, it is essential you complete this at the kiosk. If you have trouble signing-in or out please let the front desk or administration know. **If you send someone other than yourself to drop-off or pick-up, let them know to notify the front desk and they will get your child signed-in or out.**



Family Conferences



Family conferences will be scheduled throughout the month of **November**. Be on the lookout for sign-up sheets from your child's teacher in **late October**.

Below is our babysitting list. Please remember that this list is for BGCC families only!

Babysitting List

Name	Phone Number	Experience
Avery Seago	832-589-2909	Everywhere
Mia Patterson	214-984-2865	Bird Wing
Kayleigh Holub	832-767-9701	Sea Wing (Panthers)
Karina Aguilar	214-564-2088	Butterflies/Bumblebees/Bird Wing
Yessenia Torres	469-258-6158	Butterflies/Bumblebees/Bird Wing
Kelsey Kraushaur	832-452-0647	Sea Wing (Seahorses & Panthers)
Caitlyn Horton	832-600-1277	Rainforest Wing
Emily Atteberry	512-718-9708	Sea Wing (Seahorses)
Emma Biddle	806-787-3910	Sea Wing (Whales)
Megan Marthiljohni	361-655-6759	Butterflies/Bumblebees/Bird Wing
Bethany Flummer	210-573-0635	Rainforest (Jaguars)
Neely Curry	806-570-0623	Sea Wing
Maddie Grace Tomme	512-564-0607	Babysitting Experience - All Ages
Samantha Beacham	713-416-1148	Butterflies/Bumblebees/Bird Wing
Amber Pawelek	830-302-0262	Butterflies/Bumblebees/Bird Wing
Kaleigh Saher	903-730-1965	Seahorses



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SPICY JACK-O'-LANTERN SEEDS

Here are two different ways to make a scrumptious snack: one starts with seeds with the shells on, right out of a fresh pumpkin; the other uses raw green pumpkin seeds without their shells, also called "pepitas" which you can buy at the store.

KITCHEN GEAR

Measuring spoons
Measuring cup
Baking sheet
Wooden spoon or spatula

INGREDIENTS

1 cup raw, unshelled pumpkin seeds
3/4 teaspoon olive or canola oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon chili powder



INSTRUCTIONS

Wash your hands with soap and water, then gather all your kitchen gear and ingredients and put them on a clean counter.

1. Turn the oven on and set the heat to 325 degrees.
2. Put the pumpkin seeds on the baking sheet in a single layer and add the oil, salt and if you like spicy, the chili powder. Mix everything together.
3. Once the oven temperature has reached 325 degrees, put the sheet in the oven and bake until golden brown, about 30-45 minutes; use the wooden spoon or spatula to stir them every 10 minutes or so. Set aside to cool. Serve right away or store in an airtight container up to 1 week.



TRY IT THIS WAY:

Cinnamony Pepitas: Make these sweet seeds the same way, but use these ingredients, and bake them for a shorter amount of time — only 15 minutes — since these seeds don't have their shells on!

Ingredients

1 cup raw, shelled pumpkin seeds
1 teaspoon canola oil
1 teaspoon brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon



<https://www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/spicy-jack-o-lantern-seeds>



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Easing Infants & Toddlers into Halloween Fun:

By: Dina DiMaggio, MD, FAAP

Tips from the AAP

Here are 8 Tips for a Smooth and Safe Halloween with Little Ones:

1. Allow for plenty of time to fright-prep.

As a parent, [you know your child best](#). Keep a look out for [fears and anxieties](#) about Halloween. The best way to handle fear and get a toddler ready is to discuss what's going to happen. Reading books and stories to your child about trick-or-treating—and Halloween in general—are great ways to help that discussion. You might even want to have your child practice in his or her costume before the big day. Toddlers need to know that Halloween is just for fun and the scary stuff is all pretend. If your little one doesn't want to partake in Halloween, then let that be okay. There is always next year, and 12 months can make a big difference!

2. Play with pumpkins.

Allowing your baby or toddler to squish his or her hands around the insides of a pumpkin can be a great sensory activity. For little ones who "hate getting dirty," there are plenty of no-carve pumpkin decorating options to try.

3. Go out before dark.

Infants and young children thrive on routine, and it is easy for Halloween festivities to throw those routines off-track. If your schedule permits, try trick-or-treating while it's still light outside so you can stick to your child's regular [bedtime](#). If your child is sleeping, try putting a "please knock" sign on your door for other trick-or-treaters.

If Halloween doesn't start until after dark where you live: Check your local newspaper or recreation center for Halloween activities offered earlier in the day.

4. Watch for tripping-toddler hazards.

Even on their best days and in the best conditions, it is still a struggle for some toddlers to walk without falling. While you won't be able to prevent all of the tumbles, choosing a costume that is not too long or too bulky will help a great deal. Be sure to check the forecast before you go out and try to include layers if needed. Also remember to help your little one climb up and down any steps and porches.

5. Always have a "Plan B" costume.

From leaky diapers to spit up to [toilet training accidents](#), this age is always reason to pack a backup costume and plan for the unexpected. If potty-training is still a new thing and there's a narrow window between "I have to go" and an accident, you might want to rethink a complicated costume. There is also no harm in putting him or her in an easy-on, easy-off diaper.

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<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/on-the-go/Pages/Easing-Infants-Toddlers-into-Halloween-Fun.aspx>



6. Be ready to pack it in early if needed.

A house or costume that's too scary, a trip or a fall, or just a hard day can send your child into the temper-tantrum zone. But all is not lost! If your toddler quickly loses interest in trick-or-treating, see if he or she would prefer to answer the door and hand out candy to all the "big kids" instead. Plus, it can help you re-inforce those important sharing skills!

7. Take precautions with added sugar.

Although Halloween and sugar often go hand in hand, the AAP recommends limiting the amounts of sugar kids get each day. This may not be an easy task when most Halloween treats are packed with added sugar and artificial colors your little one doesn't need. Look out for snacks and treats that may seem "healthier" but still contain added sugars—flavored yogurts, flavored milks, sugary cereals, granola bars, juices, and fruit gummy snacks. Other options for trick-or-treating toddlers, or those who choose not to give out candy, include crayons and notepads, stickers, stamps, chalk, bubbles, tattoos, playdough, or stuffed animals.

If your baby is six months or older and is just starting solid foods: You can get him or her into the Halloween spirit with some pumpkin purees. Whether canned, frozen or fresh, pumpkin is packed with nutrients for your growing baby—beta-carotene, vitamin A, potassium, vitamin C, calcium, and more. Other fall-themed options include butternut squash, sweet potato, or roasted apple purees. You can even mix in a pinch of cinnamon or nutmeg to add in fall-inspired flavors.

Ideas for older toddlers: Seasonal treats may include soft bites of roasted apples or apple sauce, baked sweet potato fries dusted with cinnamon, apple zucchini muffins, pumpkin-inspired smoothies, or fruit ice pops made with fun Halloween molds.

8. Watch for any treats that can be a choking hazard.

Keep an eye on what your child has in his or her mouth at all times while on the trick-or-treat trail—it's so easy to get distracted! It's best to avoid eating while walking or running. Once your child is ready to enjoy treats at home, keep in mind that babies and toddlers should not have any hard candies, caramel apples, popcorn, gum, small candies (jelly beans, etc.), gummy candy, pumpkin seeds, or anything with whole nuts. Candy wrappers, stickers, small toys, or temporary tattoos can be a choking hazard, as well. As all parents know, babies and toddlers will put just about anything into their mouths!

About Dr. DiMaggio:



Dina DiMaggio, MD, FAAP, is a board certified pediatrician at Pediatric Associates of NYC and at NYU Langone Medical Center. She is the co-author of *The Pediatrician's Guide to Feeding Babies and Toddlers*, a comprehensive manual written by a team of medical, nutrition, and culinary experts. Follow her on Instagram @Pediatriciansguide.

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<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/on-the-go/Pages/Easing-Infants-Toddlers-into-Halloween-Fun.aspx>



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Below are the minutes from the previous Family Advisory Board Meeting.

**Becky Gates Children's Center Family Advisory Board Meeting
Friday, September 06, 2019
3:30-4:30 pm**

Agenda

1. Call to Order, Welcome, Introduction
2. Look @ the Family Advisory Board's Mission Statement (*Available upon request*)
3. Identify day/time for meetings that work for the good of the group

FAB Meeting Dates for 2019-2020 school year:

- Friday, November 15 @ 3:30 pm
- Friday, February 28 @ 3:30 pm
- Friday, April 24 @ 3:30 pm

4. Elect co-chair

Sarah Dicaglio

5. Review survey results and identify goals for 19-20 year (*Available upon request.*)

- Question was asked about back-story behind music changes and historical evolution of music program was explained. (In short, funds that were previously being used to pay for the music teacher were diverted to hiring an additional teacher for the center.) Ms. Callie is currently doing music with classrooms on Friday -- but is also helping teachers with integrating more music into their classrooms.
- Primary conversation centered on concerns about teacher communication and a desire to better understand what the kids are learning in their classroom.
 - Teachers are currently doing daily lesson plans (approx 3 pages in length)
 - Lesson plans are composed based on what is happening in the classroom
 - Weekly lesson plans are posted in the classrooms in various locations
 - Proposals for increasing communication --
 - Sharing out projects that are ongoing in classrooms
 - Posting on the door what the current classroom project is so that parents can see/read it quickly
 - Include a sentence or two about what's going on in the classroom next week in weekly letter/email
 - Erica suggested providing a list of questions to preschool parents to talk about their day
 - Marketing intern can begin sending out upcoming events for the center (such as dance troupe coming soon.)



- In Erica's newsletter, highlight a few classroom projects. Erica suggested working with teacher to use the storyboard feature of the app to share out classroom projects with whole BGCC.
- Praise for 6-week at a time menu share!
- Brief conversation about integrating more diversity and cultural awareness into the classrooms/center; conversation was cut short due to time. Erica and Debbie discussed the new instructional coach and her background in integrating cultural awareness -- should help address these concerns.

6. Book Fair

- a. October 21st - 25th
- b. Be on the lookout -- Call for parent volunteers and more information coming soon!
- c. Family Fun Night will be October 24th. Book fair will be open and likely facilitated by student volunteers. (Andrea is faculty advisor for a student organization and is going to inquire about getting student volunteers.)

7. Center Updates

- Part time instructional coach has been hired for the center
 - Part of her focus will be incorporating more cultural diversity into the classroom
- Mrs. Becky Gates will be visiting the week of October 21-25; Ms. McFerrin will also be visiting one of those mornings.
- Playground design should be completed sometime this month;

construction document will be complete *hopefully* by Oct 21-25 so design can start to be shown off and fundraising can begin.

8. Unfinished business, concluding remarks

9. Adjourn

Chair: Laura Greer

lgreer@tamu.edu

Chair-Elect: Sarah Dicaglio

sdicaglio@tamu.edu

Director, BGCC: Erica Ritter

Assistant Director, BGCC: Deborah Almand





ACTIVITY CALENDAR



OCTOBER

Get Moving Today!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Kick off the new month by practicing your kicking skills. Kick - chase - kick again.</p>	<p>Fold a towel or newspaper and put in on the floor. Pretend it is a puddle that you are going to leap over. Each time you leap over it make it a little bit bigger.</p>	<p>Find a starting spot outside/inside and choose different places to go. Count how many steps it takes to get to each spot. Which is the farthest?</p>	<p>Create a movement sequence - hop, twist, reach - and then do it together. Say the words as you do the motions.</p>	<p>Jumping obstacle course: Line up pillows across the floor and try to jump from one to another without touching the floor.</p>	<p>Pretend to be airplanes. Start out on the floor, pushing yourself up and down with your arms to start your engine. Next stand up, with arms out as wings, fly all over the place.</p>	<p>Feel your heart. Walk for five minutes, feel your heart again. Is it beating faster? Why?</p>
<p>Clean up! Spread out a bunch of small items in a room. Crab walk to each item, put the item on your tummy, crab walk the item to a new spot.</p>	<p>Use recycled newspapers and crunch up pieces, making paper balls. Practice throwing the balls into a box. Throw from different distances and angles.</p>	<p>Using the paper balls from yesterday practice self tossing and catching. Can you clap between catches?</p>	<p>Turn your favorite music on and make up a sequence of dance moves. Share them with someone!</p>	<p>Using a pool noodle create a jumping challenge. Place the noodle on the floor and jump over it. Next move the noodle slightly off the floor and jump over it.</p>	<p>Roll up a pair of socks. Try to balance the socks on different parts of your body as you move throughout space. Try to move around, over and under things.</p>	<p>"At the Zoo": Take turns naming an animal. Try moving around just as that animal would.</p>
<p>Go for a color walk outside. As you walk keep track of the different colors you see and then when you return home draw a picture using those colors.</p> <p>TAKE IT OUTSIDE! WEEK</p>	<p>Rake piles of leaves & jump into them!</p>	<p>Outdoor dramatic play: Fly like birds - high and low and fast and slow. Pretend to fly south for the winter and return in the spring!</p>	<p>Go on a rock hunt and sort the rocks you find by size or color.</p>	<p>Read nature-related books and go outside to look for wildlife, like birds, bugs and squirrels. Nature is all around - no matter where you live!</p>	<p>Play Spy! Go outside and take turns saying, "I spy something _____" and then together run to that object.</p>	<p>Pick up some sticks around the yard, line them up and jump over them</p>
<p>Get outside again! Go on "an around" walk. Walk around your house, walk around a light pole, walk around a leaf on the ground...</p>	<p>Musical Freeze: Have someone turn the music on and off. When it is on you must dance and move, but when it is shut off you must balance and freeze.</p>	<p>Galloping Fun: Find something around the house that could be your horse (broom, hockey stick, wrapping paper tube). Go for a horse ride as you walk, run, and gallop.</p>	<p>Pathway locomotion challenge! Choose a start and finish. Choose a way to move (walk, run, skip, robot etc.). Choose a pathway - either straight, curvy or zigzag.</p>	<p>Pretend to be a cloud as your float around outside. Change your shape as you move through space.</p>	<p>Turn on some music and make up some new moves. Try to move high, low, big and small.</p>	<p>Transportation Travels! Take turns naming a different type of transportation and then pretend to move that way. Such as a train, bike, car, etc.</p>
<p>Do the Twist! Sit or stand on a t-shirt and twist away.</p>	<p>Practice your ball rolling skills, by rolling a ball into a box set on its side or rolling a ball to knock over obstacles.</p>	<p>Run and Touch: Have someone identify a part of your body and a number - now, run and touch that many items using that body part (i.e. touch eight things with your elbow).</p>	<p>Take a break and stretch, reach and bend as you take big breaths.</p>	<p>Connect to someone else and try moving together in different ways. How long can you stay connected?</p>	<p>Stretch as big as you can. Curl up as small as you can. Now explode back to being as big as you can</p>	<p>Go back and do your favorite activity from this month!</p>

CLASSROOM SPOTLIGHT: Ms. Carolina's Jaguars Class

"Dear Families,

Who doesn't love building in the block area? Talk about amazing building coming to life in the Jaguars class. Children use blocks to recreate the world around them—a road, a house, or maybe the zoo. They work together and learn to cooperate and make friends. Each time they use blocks, children make decisions about how to build a structure or solve a construction problem. We encourage children to talk about what they are doing, promoting language development. We also ask questions to expand on their block play. For example, we might say: "Tell me about what you made." This offers the child new opportunities to explore, rather than just asking a child, "What did you make?" Just a little insight into to our building area.

Blocks help children learn

- 1. Imagination** – Through block play children are free to follow their own ideas as they embark on a voyage of discovery, or share in the development of their friends' creations.
- 2. Self-Expression** – Children are able to express themselves through their play, creations and discoveries, a form of communication that's particularly valuable for bilingual or non-verbal children.
- 3. Problem-Solving** – Blocks offer a great platform to develop problem solving and reasoning skills. This can be deliberate, with children consciously working to develop a solution, or as a natural consequence of play, as they learn first-hand what does and doesn't work.
- 4. Mathematics** – Due to the many shapes, sizes and colors on offer, blocks provide ample opportunities for children to practice important math skills (covering measurement, number, symmetry, balance and estimation). By comparing shapes and sizes, creating patterns or providing measuring and weighing tools, we can extend play and exploration.
- 5. Physical Development** – Block play promotes the development of spatial awareness and hand-eye coordination as children reach for, lift, move and build with blocks, strengthening their fingers, hands and arms.
- 6. Creativity** – Blocks are loose parts, meaning children are free to combine and recombine them in countless ways. Practitioners can add alternative resources such as dough, small world characters or paint and pencils to further extend opportunities for creativity.
- 7. Science** – Through the exploration of cause and effect and experimentation, children are able to develop their problem-solving skills, test hypotheses and practice scientific reasoning. Blocks help them to become familiar with balance, weight, spatial awareness and gravity.
- 8. Self-Esteem** – Children can take risks in their block play, helping them to discover that they have independent ideas. Children experience a sense of achievement as they 'have a go', creating and developing something new and unique.
- 9. PSED** – Block play allows children to co-construct and negotiate. They take turns, share materials and cooperate with others, forging new friendships. It also encourages self-reliance, increases attention span and develops their sense of self.
- 10. Communication & Literacy** – As children encounter new experiences through block play, there are countless opportunities for discussion and the development of new vocabulary. Social interaction with adults and peers unlocks further benefits, while using blocks can support story creation and collaborative storytelling."

<http://www.teachearlyyears.com/learning-and-development/view/thebenefits-of-block-play>







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