

Wollaston Child Care Center Newsletter May, 2016

Center Closings for the month of May



We will be closed on *Monday, May 30th* in observance of Memorial Day.

Bible Stories

The last day of Bible stories will be held on May 11th. They will resume in September.

Family Physician Informational Session

Dr. Imane Bentahar, MD, a family medicine physician with Compass Medical will be coming to the WCCC to provide an informational session for families on Wednesday, May 18th at 4:30. Her presentation will include a discussion of pediatric wellness and vaccines. I am sure that she will glad to address any other health topics that are of interest to the group. We hope that many of you can join us for this informative program.

Sunscreen



Please prepare to bring sunscreen into the center as the warmer weather approaches. Sunscreen should be applied in the morning before arriving to school and the teachers will reapply in the afternoon. A permission slip will have to be filled out in order for the teachers to reapply.

Spring Time Reminders

This is also a great time to check your child's cubby to make sure that seasonally appropriate and properly fitting spare clothing is available. As the weather is still changeable, you may wish to include both warm and cool weather clothing.

Also, please let us know as soon as possible of vacation plans and schedule changes. This helps greatly in planning.

Class Pictures

Ms. Tessa will be taking class pictures on May 10th and May 18th. The class pictures will be on sale and available to purchase. All proceeds will go towards new gross motor equipment. The price will be \$5 for a 5x7 and \$10 for 8x10.

Parent /Teacher Committee

The Parent/Teacher meetings will be held on

5/25 from 4:30pm – 5:30pm and 5/26 from 8:00am – 9:00am. Please join us to share your thoughts and ideas with other parents and teachers.

Happy Mother's Day

We wish all of our mothers, grandmothers, aunts, stepmothers and all of those who care for and love our children .the happiest of Mother's Days



Wishing You a Wonderful Day

~ Anon

Sending this, Mom,
Especially to say
Wishing you a happy
And wonderful day...
And to tell you this day
Will always be one
For remembering the many
Sweet things you have done!

Some thoughts on block play by Patricia Kempthorne from the White House symposium on early childhood STEM development.

What do children learn through block play?

Playing with blocks provides the opportunity for children to learn elements of science and math, like problem solving, counting, adding and subtracting, and helps them build both gross and fine motor skills. Block play also supports other key aspects of development, including language learning as children talk about the structures they built with the adults and children around them, creativity, imagination, self-esteem, and social and emotional growth.

How does it connect to STEM?

Block play provides a natural context for exploring the physical world. Like little scientists, children experiment with structures and observe the outcomes of their building efforts. Through this process they learn about mass, weight, proportionality and balance, and can use their new concepts to plan and predict outcomes.

Block play with an 18-month-old is different than block play for a five year old. What types of block play and blocks work well for different aged children and why?

Children go through various stages of block play. As they work through the learning of one stage they are ready to move on to the next stage of play. As skills advance, it is typical for children to combine several stages. The stages are developmental—each one building on the last—but children advance at their own rate regardless of their age.

Stage 1: Discovering Blocks

Stage 2: Stacking Blocks

Stage 3: Complex Stacking

Stage 4: Making Enclosures

Stage 5: Creating Bridges or Arches

Stage 6: Combining Enclosures and Bridges

Stage 7: Building with Patterns and Symmetry

Stage 8: Building Block Structures that Represent Objects for Pretend Play

What do families learn about children's learning and development as they observe their children playing with blocks?

Parents and children form an emotional bond during block play. Block play has been shown to actually increase parent knowledge of early development in the areas of math and science education, while at the same time providing opportunities for young children to increase their math, science, social and literacy skills. Parents observe the following

behaviors from their children during block play: focusing, taking turns, listening, sorting, problem solving, predicting, observing outcomes, making patterns, comparing, naming, counting, wondering and many forms of mathematizing.

What kinds of family interactions do you encourage and why?

BLOCK Fest was developed to provide an interactive block building experience for young children ages 8 months to 8 years and their parents. The family's role in block play includes making time and space for blocks at home, saving household materials for building, following the child's lead, supporting their decision making and remembering to ask open-ended questions about the building process which invites children to talk about their understanding of the world around them.

Blocks provide opportunities for children's social and emotional development as they build and share with others, and manage the frustration that comes when structures collapse. The characteristics of grit and perseverance are displayed and developed for both children and adults participating in active block play. In addition, children are challenged cognitively as they solve the problems that arise in the construction process.

What does the research tell us about the value of block play?

Two decades of research show that children build number and math skills from a very early age, and that those who are strong in early math skills excel in math in the later years. Research shows that children's block play is related to later math competence and particular interest in STEM careers.



