



Children's House Newsletter



UPCOMING EVENTS

In September...



9/05 .. **Labor Day** – Closed

9/06 .. **First Day of School**

9/15, 9/16.. **Grandparent's Day**
Upstairs—Thursday
Downstairs (incl. P4)—Friday

Grandparents are invited to come visit the center from 10:00 until 11:15 am. Each classroom (Toddlers through K) will prepare a brief "performance" and refreshments will be served. If grandparents are unable to attend, children are welcome to invite a "special friend".



In order to avoid confusion and possible upset for the children, parents should not attend in place of grandparents or special friends.

9/20...**Open House for all Parents and Prospective New Families**

Parents are welcomed back to the center from 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Parents are encouraged to come back to the center to meet with the staff, learn about their child's classroom and curriculum, and view the rest of the center.

Each teacher will prepare a 15-minute presentation. Presentations

Openings Available

CH currently has one full time Infant opening and several Preschool slots available. Please let friends and co-workers know about our openings! *The Referral Bonus program is still*

will be staggered (times will be posted in advance) to assist families with multiple children. We have so many siblings enrolled though, that we may not be able to make all presentations at separate times.

We hope parents will be able to attend! Staff are prepared to discuss their philosophies, classroom routines and give parents detailed information about curriculum, assessments and materials that isn't generally shared at drop-off or pick-up times because the main focus for the staff during these times is the children. Printed information will be given to all families that evening.

The materials that will be set up in classrooms and in the main hall are set up for *display* purposes only. For this reason, we *strongly* encourage children not attend.

If parents cannot find alternate care for the evening we just ask that they take responsibility for making sure children do not disturb displays.

In October...



10/12 **Picture Day for Infants & Toddlers**

10/13 **Picture Day for P2, P3, P4, Pre-K/K and sibling photos**

in effect. Refer a new family! If they enroll, after one month your family receives a \$50 WalMart gift card OR \$50 off tuition!

Please encourage anyone interested to contact Pam at 782-4448 or via email at: pflowers@childrenshouseinc.org



McClement Studios will do individual and class photos from 9:00 a.m. until approximately noon.

All children are encouraged to attend for class/individual pictures — even if it is not a regularly scheduled day at the center. An adult must stay with the child, though, until pictures are completed, if it is not the child's regularly scheduled day.

Flyers will be sent home with more information and pricing as the date approaches.



10/14...**A Visit from the Springfield Firefighters with their Equipment!**

10/18... **Field Trip for P2, P3, P4 and PK to Randalls Farm**
This will be a fun morning of pumpkin picking, games, corn maze, cider, donuts and a hayride!

Chaperones will be needed. Field trip permission forms with all the details will be sent home a couple weeks prior to the trip.

Invite Friends, Family and Co-workers to our Open House on 9/20/16 from 6:30-8:00 p.m.

More information for new and existing families can be found on our website:

www.childrenshouseinc.org

SEPTEMBER THEMES

Getting to Know My Classroom

All About Me

My Family

The Five Senses

Apples



Authorized and Unauthorized Pick-Ups

Children's House takes the safety of your child seriously. Therefore, we have in place a policy regarding "Authorized and Unauthorized Pick-ups" of the children in our care. The policy allows only the parents or guardians of a child to pick up the child from the center unless written or verbal authorization is obtained otherwise.

Written authorization is the most effective in that it doesn't require staff to remember unfamiliar names or to pass on the information to the closing staff. Written authorization can be in the form of a separate note to the teacher, a note on the Infant or Toddler Daily Information Sheet, or a note to the teacher in the Communication Notebooks located in P2 through K.

Verbal authorization is usually done by phone when an unforeseen circumstance arises that changes pick-up plans. Parents should call the center and ask to speak directly with their child's teacher. If the teacher is unavailable, a message can be left with whoever answers the call. Please do not leave pick up messages on the answering machine as it is not checked after 2:30 p.m.

All authorizations *must* include the *full name* of the person who will be arriving at the center (not just "grammy" or "papa"). The person who arrives to pick up must have a picture I.D. with them even if they have been at the center before. The staff who met them initially may not readily recognize them the second time or may not be on site the next time they come to pick up.

We do have forms available that allow listed persons to pick up anytime without authorization. Please see Pam if you would like an "Authorized Anytime" form. Parents can also simply write a note stating the names on the note are "authorized anytime". Those persons listed currently in your child's file are *not* authorized anytime *except* in an emergency situation when neither parent can be reached.

Please understand that we are not trying to make it difficult for parents. We are trying to keep children safe and avoid the inconvenience of having parents arrive at the center only to find out someone else has already picked up. Thanks so much for your understanding and cooperation!

10 Tips to Make Your Child's Morning Drop-Off Easier

- 1 Solicit the help of any staff member.
- 2 Make your a.m. routine consistent from the time your child awakes. Involve your child in his/her morning routine (dressing self if possible, getting own breakfast if possible, getting items ready to bring to school).
- 3 Have your child bring a special stuffed animal or blanket from home for security.
- 4 Don't show distress yourself.
- 5 Help your child connect to either a staff person or another child.
- 6 Don't linger. A child who is upset

will calm down very shortly after a parent departs. A parent who stays, may prolong the separation anxiety episode.

- 7 Establish a routine once you arrive at the center. Follow through even when your child resists.
- 8 For some children, a picture of family members or pets posted in their cubby is helpful.
- 9 Reassure your child daily that you love him and will be back to pick him up after work. Make your pickup time consistent to avoid anxiety. Children get to know the "order" that they go home in. *Please*

remember that tuition covers a 9-hour day. A child cannot look forward to school if she knows she'll be here a really long day.

- 10 Give your child something to look forward to at school. (Look at the lesson plans in the classroom or main hall for ideas!)

We encourage parents to share a talent or a story with children at the center!

Talk with your child's teacher to arrange a good time.

Parents are welcome to visit classrooms anytime without notice to staff.

COMMUNICATION

We do our best to keep parents informed. Each classroom has its own system for communicating. If you don't already know, please ask your child's teacher to explain how their system works.

In general, Daily Sheets are used in the Infant and Toddler classrooms. Notes, memos and sometimes receipts are attached to the daily sheets. Receipts are emailed when possible.

In the Preschool through Pre-K classes, communication boards are used along with notebooks and parent/child folders.

The main foyer is also a site for information

as well as the front door and the hall leading to the upstairs classrooms. P4 families may want to periodically check the main hall and front door for information that isn't necessarily posted in their room.

Please check these areas often to stay on top of the news. Also watch for the monthly newsletter!

Phone calls can be received by staff members in the Toddler through Pre-K classes between 1:00 and 2:30 p.m. Conferences can be arranged whenever convenient for both the parents and teacher. Calls to the Infant Room can be received all day *except* between the hours of 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Please try to avoid calling the center before 8:00 a.m. unless there is an emergency as there

is no one on site to specifically answer the phone. We would like our staff to be able to focus on the children in the early morning as much as possible without interruption.



Pam Flowers is available to check on children throughout the day if you need to call sometime other than what is generally most convenient for classroom staff.

Please feel free to talk to Pam Flowers about any issues that come up or if you need help with your child's transition into the center or his/her new classroom.

We're all here to help and we want parents and children to feel comfortable at our center!

STAFF REQUESTS

From time to time, parents ask how they can be helpful to the staff. Here are a few tips:

- 1 Summer camp is over. Please bring towels, swimsuits and sunscreen home. Replace with slippers and heavier weight (**but still crib size**) blankets for naptime.
- 2 Please avoid sending items to school in plastic bags. Exception: One set of extra clothes (two or more sets would be appropriate for those children in the process of toilet training) should be placed in a labeled zip loc bag and either kept in your child's back pack or given to your child's teacher.
- 3 Please check extra clothes currently on site or in back pack to be sure they are appropriate for weather and still fit.
- 4 Label! Label! Label!
- 5 Please dress your child in "easy on and off" clothing, especially if your child is recently toilet trained. Avoid hi-top sneakers, onesies, belts, suspenders, buttons, zippers on pants, and one piece outfits. Velcro shoes are also encouraged.
- 6 Encourage your child to practice self-

help skills at home (i.e. putting on own coat, zipping, putting on own shoes, tying (if older), dressing self, washing hands, wiping self after toileting, etc.).

- 7 For safety reasons, we ask that children wear sneakers on the playground. Sandals are dangerous on the playground and children are not allowed on any of the equipment if they are wearing them.
- 8 Please avoid allowing children to bring hard toys to school. **One small**, stuffed animal is appropriate for naptime. Pillows larger than crib size are not allowed due to limited storage space in cubbies. Whatever your child brings to school, must fit in his/her back pack. Try it out at home. If your child cannot "stuff" his/her belongings into the back pack by him or herself, then smaller items need to be chosen for school.
- 9 Teachers will inform parents if they plan to have "sharing" or "show-n-tell" days.
- 10 Because children mimic TV characters,

staff recommend limiting your child's exposure to shows like Power Rangers, wrestling, violent animated shows and the like. We also strongly discourage sending children to the center with merchandise reflecting the above mentioned characters/shows.

- 11 **Please call** if you will be bringing your child to the center *after* 10:00 a.m. Our lunch counts are given to the cook at this time. So to be sure a lunch is prepared for your child, we will need to know **by 10:00** if he/she will be in attendance.
- 12 We ALWAYS need scrap paper for children to draw/color on. If one side is clear, we're happy to repurpose into a child's masterpiece. Please leave any scrap paper with your child's teacher.

Thank you!!

"We find delight in the beauty and happiness that makes the heart too big for the body."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

OUR STAFF



We have new faces on deck at Children's House as we begin this new school year! See the staff schedule chart (last page) for all the details.

Classroom doors will provide parents with pictures and information about the staff members who will spend time in each room.

Need Assistance or Have

Questions??

In the event **Pam Flowers**, the Center Director, is not available and you need assistance or have a question, in the early morning, please see **Sandy Bigelow** in the Pre-K/K class at the top of the stairs. In the late afternoon, **Sue Alexopoulos** will be on site to support staff and assist parents.

Please feel free to contact Pam Flowers via phone (782-4448) or email: pflowers@childrenshouseinc.org to check on your child. Parents are also welcome to drop in *anytime*.

Tuition questions should be directed to **Pam Frogameni** at 782-4448 or pfrogameni@childrenshouseinc.org.

Check in or Stop in Anytime!

FIA



The Family Involvement Association (FIA) is a communication group formed to facilitate information between the family and center regarding the care and development of each child. Through identification of mutual interests and needs, the parent/teacher partnership will support programs and activities that best meet the needs of the children. Members of the FIA will include parents/guardians of children enrolled and the Center's staff members. FIA meets monthly and all are invited to attend.

Our first meeting will be held in October. The date will be posted. *All* parents are encouraged to attend. If the meeting is at MassMutual and you would like to attend, but are not a MM employee, please contact Pam.

We can meet and go in together. Some meetings will be held on site at Children's House so that parents unable to attend a mid-day meeting at MM can still participate.

Prior to our first meeting, we would like parents who are interested in representing their child's classroom at FIA meetings to sign a "Volunteer List" which will be posted in each room. The classroom teacher will appoint one "Room Representative" and anyone else who volunteers will assist the Room Representative throughout the school year.

Specific duties of the volunteers may include: welcoming new families via email and acquainting them to communications systems (E-Mail/Outlook), soliciting refreshments for class parties, assisting in soliciting chaperones for field trips, running one or two FIA meetings per year (including

meeting CH staff and possibly other parents at the security desk, copying the agenda for the parents attending the meeting, going through the agenda *at* the meeting, arranging for a parent to take and prepare minutes (or doing themselves), putting minutes on e-mail and providing CH with "hard copy").

Room Reps must be able to attend monthly FIA meetings. However, if unavailable, *Reps will be responsible for arranging room representation by another parent in the class.*

It is our hope that at least one parent per classroom will attend each month. **Attending these meetings is a great way to connect with other families!**

Suggestions for agenda topics should be sent to Pam at: pflowers@childrenshouseinc.org.



Just a Reminder....

Auto payments can be set up to make remembering to write a weekly check a non-issue. Contact **Pam Frogameni** to request a form.

If paying by cash or check...Tuition is due on the Friday before the new week begins. A late fee of \$5.00 will be assessed on late payments.

If your child is sick or absent for other reasons, please attach a note to your payment so that the fee can be waived.

Feel free to contact Pam Frogameni (accounts receivable) at: 782-4448 or pfrogameni@childrenshouseinc.org with any tuition questions. *Thank you!*

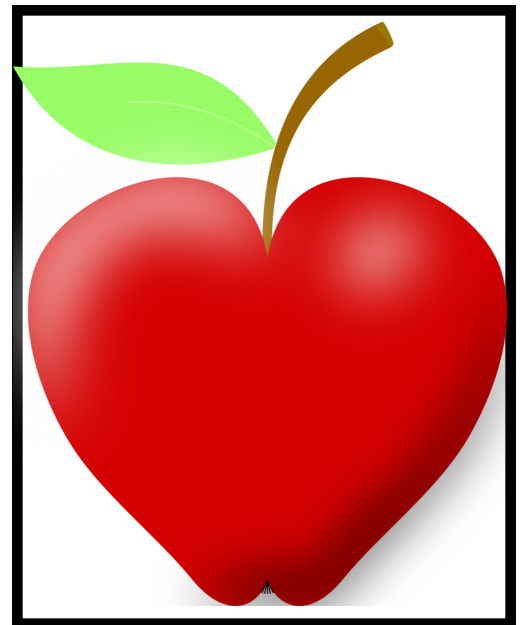
OUR MENU... Our lunch and snack menus are posted in the main hallway. Lunch menus are sent home via email monthly. Through trial and error, we believe we have put together meals that the majority of the children enjoy, are nutritious and varied. Fresh fruits and vegetables are added often via our affiliation with the "Farm to Preschool" initiative. When canned fruits are purchased and served, they are almost always "no sugar added" or "in its own juice". We appreciate menu suggestions, especially favorite family recipes. Please feel free to share! *Just drop suggestions with your child's teacher who will give them to the cook!*

COMMUNITY INFO/INVOLVEMENT

This year, we are hoping to continue involvement in community activities. We will be planning a few "events" or activities that parents, staff and children can participate in. So far, some ideas include: Clothing for Cambodian Infants, Toys for Tots, Coats for Kids, food donations to an area soup kitchen and participating in an Asthma Walk.

We welcome any ideas parents might have! Please email your suggestions to Pam at pflowers@childrenshouseinc.org or see Sue Alexopoulos, our *Community Events Coordinator*, at the end of the day.

Whenever we receive info about events or activities happening in the community, we post them in the main hall. Please take a few minutes each week to check out new postings by the bulletin board nearest the Infant rooms.



Happy Anniversary to Staff!

The following staff have now completed 5+ years at Children's House! Please join us in saying CONGRATULATIONS!

Irene Provenzano 32 years
Pam Flowers 32 years
Sandy Bigelow 28 years
Sue Alexopoulos 25 years
Kim Allaire 24 years
Marta Gonzalez 19 years
Natalya Yazhbin 18 years

Happy Anniversary to Staff!

Continued...

Dianne Guthrie 15 years+
Jennifer Close-Conlon 9 years
Nereida Castellano 9 years
Noreen Fitzgerald 6 years+ (was here for 3 years many years ago!)

Thank you so much for your dedication and caring!



Backpack* Checklist

(Toddlers through Pre-K)

___ Extra Clothes (socks, underpants, pants, shirt) in a labeled Ziploc bag

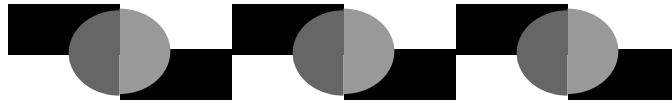
___ One **small** blanket and **crib** sheet for naptime (Toddlers through K)

___ Slippers

___ **Small, soft toy for naptime (optional)** - **No hard toys please**

- Backpacks should be **medium-sized**. Over-sized backpacks or bags which are more "horizontal" are difficult to store and take over space designated for other children.

~Thanks!



Kid Corner: What to Do with Your Child's Artwork

(from Neighborhood News, Vol. XII, Issue IV)

Kids are incredibly creative, and they can turn out artistic “masterpieces” faster than you can blink an eye. But what do you do with all those colorful drawings and sketches? For many sentimental parents, throwing them out just isn't an option. But instead of wallpapering your fridge or storing artwork in a box where it will never be seen or appreciated, try these creative ideas for using your child's artwork.

- **Wrap it up!** Use your child's drawings as unique wrapping paper for gifts for close friends and relatives.
- **Eat em' up!** Laminate the really “good ones” and use them as placemats. Change them out every season.
- **One up, one down.** Choose a wall where your child can display his or her artwork. Every time a new piece is created, let your child choose which one will come down. This ensures a nice rotation of artwork and it absolves you of having to pick and choose which ones are “wall-worthy.”
- **Mail em' out!** Turn pictures into thank you cards. Help your child write a note on the back and then send them out. Your family and friends will appreciate the handmade card and artwork.
- **Go digital.** Scan each drawing and build a digital library of artwork that you can use as screen savers. Be sure to save each one with the date in the file name. Eventually, you can arrange the photos into a slideshow and watch your child's artwork evolve over time.
- **Get crafty.** Cut one drawing to fit an aluminum can. Slice off the top (be sure to make it smooth so there are no sharp, jagged edges), and glue the drawing to the can and use it as a pen holder. Use a drawing as a background for a framed picture, such as a school photo. You can also turn drawings into personalized calendars that you can hang up at work or give to grandparents to admire all year.
- **Cover books.** Use large drawings to cover textbooks or favorite books at home.
- **Gift it later.** Save some of the best ones in a box until your child is grown up. Then frame a few pieces and give them back to him as a gift.
- **Book it.** Scan or photograph your child's artwork or crafty creations and turn them into a beautifully bound photo book. Make one each year and turn it into a cherished coffee table book you, your child, and your guests will enjoy flipping through on a regular basis.



Classroom Staffing Assignments

Infant 1

Kim Allaire
Marta Gonzalez

Infant 2

Nereida Castellano
Jiovanni Colon

Floater for Inf 1/Inf 2—Judy Borrero & Peggy Daoust (*also sub in other classes*)

Toddler 1

Noreen Fitzgerald (Opener)
Tonya Kalesnik
Katia Mejia

Toddler 2

Caleigh Burton
Jacquelin Borrero
Michelle Kelly (Closer)

Toddler 3

Meghan Flowers
Jessica Houle (a.m. in T3; 11:30-2 Floater in Tods) & Jenny Fontoura (p.m.)

Mentor Teacher / Consultant / Floater for T1, T2 and T3 —Dianne Guthrie (*hours vary*)

Preschool 2

Natalya Yazhbin

Preschool 3

Emily Sausville

Preschool 4

Donna Borchers
Leighann Williams

Pre-K/K

Sandy Bigelow
Jennifer Close-Conlon

Floater for P4, PK/K —Kara Schlesinger
(**P2** and **P3** breaks covered by Jennifer Close-Conlon)

