

Calendar for Literacy and Early Learning

2015



Michigan Early Learning Standards for three and four-year-old children

Approaches to Learning

1. Children show increasing initiative and curiosity about their work and play in all areas of the curriculum.
2. Children show increasing engagement and persistence in their work and play in all areas of the curriculum.
3. Children show increasing invention and imagination in their work and play in all areas of the curriculum.

Social and Emotional Development

1. Children develop and exhibit a healthy sense of self.
2. Children show increasing ability to regulate how they express their emotions.
3. Children develop healthy relationships with other children and adults.

Intellectual Development

1. Children explore with increasing understanding the physical characteristics and relationships of objects and happenings in their environment.
2. Children represent what they understand about the world through actions, objects and words.
3. Children gain, organize, and use information in increasingly complex ways.
4. Children move from solving problems through trial and error to beginning to use varied strategies, resources, and techniques to test out possibilities.

Language and Early Literacy Development

1. Children begin to understand written language read to them from a variety of meaningful materials, use reading-like behaviors, and make progress towards becoming conventional readers.
2. Children begin to develop drawing and writing skills to communicate and express themselves effectively for a variety of purposes.

3. Children develop abilities to express themselves clearly and communicate ideas to others.
4. Children grow in their capacity to use effective listening skills and understand what is said to them.
5. Children begin to develop strategies that assist them in viewing a variety of multimedia materials effectively and critically.
6. Children develop positive attitudes about themselves as literate beings, as readers, writers, speakers, viewers and listeners.
7. Children begin to understand that communication is diverse and that people communicate in a variety of ways.

Creative Development

1. Children show how they feel, what they think and what they are learning through experiences in the visual arts.
2. Children show how they feel, what they think and what they are learning through listening, participating in, and creating instrumental and vocal music experiences.
3. Children show how they feel, what they think, and what they are learning through movement experiences.
4. Children show how they feel, what they think and what they are learning through dramatic play.
5. Children develop rich and rewarding aesthetic lives.

Physical Development and Health

1. Children increase their ability to understand and control their bodies and learn that regular physical activity can enhance their overall physical, social and mental health.
2. Children experience growth in gross motor development and use large muscles to improve a variety of gross motor skills in both structured and unstructured settings.
3. Children experience growth in fine motor development and use small muscles to improve a variety of fine motor skills in both structured and unstructured settings.

4. Children participate in activities that encourage self-motivation, emphasize cooperation, and minimize competition.
5. Children begin to have knowledge about and make age-appropriate healthy choices in daily life.
6. Children recognize that they have a role in preventing accidents or potential emergencies.
7. Children become aware of and begin to develop nutritional habits that contribute to good health.

Early Learning in Mathematics

1. Children begin to develop processes and strategies for solving mathematical problems.
2. Children begin to develop skills of comparing and classifying objects, relationships and events in their environment.
3. Children begin to develop the ability to seek out and to recognize patterns in everyday life.
4. Children begin to develop skills of sorting and organizing information to make predictions and solve new problems.
5. Children explore and discover simple ways to measure.
6. Children can translate a problem or activity into a new form by applying emerging skills in representing, discussing, reading, writing and listening.
7. Children begin to develop an understanding of numbers and explore simple mathematical processes using concrete materials.
8. Children build their visual thinking skills through explorations with shape and the spaces in their classrooms and neighborhoods.

Early Learning in Science

1. Children develop positive attitudes and gain knowledge about science through observation and active play.
2. Children show a beginning awareness of scientific knowledge related to living and nonliving things.
3. Children show a beginning awareness of scientific knowledge related to the earth.

Early Learning in Social Studies

1. Children begin to understand and interpret their relationships and place within their own environment.
2. Children begin to recognize that many different influences shape people's thinking and behavior.

3. Children show growth in their understanding of the concept of time and begin to realize that they are a part of history, which includes people, places and events, and stories about the present and the past.
4. Children begin to learn about the reasons for rules and laws, the importance of a democratic process, and the responsibilities of being a member of the classroom, a family, and a community.
5. Children increase their understanding about how basic economic concepts relate to their lives.
6. Children increase their understanding of the relationship between people and their environment and begin to recognize the importance of taking care of the resources in their environment.

Early Skills in Using Technology

1. Children explore and use various types of technology tools.
2. Children can name various components of computer systems and use various input devices.
3. Children work cooperatively with others while using technology tools.
4. Children demonstrate responsible handling of technology equipment.

The Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten are meant to apply to all three and four-year-old children in Michigan, both those whose development is typical and those with differing abilities and backgrounds. It recognizes that young children's growth, development and learning are highly individual. Young children learn at different rates in the various areas of their development, and not all children master skills and content within a domain in the same order, although there are patterns to their development.

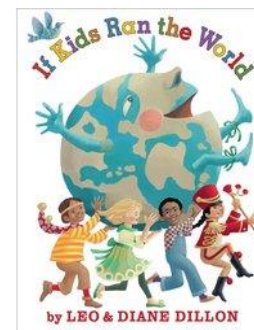
For further information on Early Childhood Standards visit:
<http://www.michigan.gov/mde>

The featured books in the calendar are readily available at the library. The activities are just examples of fun explorations for children who are 3 & 4 years old. Please use as ideas for a wide array of discussions and activities that are designed to extend language and learning. Have fun!



Early Learning activities connected to learning expectations

Created to accompany the book: **IF KIDS RAN THE WORLD** by Leo & Diane Dillon



Approaches to learning: Full of light, learning and laughter, this book is created by the Dillons, twice winners of the Caldecott Medal, the award for the best picture book of the year. The story asks children to think about what they would do, if they were in charge of the world. How would they help the hungry, the poor, the sick? It's full of great and inspiring examples of the things children could do, building on President Franklin Roosevelt's "Second Bill of Rights" mentioned during a 1944 speech -- the world's universal basic needs.

Social-emotional development: What would you do to make the world a kinder, better place? Talk about what it means to be kind, forgiving, welcoming, thoughtful. What could children do to help others who don't have enough food? Who don't have a nice house to live in? Who are constantly bullied or teased at school? For young children, it's sometimes very hard to think of others first instead of themselves. What is the first thing they would do to help a friend who was sad? Be sure to make teachable moments out of everyday classroom situations.

Intellectual development: What does it mean to be peaceful? If you smile at someone who is sad, do you think that might help how they feel? Ask the children what other things they could do for their friends that aren't mentioned in the book. What would their best friends need if they asked them? Empathy for others is sometimes difficult for very young children to understand -- give them some examples of things they could do for their family members and friends.

Language and early literacy development: Many words are repeated throughout this book -- world, people, kinder, better, safe, lonely, friendly, etc. See if the children can spot them easily after a first reading. What does it mean to love? To take care? To remember? To feel safe? Can you think of other words that mean the same thing?

Music: Reading through this book, one song immediately comes to mind -- "It's a Small, Small World". Anyone who has been to Disneyland knows it by heart! Sing this song with the children and talk about the lyrics, from smiling to laughter to hope to fear. "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands" is also another easily-learned song for this age level.

Creative development: Start a "random acts of kindness" day or week. What does random mean? Can the children suggest ideas about being kind, helpful, peaceful?

January – Global Thinking and Cultures Read-Alike Books for the Month of January:

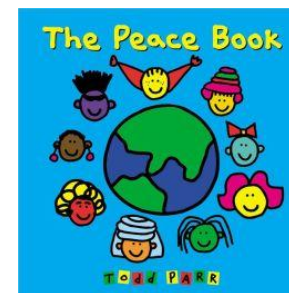
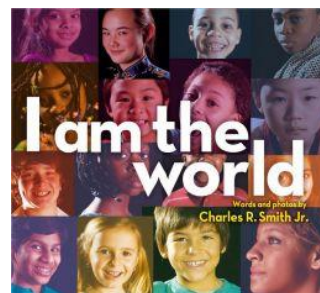
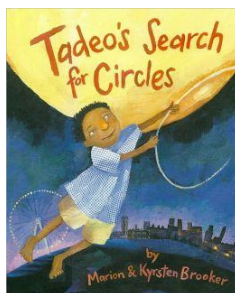
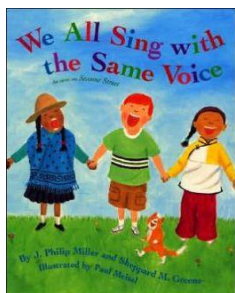
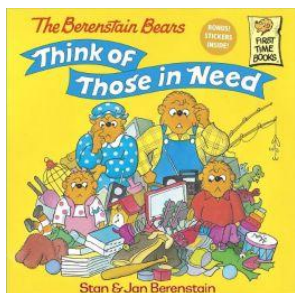
THE BERENSTAIN BEARS THINK OF THOSE IN NEED by Stan and Jan Berenstain

WE ALL SING WITH THE SAME VOICE by J. Philip Miller and Sheppard M. Greene

TADEO'S SEARCH FOR CIRCLES by Marion Brooker

I AM THE WORLD by Charles R. Smith Jr.

THE PEACE BOOK by Todd Parr



JANUARY

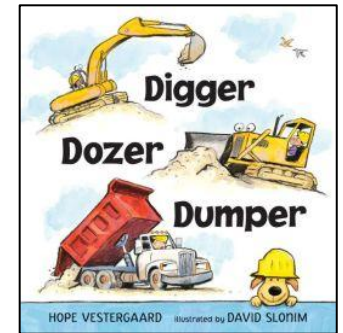
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| | | | | 1 HAPPY NEW YEAR! What is your wish for the world for the new year? Draw it. | 2 If you ran the world, what new laws would you create? | 3 What kind of clothes would you like to wear every day? Draw & color your favorite outfit. |
| 4 PLAY! | 5 Look at a map of the world. Talk about what you see. | 6 Learn how to say hello in another language - Hola, Bonjour, Jambo, Chao'. | 7 What is the name of the city you live in? The state? The country? | 8 Draw a picture of a rainbow. How many colors did you use? | 9 Bring a tub of snow indoors. Make a miniature snow family and their house. | 10 Be a nice neighbor. Surprise a neighbor with a plate of cookies. |
| 11 PLAY! | 12 In the winter we have a white world. Make a list of words that begin with 'w'. | 13 Sprinkle salt in a box top. Make letters in the salt. | 14 Read a book - show the cover and make predictions about the story. | 15 Mystery objects. Hold a common object out of sight. Describe it and have the child guess what it is. | 16 Name all the winter clothes that you can. Do this for the other seasons. | 17 Make a pile of mittens and socks. Match them. |
| 18 PLAY! | 19 MLK Jr. DAY! Dr. Martin Luther King had a dream that we would all be free. What does freedom mean? | 20 Name 10 things you can do to be kind to others. | 21 Discuss how even a child's peaceful actions can help the world. | 22 Teach how to recognize 911. Teach when and how to dial. | 23 Make a list of the first names of family members. | 24 How old are you? Trace and write this number. Do this for other family members. Put their ages on a timeline. |
| 25 PLAY! | 26 <u>Australia Day!</u> Find a book in the library about kangaroos and koalas. | 27 Use ice cubes to make an igloo village. | 28 Write a simple sentence. Put each word on an index card & put them in sentence order. | 29 <u>National Puzzle Day!</u> Do puzzles today. | 30 Make your own alphabet puzzle with your favorite things listed under each letter that begin with that letter. | 31 <u>Today is National Backward Day.</u> Dress backwards & eat a backwards lunch or supper (dessert first). |



Early Learning activities connected to learning expectations

Created to accompany the book: **DIGGER, DOZER, DUMPER**
by Hope Vestergaard

Approaches to learning: Michigan author, Hope Vestergaard, rhymes through the day with several different types of trucks, from street sweepers to snowplows. What is your favorite type of truck? Meet these hardworking movers and groovers!



Music: "Wheels on the Bus" -- "Down by the Station" -- "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" -- there are lots of great songs easy enough for preschoolers to learn about different types of transportation. Try this fun fingerplay: This is a choo-choo train (bend arms at elbows) puffing down the track. (rotate forearms in rhythm) Now it's going forward, (push arms forward, continue motion) now it's going back! (pull arms back using same motion) Now the bell is ringing. (pull cord with closed fist) Now the whistle blows. (hold fist near mouth and blow "Toot, Toot!") What a lot of noise it makes (cover ears with hands) everywhere it goes! (stretch out arms)

Creative development: The "No Time for Flash Cards" website has some easy and creative car and truck craft instructions: <http://www.notimeforflashcards.com/2012/07/19-car-and-truck-crafts-for-kids.html>. Painting on paper with toy vehicles (especially ones that rev!) becomes a fun and messy way to build roads, streets, pathways in a city designed by kids. Try drawing trucks, steamrollers, semis, forklifts and more from the wonderful illustrations in the book. What truck would YOU like to be?

Language and early literacy: Have the children listen for the rhyming words within each truck poem in the book. Right-tight, do-through, ditch-which, going-blowing. Write the words on a chalkboard or whiteboard and ask them if they can recognize them again as you repeat the poem. Underline the words on the board as you read-aloud.

February – Transportation

Read-Alike Books for the Month of February:

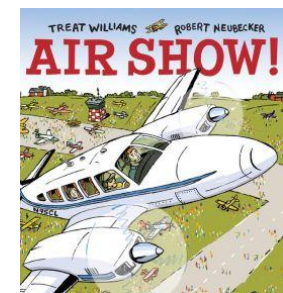
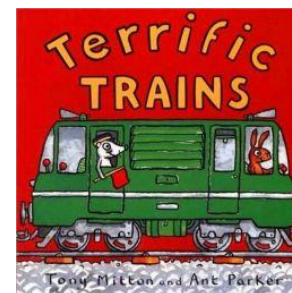
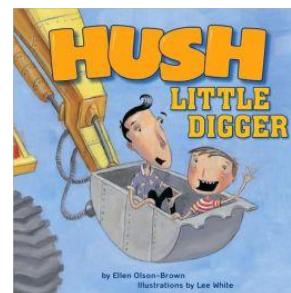
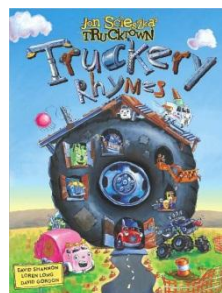
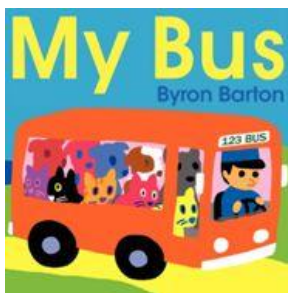
MY BUS by Byron Barton

TRUCKERY RHYMES by Jon Scieszka

HUSH, LITTLE DIGGER by Ellen Olson-Brown

TERRIFIC TRAINS by Tony Mitton and Ant Parker

AIR SHOW! by Treat Williams and Robert Neubecker



FEBRUARY

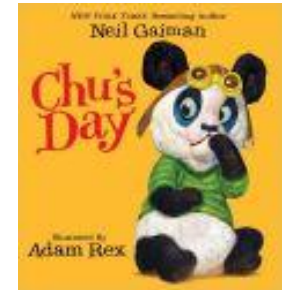
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
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| 1 | 2 GROUNDHOG DAY! Go outside to see if you can see your shadow. Lie down on a piece of paper & trace a shadow. | 3 <u>Snowplows</u> . On a counting chart, keep track of every snowplow you see this month. | 4 How do you get to school or to the store? By bus, car or train? Draw this vehicle. | 5 <u>Count Tires</u> . How many tires are on a car, bus, semi-truck? Which has the most? | 6 What colors are on a traffic light? What do they mean? Draw a traffic light. | 7 Draw a picture of a stop sign. What shape is it? Stop begins with 's'. Trace and say "ssssss". |
| 8 PLAY! | 9 Have you ever been on an airplane? Which of your favorite things would you pack for your trip? | 10 Truck begins with the letter 't'. Glue toothpicks on paper to make big and small 't's. | 11 Make a list together of everyone you will send a Valentine to. | 12 LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY Do rubbings with Lincoln pennies. Talk about names and values of a penny, nickel and dime. | 13 Sign your name (or first letter) on every Valentine card. You can also trace your hand. | 14 VALENTINE'S DAY! Make a book of "what I love to do". Make a page for each month of the year. |
| 15 PLAY! <u>National Gum Drop Day</u> . Make a truck shaped cake & add gumdrops for detail & headlights. | 16 PRESIDENT'S DAY! How many presidents can you name? We have had 43. Draw 43 circles. | 17 Make a name train with all the letters of your first name. Add a paper engine at the front and a caboose to the back. | 18 <u>Find the rhyme</u> . Say 3 words where 2 of them rhyme. Have the child name 2 rhyming words. | 19 <u>Chinese tangrams</u> . Cut paper in geometric shapes. Use the shapes to form common objects. | 20 Talk about each feeling word: happy, sad, scared, mad, frustrated, lonely, embarrassed. Use examples of when these were felt. | 21 Love begins with the letter 'L'. Make a list of other words that begin with 'L'. |
| 22 PLAY! | 23 It's cold outside. Play music and move to the beat. Occasionally stop the music and FREEZE. | 24 February is <u>Dental Health Month</u> . Read a book about teeth brushing: <i>Have you Ever Seen a Moose Brushing?</i> | 25 Make a personal pack of tissue with kleenex and a zip loc bag. Practice zip loc for fine motor exercise. Decorate bag. | 26 Play Missing Object. Look at 3 items, turn head, remove one item. Which one is missing? | 27 Visit the library and check out some books. (All books from this calendar are available.) | 28 <u>National Tooth Fairy Day!</u> Practice brushing your teeth today. Take an up close picture of your smile. Draw a self-portrait of you smiling. |
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Early Learning activities connected to learning expectations

Created to accompany the book: **CHU'S DAY** by Adam Rex

Approaches to learning: Let's look at the cover of the book, "*Chu's Day*". The author is Neil Gaiman and the illustrator is Adam Rex. (Review what the words author and illustrator mean.) As you look at the picture of Chu, what does he seem to be feeling on this day?



Social Emotional Development: Watch *Kung Fu Panda*. Usually a Kung Fu Master is fast and nimble and a panda is slow and cumbersome. *Kung Fu Panda* does a great job of achieving what seems to be impossible. Talk about what dreams you would like to achieve one day.

Language and Early Literacy: When Chu sneezed he would say... AAaachooooooooo! What letters do you hear in this sneeze sound? Practice making the letter 'O' in a variety of sizes. How many different ways can you say AAaachooooooooo? Talk about how people you know have their own style of sneeze.

Mathematics: Read the book *Panda Math* by Ann Whitehead. It tells the story of the first Panda cub born at the San Diego Zoo and teaches a few basic stories about subtraction. The stories can be drawn and retold in pictures and graphs and simple illustrations for a young listener.

Creative and Physical Development: Read *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. Read through the text of the story and practice the sound effects for: swishing grass, splashy river, squelchy mud, tripping in the forest, howling snowstorm, and tiptoe in the cave. Explain key words: under, over and through. Set up an obstacle course and narrate the story as children go through it. *Bear Hunt* can be found at: www.activityvillage.co.uk/pandas.

March –Animals

Read-Alike Books for the Month of March:

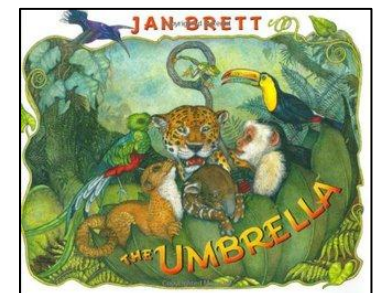
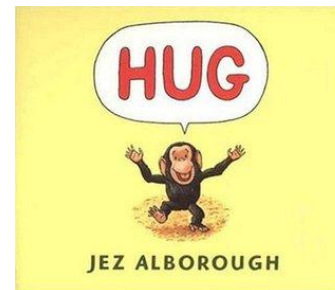
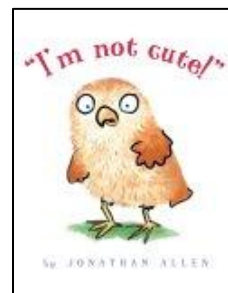
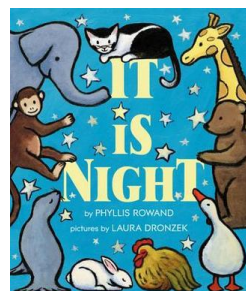
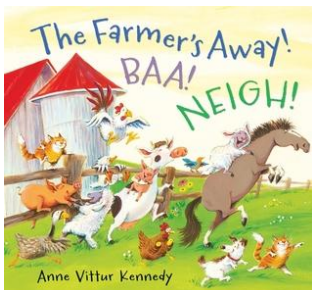
THE FARMER'S AWAY! BAA! NEIGH! by Anne Vittur Kennedy

IT IS NIGHT by Phyllis Rowand


I'M NOT CUTE! by Jonathan Allen

HUG by Jez Alborough

THE UMBRELLA by Jan Brett

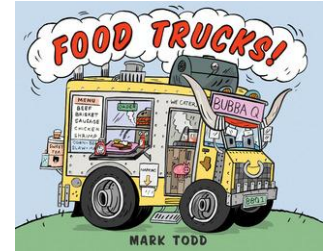


MARCH

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| <p>1 PLAY! <u>National Pig Day!</u></p> | <p>2 <u>National Read Across America Day!</u> <u>Dr. Seuss Day.</u> Cat in the Hat helps teach rhyming. Make a list of words that rhyme with cat.</p> | <p>3 <u>Cats.</u> Play a cat song and have children move like a cat, i.e., arch their back, curl up, purr, etc.</p> | <p>4 <u>Mammal.</u> A mammal is an animal that: has body hair, has 3 middle ear bones, and feeds babies with milk. Name some mammals.</p> | <p>5 <u>Guess the animals.</u> Place animal cookies in a bag. Pull out 1 at a time. Act out the noise & movements the animal makes.</p> | <p>6 <u>National Oreo Cookie Day.</u> Make an oreo tower. Place oreos from the tower into zip lock bags marked 1-8. Count to match by # & practice closing the bags.</p> | <p>7 Trace an oreo on a piece of white paper. See how many circles you can make.</p> |
| <p>8 PLAY!</p> | <p>9 <u>Ocean Animals.</u> Name some animals that live in the ocean (not fish). Seal, otter, walrus, whales, dolphin.</p> | <p>10 <u>Porcupine.</u> Feel a wisk broom to feel the prickly end-like a porcupine feels. Draw a large oval for body & small head. Dip fork in tempera paint for quills.</p> | <p>11 Name animals that are known to live on a farm. Sing "Old MacDonald". Name animals that live in a zoo.</p> | <p>12 <u>Hippopotamus.</u> A hippo is a large mammal who spends much time in the water. Hippos weigh about 10,000 lbs. Babies weigh 60-100 lbs. How much do you weigh?</p> | <p>13 Hippo and House begin with the letter 'h'. Make a list of other words that begin with 'h'.</p> | <p>14 <u>Zebra/Leopard.</u> How are a zebra and leopard the same & different? Look at pictures.</p> |
| <p>15 PLAY!</p> | <p>16 Make green finger jello. Use a shamrock cookie cutter to make jello shamrocks.</p> | <p>17 HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY! Read an Irish folktale. Play Irish music and dance a jig.</p> | <p>18 <u>Elephant.</u> Describe this animal. Did you know that elephants are very smart? They have no fingers or hands so they use their trunk to feel things.</p> | <p>19 Mix food coloring in pudding to finger paint.</p> | <p>20 SPRING! <u>Rabbit.</u> Bunny is another word for Rabbit. Rabbits have long oval ears. Draw & cut ovals. Have a rabbit snack: carrots, celery, sprouts, etc.</p> | <p>21 Sing <i>Zippitty Do Da</i>. Zip begins with the letter 'z'. Trace 'z's and have fun making the sounds.</p> |
| <p>22 PLAY!</p> | <p>23 <u>National Puppy Day!</u> Dip dog treat bones in paint & press on paper for a dog bone collage.</p> | <p>24 Use a Venn Diagram to compare cats to dogs. Place common traits in the center.</p>  | <p>25 <u>Panda.</u> The giant panda is a national treasure in its homeland China. Use a white & black paper plate to make a panda head.</p> | <p>26 The giant panda is endangered. (Explain.) There are about 1000 living in the world. Explain 'extinct'. About 140 pandas live in zoos. Extinct has a letter 'x' Practice making them.</p> | <p>27 Pandas living in zoos eat bamboo, apples, sweet potatoes, & carrots. Eat these foods today. Have a sweet potato relay.</p> | <p>28 What is your favorite book that has an animal as a character? Read it. How does it begin and end?</p> |
| <p>29 PLAY!</p> | <p>30 <u>Panda Facts.</u> Look at a map to find China. This is where the panda lives in the mountainous bamboo forest. Pandas are: bears, mammals, black & white fur, eat bamboo.</p> | <p>31 Read <i>Panda Bear, Panda Bear, What do you See?</i> Log onto the San Diego zoo to watch the panda throughout his day. Sandiegozoo.org</p> | | | | |

Early Learning activities connected to learning expectations

Created to accompany the book: **FOOD TRUCKS!** By Mark Todd



Approaches to Learning: Have you ever heard an ice cream truck drive through your neighborhood? Do you know what they sell? Have you ever bought food from a truck? What kind of food did you buy and where were you? Food trucks are becoming more and more popular and they sell every type of food. What would be your favorite food to buy? What kind of food truck do you wish would drive by your house every week?

Social-Emotional Development: Sometimes when we eat a certain kind of food, it makes you feel happy. You may like the way it tastes or it may remind you of a special day or Holiday. Some families have these special foods that they cook on special days. This is called **Comfort Food**. What food makes you feel good or comfortable? Do you usually have this food on a special day?

Intellectual Development: If a truck is a food truck, what kind of special equipment would it need inside of it?

Language and Early Literacy: After hearing about all of the food trucks in the book, which one would you like to shop at? What food sounded great to you? You heard many food facts from this book. What questions do you have about any of them? Have you ever tried to count how many licks you make while eating an ice cream cone? This book has an answer for the average number a person would make. Guess what it could be? Does your family have a traditional food that you make every year? What is it and what special time of year do you eat this food?

Mathematics and Science: The owner of a food truck would need to have a cash register and know how to count money. Sort pretend or real money into like categories. Organize into a tray or pretend cash register. Practice counting. Line up the number of pennies that you have in a nickel, dime and quarter, etc.

Creative Development: Go to the grocery store to get large boxes. Line up the boxes to make a food truck. Cut out a door so that you may go inside. Decide what kind of food this truck will sell. Paint it to go with the food idea. What name will you give this truck? Ask someone to help make a name sign.

Physical Development and Health: Plan a menu for a food truck using the categories from the Food Pyramid. Talk about how many servings of each food you should eat every day.



April – Cultures and Food

Read-Alike Books for the Month of April:

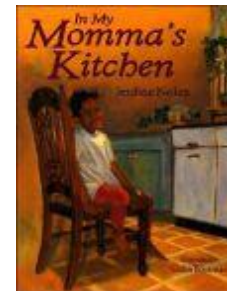
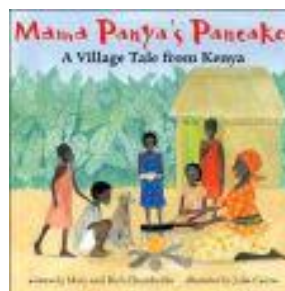
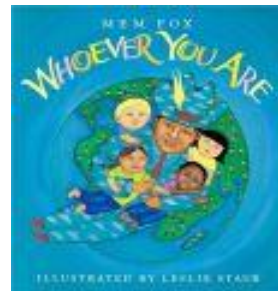
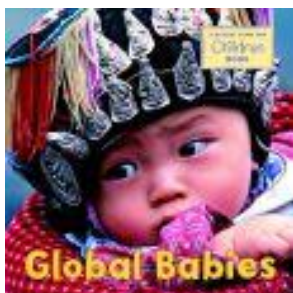
GLOBAL BABIES by the Global Fund for Children

WHOEVER YOU ARE by Mem Fox

MAMA PANYA'S PANCAKES by Mary and Rich Chamberlin

IN MY MOMMA'S KITCHEN by Jerdine Nolen

THE TORTILLA FACTORY by Gary Paulsen



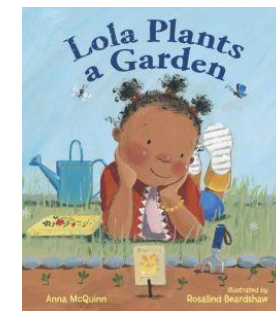
APRIL

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| | | | <p>1 APRIL FOOL'S DAY! Tell all the jokes you know. Make up a silly April Fool's joke for mom or dad.</p> | <p>2 <u>National Peanut Butter & Jelly Day.</u> Make a p, b & j sandwich with a tortilla.</p> | <p>3 PASSOVER Read <i>Max Makes a Cake</i>. Max's family has cake on Passover. What is your favorite family cake? Draw it.</p> | <p>4 <u>Nuts.</u> Talk about the different types of nuts. Sort shelled nuts. Use to count into groups of 5, 10.</p> |
| <p>5 PLAY!</p> | <p>6 Read <i>Strega Nona</i>. Use pasta to glue on heavy paper to make a landscape or design. Boil a pot of pasta to eat.</p> | <p>7 <u>Soup today?</u> Take out every pot in the kitchen. Line them up from smallest to biggest. Pick one to cook soup.</p> | <p>8 <u>National Empanada Day.</u> An empanada is a little pie - closed up like a bundle. Make them out of playdough & use a fork to close.</p> | <p>9 Rice is a food eaten around the world. Make colored rice for a sensory tray. Recipe at: blogmemom.com</p> | <p>10 List objects that come in pairs: i.e., salt & pepper, shoes, etc.</p> | <p>11 Pancake Day! Create one with your favorite ingredients (from a long list). Give your special pancake a name & enjoy it!</p> |
| <p>12 PLAY! <u>National Grilled Cheese Day</u></p> | <p>13 <u>Week of the Young Child.</u> Visit your local children's museum to celebrate children and play.</p> | <p>14 Create a food truck with chairs, blankets & boxes. Drive it and call out to your customers.</p> | <p>15 <u>Drive</u> begins with the letter 'd'. Make a list of all the 'd' words you can think of.</p> | <p>16 <u>National Wear Your Pajamas to Work Day</u> Wear your pajamas all day. Describe what your favorite pajamas would be.</p> | <p>17 Read <i>Too Many Tamales</i>. Make pretend tamales by rolling paper or corn husks around cotton balls & tie with ribbon.</p> | <p>18 Name all the fruits & vegetables you know. List some you wish to try.</p> |
| <p>19 PLAY!</p> | <p>20 Read <i>The First Book of Sushi</i>. Make kid friendly sushi. Recipe can be found at mindful.momma.com.</p> | <p>21 Use small squares & circles of colored paper to create a sushi collage.</p> | <p>22 <u>National Jelly Bean Day.</u> Use beans to identify colors. Make jelly bean rainbow pictures.</p> | <p>23 <u>Rice Krispy Earth.</u> Use basic rice krispy treat recipe & divide into 2 to add blue & green food coloring. Use each to form an earth.</p> | <p>24 Read <i>Dim Sum for Everyone</i>. Eat a meal on many little dishes and drink hot tea.</p> | <p>25 Read <i>Chopsticks</i>. Use chopsticks to eat today. Use them for a fine motor game such as picking up cotton balls to fill an egg carton.</p> |
| <p>26 PLAY! <u>National Pretzel Day</u></p> | <p>27 Estimate the number of baby carrots in a bag. Count them & eat some.</p> | <p>28 <u>Ride a city bus.</u> After the ride, have child dictate their experience into a story that the adult records.</p> | <p>29 Have the child illustrate the bus ride story.</p> | <p>30 Match small & capital letters. Use stick pretzels to make some capital letters.</p> | | |



Early Learning activities connected to learning expectations

Created to accompany the book: **LOLA PLANTS A GARDEN** by Anna McQuinn



Approaches to learning: Lola loves to read. After reading a book of garden poems, she's determined to plant her own garden. Where should she start? With gardening books from the library, of course! Make a list of favorite flowers, buy some seeds, and wait and watch.

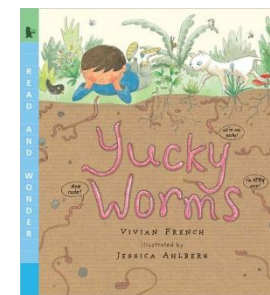
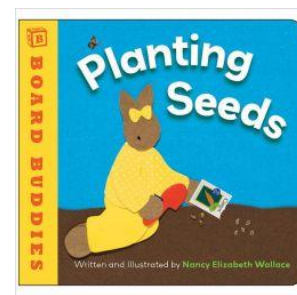
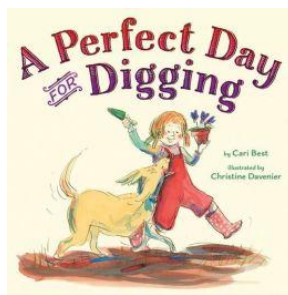
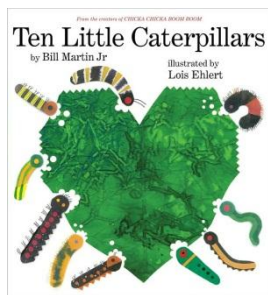
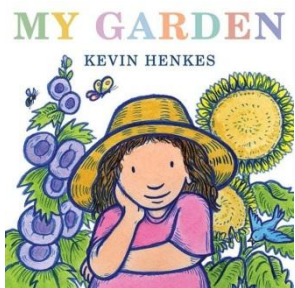
Creative development: Lola's favorite poem is "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary". Lola then writes a poem of her own which is highlighted on the last page of the book. What poem would you like to write? What flowers do you like best? Draw different sizes of dots on a page (seeds) and ask the children to draw what they think will grow out of those seeds.

Mathematics and science: Plant several different kinds of flower seeds in the classroom and keep track of which ones grow the fastest, the biggest, the tallest. How many days did it take before you saw those tiny green shoots? Keep track on the calendar. Why do the plants need sunlight to grow?

Language and early literacy development: Lola makes her own flower book while she waits for the flowers to grow. Cut out pictures of flowers and other plants from magazines and catalogs to paste into your own book, and add your own favorite poems and fingerplays. "Here's a little seed in the dark, dark ground. Out comes the warm sun, yellow and round. Down comes the rain, wet and slow. Up comes the little seed, grow, grow, grow!"

**May – Growing, creative writing and rhyme
Read-Alike Books for the Month of May:**

- MY GARDEN by Kevin Henkes
- TEN LITTLE CATERPILLARS by Bill Martin Jr.
- A PERFECT DAY FOR DIGGING by Cari Best
- PLANTING SEEDS by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace
- YUCKY WORMS by Vivian French



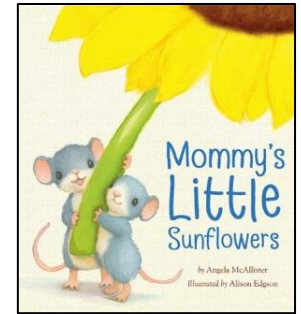
MAY

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| | | | | | 1 <u>May Day</u> . Celebrate May. Go for a walk and make a list of words that rhyme with May. | 2 <u>National Mother Goose Day</u> . Recite <i>Mary, Mary Quite Contrary</i> . If you were to plant a garden, what would you wish to put in it? |
| 3 PLAY! | 4 Open a pretend flower shop with artificial flowers. Make signs & displays for your store. | 5 CINCO DE MAYO This is a celebration day for Mexican heritage. Count to 5 in Spanish & use yellow paint to create a sunflower. | 6 Recite <i>Twinkle Twinkle Little Star</i> . Use sponges and cut out stars and moon and dip in paint. | 7 Visit website: www.3drhymes.com . Watch animated children rhymes such as <i>Mary, Mary Quite Contrary</i> . | 8 Recite <i>Little Miss Muffet</i> . Make a spider out of a small paper plate and black paper. | 9 Make "worms in the dirt". Chocolate pudding with gummy worms hidden inside. |
| 10 MOTHER'S DAY! Make your mother a beautiful card! | 11 Visit website: www.thevirtualvine.com/nurseryrhymes.html . Recite <i>Jack be Nimble</i> . | 12 Practice jumping over objects. Make a list of objects that begin with 'J'. | 13 Recite <i>Hey Diddle Diddle</i> . Have a relay with a dish and a spoon. | 14 Recite <i>Baa Baa Black Sheep</i> . Precut paper into sheep. Glue cotton balls and add detail. | 15 Recite <i>Humpty Dumpty</i> . Do a collage on an oval shape of broken egg shells, paper, marker. | 16 Practice saying the days of the week. What day is today? |
| 17 PLAY! | 18 Recite <i>Three Blind Mice</i> . Wear a blindfold and play pin the tail on the mice. | 19 Gather leaves and glue them on paper to make a collage. | 20 Recite <i>Star Light, Star Bright</i> . Use cut out stars to record child's wishes. | 21 Recite <i>Hickory, Dickory Dock</i> . Role play position words: up/down, on/off, near/far, high/low. | 22 Trace your hand on paper & see what kind of flower you can make with the design. | 23 Create a rhyme book from all printed rhymes. Child may illustrate. |
| 24 PLAY! | 25 MEMORIAL DAY Talk about people you will <u>always</u> remember and why. | 26 Recite <i>Old King Cole</i> . Make a crown. | 27 Recite <i>Little Boy Blue</i> . Find objects in the house that are blue. | 28 Review all nursery rhymes learned to date. Hold a Nursery Rhyme Theatre. Use props and role play. | 29 Flower begins with the letter 'f'. Make a list of all words that begin with 'f'. | 30 <u>Water a Flower Day!</u> Bring flowers to share. Talk about them. Draw them. |
| 31 PLAY! | | | | | | |



Early Learning activities connected to learning expectations

Created to accompany the book: **MOMMY'S LITTLE SUNFLOWERS**
by: Angela McAllister



Approaches to learning: This is a lovely story about two siblings trying to find a "funflower" for their Mother, after one of them has eaten the sunflower seed the older of the two brought home from school. Sharing, discovering, crafting and creating are themes that are prominent in the story, leading to a very big adventure! Beautiful illustrations of spring and summer seasons throughout.

Social-emotional development: The two brother mice in this story are great examples of sibling cooperation. The younger brother, Scamp, doesn't understand how some seeds will grow into huge flowers. Have you ever eaten sunflower seeds? Or seen a huge field of sunflowers growing in the country? Scamp is just young enough that all these experiences are new to him. Scurry will guide him through the countryside, meeting a bird, a cow, and some bees, before they realize that growing seeds takes time and patience.

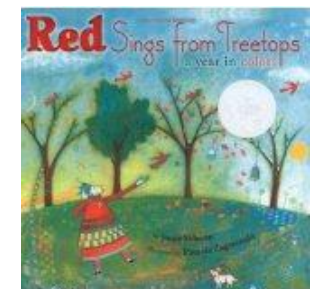
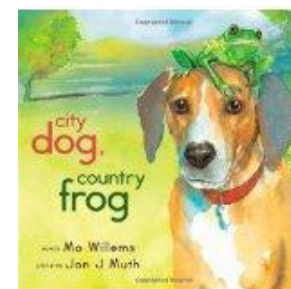
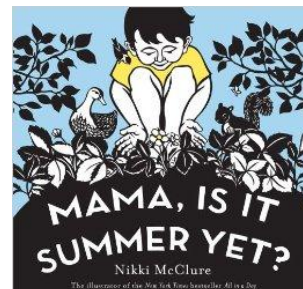
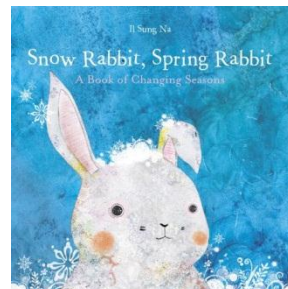
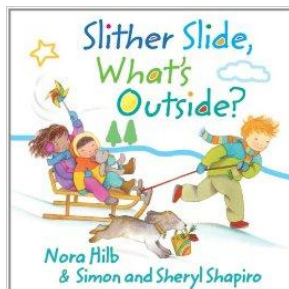
Science: What other flowers have big seeds? What flowers have big bulbs? What happens to plants during the cold winter? Plant some dahlias during the summer, or amaryllis during the winter season, or tulips during the fall, to show what a beautiful display can come from a simple plot of dirt. Keep track of a nearby tree throughout the school year -- what happens during the spring, summer, winter, fall? With a laminated construction paper tree, replicate what is happening outside, with different colored leaves. Do a taste test with different colors of apples. Which ones do you like the best? Make a four seasons feltboard: <http://craftsbyamanda.com/2013/02/4-seasons-felt-board-craft.html> Easy and beautiful!

Language and early learning development: Try this fun fingerplay/song to explain the four seasons: "Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall (to the tune of "This Old Man") Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall, there are seasons, four in all. Weather changes, sun and rain and snow. Leaves fall down and flowers grow. Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall, there are seasons, four in all. Look outside and you will see, just what season it will be!" What other words can you think of that rhyme with tree? With leaf? With flower?

June – Four Seasons

Read-Alike Books for the Month of June:

- SLITHER SLIDE, WHAT'S OUTSIDE? by Simon and Sheryl Shapiro
 SNOW RABBIT, SPRING RABBIT: A BOOK OF CHANGING SEASONS
 by Il Sung Na
 MAMA, IS IT SUMMER YET? by Nikki McClure
 CITY DOG, COUNTRY FROG by Mo Willems
 RED SINGS FROM TREETOPS: A YEAR IN COLORS by Joyce Sidman



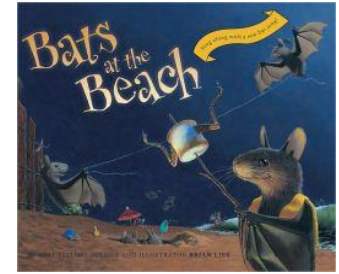
JUNE

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| | <p>1 Start a calendar for the month of June. Keep track every day if you see rain, sun, or both.</p> | <p>2 Read <i>The Tiny Seed</i> by Eric Carle. What happens to the seed throughout the year? Retell the story.</p> | <p>3 Place some birdseed on the sidewalk. Watch to see who comes to eat it.</p> | <p>4 Grass begins with the letter 'g'. Plant some grass or wheatgrass in a clear cup and watch it grow.</p> | <p>5 Look at your cereal boxes. Do you recognize any words or letters?</p> | <p>6 Join the summer reading club at the library and read, read, read.</p> |
| <p>7 PLAY!</p> | <p>8 Read a story and retell the story. How did it start and end?</p> | <p>9 Find rocks outside and put in a jar. Estimate how many you found. Count them by 1's, 2's, 5's, 10's.</p> | <p>10 Make a list of all known insects. Draw your favorite one.</p> | <p>11 <u>Bug Body Parts</u> - with a simple drawing identify: head, thorax, abdomen, antennae.</p> | <p>12 Play outside and look for insects. Gently collect them and identify.</p> | <p>13 Go outside and toss a ball, skip rope or hula hoop.</p> |
| <p>14 FLAG DAY</p> | <p>15 What are your favorite summer fruits? Make a healthy smoothie and name it!</p> | <p>16 Spiders love spring and summer. Play the Spider Ring Game. Roll die & place that amount of spiders on fingers. First with all 10 win!</p> | <p>17 Rest begins with the letter 'r'. Make a list of other words that begin with 'r'.</p> | <p>18 RAMADAN begins at sundown Talk about how you feel when you don't get enough rest. How does your body feel when it's tired?</p> | <p>19 Make a map of the yard. Take turns marking it and finding a hidden treasure.</p> | <p>20 Set up an outdoor art gallery. Enjoy nature and paint!</p> |
| <p>21 FATHER'S DAY/SUMMER! Do something special with Dad.</p> | <p>22 Take a nature walk outside. Look for leaves and signs of summer. Write a story about the signs of summer.</p> | <p>23 Go on a hunt looking for rocks. Count them and sort them.</p> | <p>24 Look at the cover of a book and predict what it will be about. Design a new cover.</p> | <p>25 Make a pretend boat on the grass with chairs. Sing <i>Row Your Boat</i> and row.</p> | <p>26 Read a book. Pick a favorite page and design a new illustration. Make a list of your top 10 favorite books.</p> | <p>27 Stash clues around the yard or house for a treasure hunt.</p> |
| <p>28 PLAY!</p> | <p>29 Make or buy brown play dough. Put sand in it for texture. Play with beach play dough.</p> | <p>30 Use the June weather calendar to make a rain & sun bar graph and pie graph.</p> | | | | |



Early Learning activities connected to learning expectations

Created to accompany the book: **BATS AT THE BEACH** by Bryan Lies



Approaches to learning: What happens on the beach at night? A family of bats bury each other in the sand, roast "bug-mallows", and sing around the campfire! The story will give children a chance to share other things they know about fun at the beach.

Science: With a large bowl or a kiddy-pool, float different items to see if they will float or sink. Will a raisin float? A leaf? A pencil? A penny? In what other ways can you find water? Talk about ice, mist, rain, etc. Using different sized glasses or containers, fill them with water. Ask the children which one has the most water, and keep track of the answers after measuring the amounts in measuring cups.

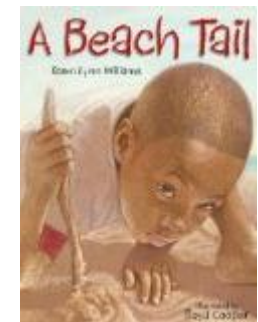
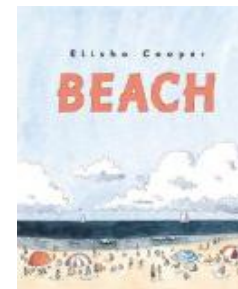
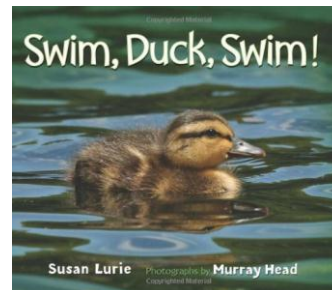
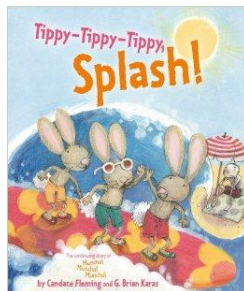
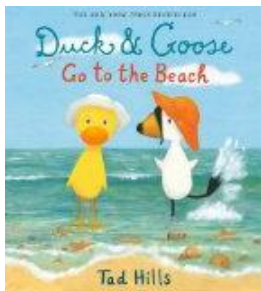
Language and early literacy development: Have the children make a sight list of words, such as "wet" and "drop". What words rhyme with them? What other words are typical words having to do with water and the beach? Build a dramatic play center with beach items, such as shells, suntan lotion bottles, beach hats, balls, sand molds, etc. for the children to play with and tell stories about. Why would they need each of these items?

Creative development: Make sidewalk "paint" with equal amounts of water and cornstarch, then add a drop of food coloring. Talk about what will happen to the paintings the next time it rains! Or just paint the sidewalk with plain water, and watch how long it takes for the painting to evaporate and disappear. Next time it rains, create a rain painting -- use a paper plate, put a few drops of different food coloring on it, and let the rain do its thing! What design did it create? With a beach word list, make a beach words scavenger hunt -- hide different clues around the room and ask the children to find all the clues on the word list and match them to the original.

July – Water

Read-Alike Books for the Month of July:

DUCK & GOOSE GO TO THE BEACH by Tad Hills
 TIPPY-TIPPY-TIPPY, SPLASH! by Candace Fleming and G. Brian Karas
 SWIM, DUCK, SWIM! by Susan Lurie
 BEACH by Elisha Cooper
 A BEACH TAIL by Karen Lynn Williams



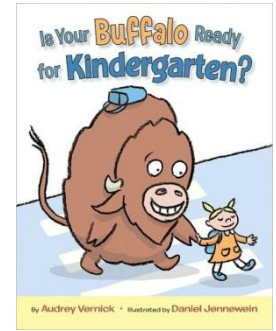
JULY

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|---|
| | | | <p>1 Have you ever been to Canada? Look at a map to learn more about North America.</p> | <p>2 Using red, white & blue paper, cut & glue to make the US Flag. Use stamp and white paint for stars.</p> | <p>3 Sing the song <i>Yankee Doodle</i>. Make a red, white & blue snack.</p> | <p>4 HAPPY 4TH OF JULY! Play patriotic music and march!</p> |
| <p>5 PLAY!</p> | <p>6 <u>Bats!</u> Look at pictures of bats. Talk about what nocturnal means. Describe how bats can be seen at night.</p> | <p>7 Begin a chart of bat facts. Bats are the only mammals that can fly. Go to www.batsatkidzone.ws.</p> | <p>8 When bats get cold, they migrate or hibernate. Talk about and then act out in dramatic play.</p> | <p>9 Sing to <i>Are you Sleeping</i>..Bats are sleeping (repeat), in a tree, in a tree. In winter they rest together, waiting for warmer weather, hibernate, hibernate.</p> | <p>10 Bat begins with a 'b' and belongs to the <u>at</u> family. Name other words that rhyme with bat.</p> | <p>11 Make bubbles with water, glycerin, and dish soap.</p> |
| <p>12 PLAY!</p> | <p>13 Read <i>Stellaluna</i> by Janell Cannon. How was Stellaluna different from the other birds?</p> | <p>14 <u>Make a bat.</u> Trace each hand & cut out to make wings. Fold a paper plate in half & attach wings to side. Paint black.</p> | <p>15 Use goldfish crackers to count into groups of 2's, 5's, and 10's.</p> | <p>16 Use watercolors to paint fish. Look at books or internet for colorful fish.</p> | <p>17 RAMADAN Ends at Sundown What kinds of things have you done this month?</p> | <p>18 Go pick blueberries or buy them at the market. Sort them by small, med, & large. Count groups of 10 & put them in baggies.</p> |
| <p>19 PLAY!</p> | <p>20 <u>Water Table.</u> Fill a large plastic tub. Drop objects in one at a time & guess if it will sink or float.</p> | <p>21 How many ways can you think of to keep cool when it's hot?</p> | <p>22 What letters do you know? Practice writing them in sand.</p> | <p>23 <u>National Hot Dog Day.</u> Cook together and talk about safety tips for eating hot dogs.</p> | <p>24 How many vegetables can you name? Vegetable begins with the letter 'v'.</p> | <p>25 Let the child(ren) dictate what they would like to do today. Make a list of choices.</p> |
| <p>26 PLAY!</p> | <p>27 <u>Fish Freeze Dance.</u> Swim while the music plays. Freeze when it stops.</p> | <p>28 Have a car wash. Fill sponges with water and practice squeezing them out.</p> | <p>29 Make water foot prints and hand prints on the sidewalk.</p> | <p>30 Trace fruit shapes on paper using real fruit. Paint or color.</p> | <p>31 Plan an outdoor picnic. What fruit and vegetable do you pick?</p> | |



Early Learning activities connected to learning expectations

Created to accompany the book: **IS YOUR BUFFALO READY FOR KINDERGARTEN?** By Audrey Vernick



Approaches to Learning: Let me read you this book title: “*Is Your Buffalo Ready for Kindergarten?*” What is a buffalo? Have you ever heard of a kindergarten for large animals? Is this story going to be real or fiction? (explain fiction if needed) Do you think this story will be serious or silly? The author has used a buffalo in this story to help get kids to laugh at the first day of school. Listen to this funny story and then we will talk about how this buffalo may feel the same things as you on a first day of school.

Social-Emotional Development: What were some of the things that the Buffalo worried about in the story? What do you worry about when you hear you are going to a new preschool or school? How do most kids feel on the first day or so? What can you do about this? Buffalo had to learn about sharing. What are your rules for sharing and caring?

Language and Early Literacy: The Buffalo in this story had many different kinds of feelings and needed to try some new ways to be with friends. What do the following feeling words mean: shy, worried, frustrated, cheerful and friendly? Write these words out for a visual reminder. Listen for them in the story and as you hear each one of them, place a finger up. After the story please give an example of why the buffalo felt each of these feelings.

Mathematics: Buffalo liked to build with blocks. Use blocks to build a structure as tall as you can. Is it as tall as you are? Lay down and have someone line up blocks to match your height? Stand up and count how many blocks tall you are. Use blocks to make a variety of patterns.

Fine Motor and Sensory: Real buffalos like to play in the mud. Make some fabulous indoor mud. Bring in dirt from outdoors for a sensory table or tub. Mix the dirt with a bit of sand (2/3 dirt and 1/3 sand) and water as needed. Add sticks, leaves and other natural items. Also include tools to dig with, containers, muffin tins, pans, plastic animals and insects, etc. You may want to do this activity outside or place this on top of a vinyl tablecloth and supply aprons. Mud is messy and fun!

Creative Development:

The buffalo in this story could not finger paint because he had no fingers, he had hooves. Cut hoof shapes out of sponges and paint a hoof masterpiece. Be sure it is a MASTERPIECE!

Physical Development and Health: In this story the buffalo tries to play Hide & Seek. Play this game outside or in the building in a defined space.

August – Getting ready for School

Read-Alike Books for the Month of August:

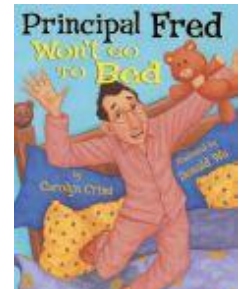
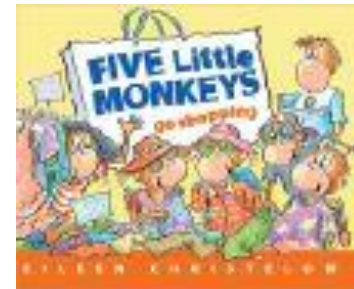
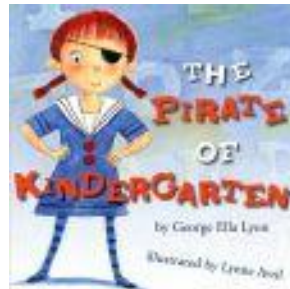
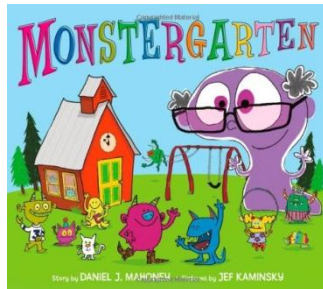
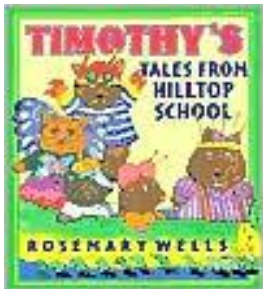
TIMOTHY’S TALES FROM HILLTOP SCHOOL by Rosemary Wells

MONSTERGARTEN by Daniel J. Mahoney

THE PIRATE OF KINDERGARTEN by George Ella Lyon

FIVE LITTLE MONKEYS GO SHOPPING by Eileen Cristelow

PRINCIPAL FRED WON’T GO TO BED by Carolyn Crimi

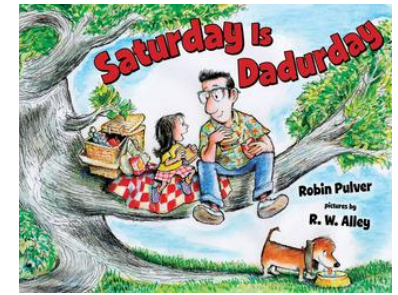


AUGUST

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| <p>2 PLAY!</p> <p><u>National Kid's Day</u> Play Like a KID!</p> | <p>3 <u>National Watermelon Day</u> Hide a watermelon outside & give children hints to locate the dinosaur egg. Shhhh!</p> | <p>4 Estimate the number of seeds in the watermelon. Save them to count into groups of 10.</p> | <p>5 Tear pictures from a magazine to paste on a collage. Can you find the letters to make your name?</p> | <p>6 Count the number of steps it takes to walk to the corner.</p> | <p>7 List all of the rooms in your house. Where will you practice your school work? Where will you keep your supplies?</p> | <p>8 Walk to the closest playground & talk about playground safety.</p> |
| <p>9 PLAY!</p> | <p>10 Use sidewalk chalk. Play hopscotch.</p> | <p>11 Name all of the games & sports you can play with a ball. Play kickball.</p> | <p>12 Ask 3 adults where they went to school. What do they remember about their first day? What was their favorite game to play?</p> | <p>13 <u>Grandparent's Day/Rosh Hashanah</u> Dictate a letter to a grandparent. Have an adult write it. Draw a picture of you with them.</p> | <p>14 <u>Cookie Cutter Art.</u> Trace the cutters to make a collage.</p> | <p>15 Make a list of everything you need for school.</p> |
| <p>16 PLAY!</p> | <p>17 Sometimes people (or buffaloes) are shy because they feel different. Everyone is special. What makes you special? Draw this.</p> | <p>18 Bring an animal to school. Instead of a buffalo, what animal would you like to bring to school? Why?</p> | <p>19 Draw a picture of one thing you will do to get ready for school.</p> | <p>20 The buffalo got mad when people called him names. What are ways that you can calm down when this happens to you?</p> | <p>21 <u>Back Pack.</u> What would a buffalo put in his? What would you put in yours?</p> | <p>22 <u>National Tooth Fairy Day.</u> Read <i>Dear Tooth Fairy</i>. Make a mouth: 2 apple wedges for lips, peanut butter gums & mini marshmallows for teeth.</p> |
| <p>23 PLAY!</p> | <p>24 Learn first & last names, address & phone number.</p> | <p>25 What comforts you? Find an object to put in child's backpack that brings comfort, i.e., family picture, stuffed animal.</p> | <p>26 <u>National Dog Day.</u> Make a list of all the dogs you know. Draw a picture of your favorite dog ever. Why do you love them?</p> | <p>27 Create a morning routine & practice it before preschool begins.</p> | <p>28 <u>Shaving Cream Painting.</u> Mix heavy shaving cream & finger paint.</p> | <p>29 <u>Play Dough.</u> 1 cup flour, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup salt, 1 cup boiling water, 3 tsp. alum, 2 Tbsp oil. Food color when cool. Can add Kool-Aid for smell/color.</p> |
| <p>30 PLAY!</p> | <p>31 Time yourself & walk for 10 minutes.</p> | | | | | |

Early Learning activities connected to learning expectations

Created to accompany the book: **SATURDAY IS DADURDAY** by Robin Pulver



Approaches to learning: Saturday is Dadurday because Mimi and her Dad make it special! Mimi is the older sibling to twins, so she's had to make sure that she still has at least some of her parents' attention. She takes Saturday as her own, and they plan all kinds of fun things to do together. Do you have special rituals for the weekend? Pancakes for breakfast on Sunday? Bike rides on Saturday? Library day on Saturday?

Social-emotional development: Talk about all the different kinds of families there are, and what makes a family -- moms, dads, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, pets. Do all the children have grandparents living nearby? Do they have aunts and uncles? Should we consider cats and dogs part of our families too? Have the children bring in photos of themselves when they were babies. Try to identify each one and match with the child today. What characteristics did they inherit from their parents (hair color, eye color, etc.)? What family traditions do you have -- holiday meals, favorite stories, annual vacation spots? Bring in a photo of your family for the bulletin board.

Creative development: On large butcher paper, have each child lay down on the floor for their body to be traced. They can draw in whatever facial expressions they'd like: eyes, nose, mouth, hair. Paste on a photo of the child as a nice memento for Mom and Dad, with their name and today's date. How tall is the child? How much taller do you think he or she will get?

Language and early literacy development: Create a "Family Book" for each child throughout the year by helping them fill out pages with questions, such as "I love my Mom because....", "My sister/brother and I like to.....", "My Grandmother makes the best....." Have the child add photos or drawings and they'll have a nice gift to bring home! Make lists of fun things they like to do with their families, from playing checkers to splashing in puddles to having a party for their stuffed animals.



September – Families

Read-Alike Books for the Month of September:

WHAT MOMMIES DO BEST/WHAT DADDIES DO BEST

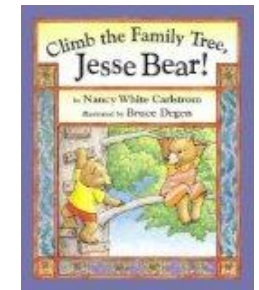
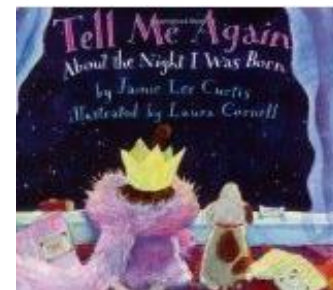
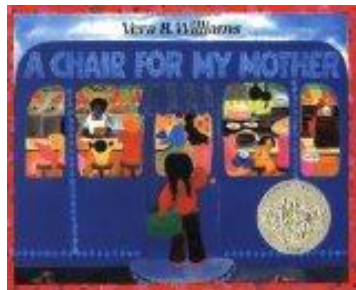
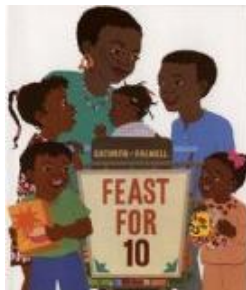
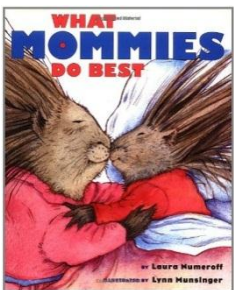
by Laura Numeroff

FEAST FOR 10 by Cathryn Falwell

A CHAIR FOR MY MOTHER by Vera B. Williams

TELL ME AGAIN ABOUT THE NIGHT I WAS BORN by Jamie Lee Curtis

CLIMB THE FAMILY TREE, JESSE BEAR! by Nancy White Carlstrom



SEPTEMBER

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| | | <p>1 Talk about how to set the table. Talk about table manners. Make a name card for everyone in the family.</p> | <p>2 Read a story and talk about the beginning, middle and end.</p> | <p>3 Trace shoes of every family member on white paper. Color and cut out.</p> | <p>4 <u>Touch Bags</u>. Place objects in lunch bags. Touch with bag closed to guess what is inside.</p> | <p>5 Trace or write the names of everybody in your family.</p> |
| <p>6 PLAY!</p> | <p>7 LABOR DAY What jobs do the people in your family do? What do you want to do one day?</p> | <p>8 <u>International Literacy Day</u>. Read a book challenge. How many books can you read today? Keep a list.</p> | <p>9 What is your favorite book? Have it read tonight at bedtime and <u>you</u> ask the questions!</p> | <p>10 Make a family tree. Put pictures of everyone on this tree.</p> | <p>11 Make a finger puppet for each member of your family. Use them to tell a funny story.</p> | <p>12 Call or talk to every member of your family. Ask them their birthdate and put it on a calendar.</p> |
| <p>13 Grandparent's Day Call your grandparents today!</p> | <p>14 Draw a picture of your family. Hang this up for all to see.</p> | <p>15 Have a great big family hug at the end of the day. Practice a group hug.</p> | <p>16 What is your favorite thing that you do together as a family? Draw a picture of this.</p> | <p>17 Play apple hide & seek. Hide the apple. Use hot and cold hints to find it.</p> | <p>18 Predict how many seeds an apple has. Cut into parts (fractions) and count seeds.</p> | <p>19 <u>National Talk Like a Pirate Day!</u> Ahoy Matey! How many names can you think of that begin with the letter 'm'?</p> |
| <p>20 PLAY!</p> | <p>21 Play the opposite game. Say a word & child names an opposite, i.e., up, big, sad, slow, etc.</p> | <p>22 YOM KIPPUR begins this evening Talk about your address, phone number, and stranger danger.</p> | <p>23 AUTUMN Find your home on a Google map. What neighbor should you go to if you need help? YOM KIPPUR ends</p> | <p>24 Talk about the 5 senses. Take a sound walk and on a note pad list all the sounds heard.</p> | <p>25 I See. Take pictures around the yard and neighborhood. Take a walk to find. Can you spy?</p> | <p>26 Sensory Gloves. Fill latex gloves with beans, lentils, corn starch, sugar & rice. Tie at the wrist & feel the different textures.</p> |
| <p>27 PLAY!</p> | <p>28 Practice saying the days of the week. What day is today?</p> | <p>29 Take pictures of your house inside & out. Put one picture on each page of a book & tell a story about it.</p> | <p>30 Help the child write a letter to an out-of-town relative.</p> | | | |



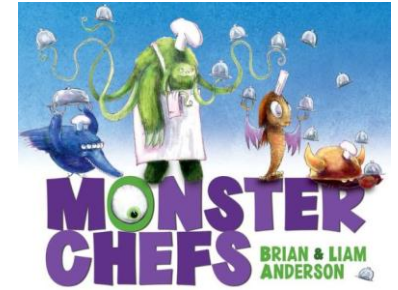
October – Food and Nutrition

Read-Alike Books for the Month of October:

- 10 HUNGRY RABBITS: COUNTING AND COLOR CONCEPTS
by Anita Lobel
- NO COOKIES? by Sarah Albee
- BEAR SAYS THANKS by Karma Wilson
- EAT YOUR PEAS, LOUISE! by Pegeen Snow
- "EAT!" CRIED LITTLE PIG by Jonathan London

Early Learning activities connected to learning expectations

Created to accompany the book: **MONSTER CHEFS** by Brian & Liam Anderson

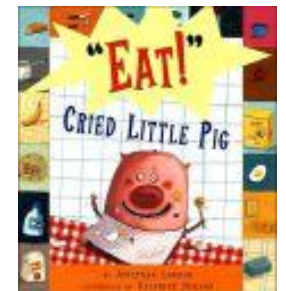
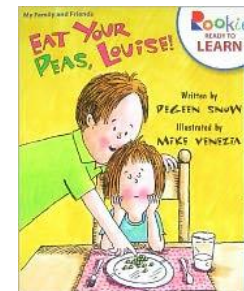
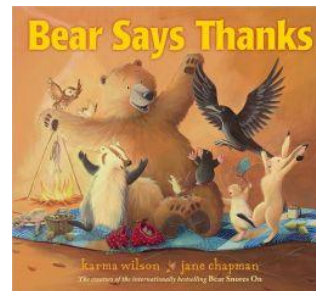
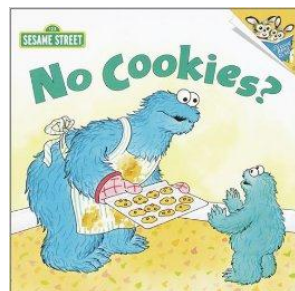
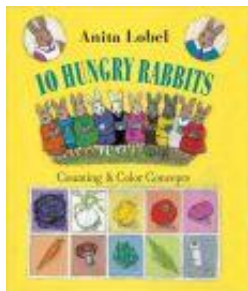


Approaches to learning: The monster king sends his four chefs out into the world to find something different for him to eat. He's tired of eating only ketchup and eyeballs. This story will challenge little ones to think of their own winning recipes and to try new foods. Based on the tried and true theme of a few of the king's subjects being sent out, to see which returns with the best result, MONSTER CHEFS is funny, fun to read aloud, and even includes its own recipe for the winning entry!

Language and early literacy development: Lots of luscious, sloppy, slathery adjectives in this book. The king bellows, he summons, he roars, he squints, he looms, he pops, he growls, he sniffs -- eventually, he dances and sings. Talk about what all these verbs mean and see if the children can do all these things too. Make a list of everyone's favorite foods. Sort them into different food types -- meats, vegetables, desserts, beverages, etc. Is there one type of food that is mentioned more than the others? Find all the words in the story that begin with the letter "s". Draw a picture of the ssssssnake! Can you think of a food that begins with each letter of the alphabet?

Mathematics and science: After reading the classic picture book "Stone Soup", have everyone bring in one vegetable from a list to make a delicious lunch! This will take some time to cook, so some of the prep will need to be done ahead of time (chopping, heating, etc.) Where do each of the vegetables go on your sorted foods list? How many different vegetables are in the soup?

Physical development and health: Set up a pretend restaurant with menus, tables, chairs, play food and play money. What will be on the menu? How much should everything cost? Who will play the waiters and waitresses, who will play the chef? Which foods will be the most nutritious? Talk about healthy food vs. junk food. Find pictures in magazines and newspapers to cut out and sort. Go on a pretend grocery shopping trip.



OCTOBER

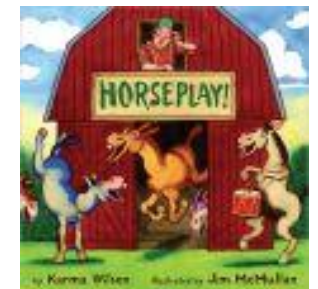
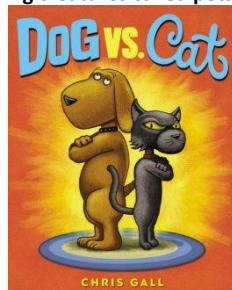
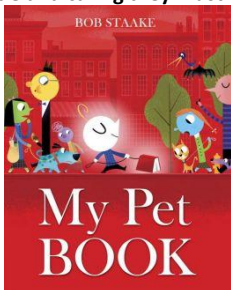
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-----------------|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| | | | | 1 <u>World Vegetarian Day.</u> What is your favorite vegetable? Eat vegetables today. | 2 Cut green peppers and other vegetables to make stamps for printing. | 3 What does a chef do? Go to a restaurant and watch the chef. Could you be a chef one day? |
| 4 PLAY! | 5 List all the words you can think of to describe your favorite food - i.e., yummy, great, delicious, crispy, stupendous, etc. | 6 Have a conversation with your child. <u>Strive for five</u> back and forth exchanges. | 7 Introduce the food pyramid. Top to bottom: fats, dairy, protein, fruits, vegetables, & grains. Explain what is needed each day. | 8 <u>Bring your Teddy to Work Day.</u> Spend the day with your favorite bear or stuffed animal. Explain why you love them. | 9 <u>Cereal Rainbow.</u> Trace a rainbow on paper and glue Fruit Loops on to make a rainbow. Smell and eat as well. | 10 Gather a bag full of fallen leaves. Sort them by color, shape, size. |
| 11 PLAY! | 12 Columbus Day Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1492. Talk about this discovery with a map or globe. | 13 <u>Vegetable Stew.</u> Talk about an assortment of fresh vegetables. Chop them & cook them in chicken broth with rice. Enjoy! | 14 What is your favorite juice? Do a taste test and vote. Juice begins with the letter 'j'. | 15 Make a grocery list. Visit a local grocery store to shop & identify foods on the pyramid. | 16 Look in books or magazines to get ideas for a Halloween costume. Draw your ideas. | 17 Practice crossing the street with an adult. When do you cross & how should you do this? |
| 18 PLAY! | 19 <u>Pasta Art.</u> Glue assorted pastas on cardboard. Talk about pasta names and use to make macaroni & cheese. | 20 <u>Berry Berry Fun.</u> Look at a variety of berries. Ask "How did each berry get its name?" | 21 <u>Carrot Brushes.</u> Use carrots with greens or celery as paint brushes. Save some to eat. | 22 <u>Celebrate National Nut Day.</u> Make your own peanut butter & jelly sandwich. How many nuts can you name? | 23 <u>Kitchen Tools.</u> Place a variety of kitchen tools in a large pot. Ask for the name for each & tell what it's used for. | 24 Talk about fire safety and review all escape routes. Conduct a drill. |
| 25 PLAY! | 26 Make Goop. 2 cups of water with food color and 6 cups of corn starch. | 27 <u>Pumpkin Relay.</u> Use small pumpkins to do spoon or other relay races. Pass the pumpkin in a circle to music. | 28 Make Jack-O-Lantern pizzas. Use English muffin halves & pizza sauce. Cheese is hair & use olives for face. | 29 Pumpkin begins with the letter "p". Make a list of words that start with 'p'. | 30 <u>Pumpkin Playdough.</u> Mix pumpkin pie spice into orange playdough. Mmmm this smells good! | 31 HAPPY HALLOWEEN! Take a picture of your child in costume. Use it to dictate a story at a later time. |



November – Pets and Their Care
Read-Alike Books for the Month of November:

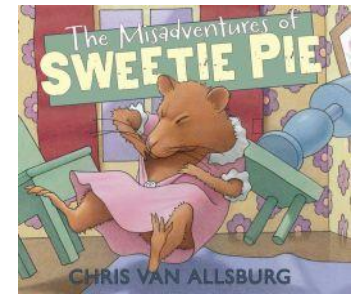
- MY PET BOOK by Bob Staake
- DOG VS. CAT by Chris Gall
- DOGGONE FEET! By Leslie Helakoski
- WANTED: THE PERFECT PET by Fiona Robertson
- HORSEPLAY! By Karma Wilson

**The Misadventures of Sweetie Pie's recommended ages are from 4-8 years old. It has some harsh reality about how pets can be mistreated and does have a happy ending which gives some comfort to the problem of the mistreatment of pets. It has also been perceived as a story about a little animal trying to find his place in this great big world. Complex stories are great for the stimulation of thinking and this story can be used as a springboard for very young children to learn about the nurturing and responsibility that goes with being a pet owner. Even young children have much to learn about how gentle and caring they must be with small, living creatures called pets.*



Early Learning activities connected to learning expectations

Created to accompany the book: **THE MISADVENTURES OF SWEETIE PIE** by Chris VanAllsburg



Approaches to Learning: This story is about a pet named Sweetie Pie. Look at the cover to see if you can guess what kind of pet Sweetie Pie is? Have you ever had a pet? What kind of pet did you or do you have? “The Misadventures of Sweetie Pie” is the book title. What is an adventure? What could the word misadventure mean? Sweetie Pie is an unusual pet name? What are some other pet names that you have heard?

Social-Emotional Development: After reading this story talking about the wide variety of feelings that Sweetie Pie experienced in his life with so many owners.

- When Sweetie Pie left the pet shop for the first time and smelled the great outdoors, he felt _____
- When the girl with the pigtails replaced the hamster cage with a computer, Sweetie Pie felt _____
- When his cage got knocked over and Sweetie Pie faced a snarling dog, he felt _____
- How did Sweetie Pie feel as he first began spinning in the plastic ball? _____
- How did Sweetie Pie feel as he spent the night in the ball looking at the stars? _____
- How did he feel as he was being chased by a broom? _____
- How did the children feel when they came back from vacation and found the hamster gone? _____
- How did Sweetie Pie feel when he finally found his freedom and lived with the squirrels? _____

As needed, re-read each section of the story as a prompt. Talk about the meaning of each word used to describe a feeling?

Intellectual Development /Language and Early Literacy: Make a list of all of the different types of pets that you have heard of. Can you place them in categories? i.e.: mammal, reptile, bird, etc.

Science: (living and non-living things) Have picture cards of pets and other non-living objects. Sort into the two categories. Talk about key needs that all living things possess and the characteristics that make something a living thing. (breathing or use of oxygen, eating or taking nourishment, movement, growing, senses or responding, etc.)

Creative Development: Use pet shaped cookie cutters to make pets out of play dough or place them on plain paper to trace and then color and complete. Put dog bone treats of various sizes in a sand table or tub. Enjoy sorting and sensory play.

Physical Development and Health: Using a bean bag and dog bowls, do a “pet treat toss.” Use a dog bone as a relay wand and have a “dog treat relay.” Use a CD with animal sounds, such as Kids in Motion at Amazon to play sounds and have the children use their bodies to move like each animal. Make healthy shakes called “Purple Cow or Purple Pet Shakes”: 1 can of frozen grape juice, 1 cup of milk, 2 cups of frozen vanilla yogurt.

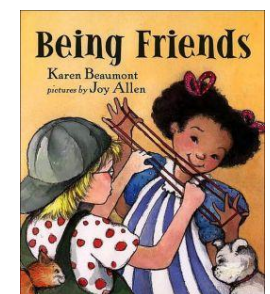
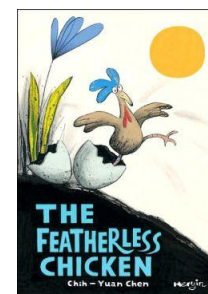
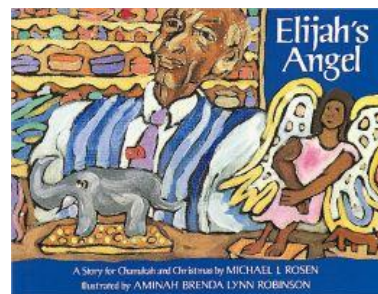
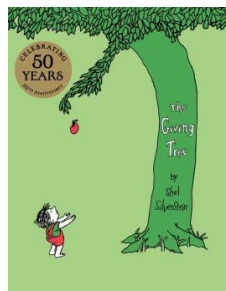
NOVEMBER

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|--|
| <p>1 PLAY! <u>National Cook for Your Pets Day</u></p> | <p>2 November begins with the letter "n". Make a long list of things that begin with "n".</p> | <p>3 <u>Use Your Noodles.</u> Use boiled spaghetti to make shapes, objects, letters, numbers, etc.</p> | <p>4 List types of known pets, i.e., cat, dog, fish, bird, gerbil, etc. Ask all to name their favorite and graph answers.</p> | <p>5 <u>National Donut Day</u> Cut paper circles (with holes). Have children color & decorate. Name the donuts then hide them to see who collects the most.</p> | <p>6 Read <i>Just Me and My Puppy</i> by Mercer Mayer. List the things that care of a pet requires.</p> | <p>7 Make popcorn and use it for counting in muffin tins. Eat when done.</p> |
| <p>8 PLAY!</p> | <p>9 <u>Pets-Animals</u> Pets are living creatures who need food, rest, shelter, love and care. Talk about good care of pets. How do you show care?</p> | <p>10 Draw a pet that you would like to own. Visit an online pet store to shop for supplies: petsmart.com, petedge.com.</p> | <p>11 <u>Veteran's Day</u> Diwali Begins Do you know a veteran? Explain what this is and why we have freedoms.</p> | <p>12 Read the <i>Rainbow Fish</i> by J. Alison James. Use paint to create a colorful fish. Use aluminum foil to make scales.</p> | <p>13 <u>Pet School.</u> Child pretends to be a dog! Lay on a mat and act out commands: sit, lie down, fetch, roll over, bark, beg, shake, come, etc.</p> | <p>14 Practice crossing the street and looking both ways. If you have a dog, teach them to sit before crossing.</p> |
| <p>15 PLAY! Diwali Ends</p> | <p>16 Play "I'm thinking of a Pet" (like I-Spy-Guess). I'm thinking of a pet with 4 legs, ears and it barks.</p> | <p>17 <u>Sing Pet Songs.</u> <i>Hey Diddle Diddle, Old Mother Hubbard, Who Let the Dogs Out, Walking the Dog.</i> Make a pet playlist.</p> | <p>18 <u>Dog Houses.</u> With big boxes, paper, markers, etc., make and decorate dog houses.</p> | <p>19 <u>Play Dough Pet Food.</u> Roll play dough in little balls to fill pet's bowl.</p> | <p>20 <u>Universal Children's Day.</u> Make Puppy Chow for kids: Melt chocolate & peanut butter, add cereal & stir. Put in plastic bag, add powdered sugar & shake.</p> | <p>21 Play "'I am thinking of". Describe an animal & let others guess what it is.</p> |
| <p>22 PLAY!</p> | <p>23 Paint with an ear of corn. Roll into several paint colors to create a colorful design.</p> | <p>24 <u>Transfer</u> - with a pan full of water & an empty pan, use the baster to transfer the water from one pan to the other.</p> | <p>25 <u>Make Placemats.</u> Paint your favorite pet on them & tell why you are thankful for them (stuffed or real).</p> | <p>26 <u>Thanksgiving</u> Make a list of things you are thankful for. Ask your family & friends to add to your list.</p> | <p>27 Think of 5 words that begin with "th", "sh" & "ch".</p> | <p>28 What kind of turkey are you? Act out the following: big, small, happy, sad, sleepy, silly, loud, etc. Dictate a turkey story.</p> |
| <p>29 PLAY!</p> | <p>30 Teach how to cover a sneeze. Use water in a spray bottle to demonstrate how a sneeze may spray germs in the air.</p> | | | | | |



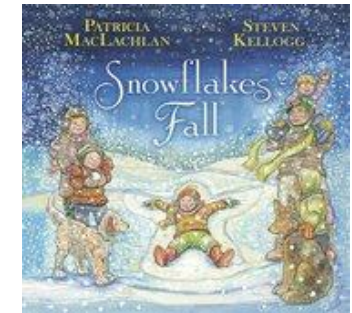
December – Friends and Acceptance
Read-Alike Books for the Month of December:

- THE GIVING TREE by Shel Silverstein
- WHEN IT SNOWS by Richard Collingridge
- ELIJAH'S ANGEL: A STORY FOR CHANUKAH AND CHRISTMAS
 by Michael J. Rosen
- THE FEATHERLESS CHICKEN by Chih-Yuan Chen
- BEING FRIENDS by Karen Beaumont



Early Learning activities connected to learning expectations

Created to accompany the book: **SNOWFLAKES FALL** by Patricia MacLachlan and Steven Kellogg



Approaches to learning: "Snowflakes Fall" was written as a tribute to the beautiful children lost after the Sandy Hook School shootings. How are each of you different? How are you the same? Talk about things you like to do with your friends. How might you include some new friends each day?

Social-emotional development: What does it mean to be a friend? To be nice? To share? Are there some stories you can share about a fun thing you did with a friend or family member? What made it fun? Did you do anything to help you remember that time -- take a picture or write a story about it? Help the children think of ways they can make sure everyone is included each day. Make sure that games include everyone in play so that no one feels left out.

Language and early literacy development: Make a word list of all the new words introduced in "Snowflakes Fall". Which ones are repeated? Which ones are winter words? Which are animal names? Which ones rhyme?

Music: In groups of two, have the children face each other with legs outstretched, feet touching. Grab each others' hands, and sing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat", with friends merrily rowing back and forth across the stream.

Science: Make simple paper snowflakes to hang around the room. Why are they all different? With an inked stamp pad, take an index fingerprint from each child. Or make handprints with finger paint. Why are they all different?

DECEMBER

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | <p>1 Use alphabet pasta to create names of family friends.</p> | <p>2 Talk about the importance of friends and the qualities of a good friend. Make a list of all that friends are and what they do.</p> | <p>3 <u>Design a Cookie.</u> Plan a cookie to include your <u>favorite</u> ingredients. Draw it on paper and name it for what is in it.</p> | <p>4 <u>National Cookie Day!</u> Distribute cookies and share with a friend.</p> | <p>5 <u>National Bathtub Day</u> Gather all your bathtub toy friends for a bubble bath. Who would they be?</p> |
| <p>6 PLAY! HANUKKAH Begins! 'H' is for Hanukkah and holiday lights. Make 7 paper candles.</p> | <p>7 Sing <i>The More We Get Together</i>. Talk about your favorite things you do with your friends.</p> | <p>8 <u>Painting with a friend.</u> 2 children paint one picture together & put on display with both artists names.</p> | <p>9 <u>Fingerprint Comparison.</u> Make prints with a stamp and use a magnifying glass to compare with a friend's prints.</p> | <p>10 Teach how and when to dial 911. Talk to your child about fire safety. Look at escape routes.</p> | <p>11 How would you feel if your friend called you a name? Make a list of all the feeling words.</p> | <p>12 Invite a friend to go to the library. Share your favorite stories.</p> |
| <p>13 PLAY!</p> | <p>14 HANUKKAH Ends at sunset Make a paper chain with the names of all your friends.</p> | <p>15 Read the story: <i>A Color of His Own</i> by Leo Lionni. Discuss how we all look different & can still be friends.</p> | <p>16 It's <u>OK</u> to be different. What words do you know that begin with the letters 'o' and 'k'?</p> | <p>17 Talk about avoiding strangers and procedures to follow if lost.</p> | <p>18 Let the child dictate a sentence. Write it, read it, cut it into words & put back together.</p> | <p>19 Send a letter to your best friend. Share all the things you like best about them.</p> |
| <p>20 PLAY!</p> | <p>21 Give your friends 10 hugs today. Tell them why you like them.</p> | <p>22 WINTER Think of words to describe winter. Name the opposite of each word.</p> | <p>23 Find the toys and clothes you don't need and donate them to charity.</p> | <p>24 Read <i>The Giving Tree</i> as its 50 years old this year! Why did the boy love this tree?</p> | <p>25 MERRY CHRISTMAS! Enjoy this day with family and those you love.</p> | <p>26 HAPPY KWANZAA! Cut rectangles to make paper candles - 3 red, 3 green, 1 black. Design a candle holder on paper & glue candles on.</p> |
| <p>27 PLAY!</p> | <p>28 Have your child sign their name or trace their hand on thank you notes. Send out for holiday gifts received.</p> | <p>29 Play "What is in the bag". Place objects in a bag. "I have something in here that begins with the letter ____." Give other clues.</p> | <p>30 Mix tempera paint to make multicultural skin tones. Paint a variety of people.</p> | <p>31 New Year's Eve Write down one wish for you for the New Year. One wish for a friend too!</p> | | |

Technology Resources for Young Children

Websites for Parents and Caregivers

BabyCenter – <http://www.babycenter.com>

A comprehensive, dynamic and informative site for parents starting with prenatal care and extending to late childhood with chat rooms, articles from experts, and discussion boards.

Be Active Kids – <http://www.beactivekids.org>

Be Active Kids is an innovative, interactive physical activity, nutrition and food safety curriculum for preschoolers designed to develop positive physical activity and nutrition habits for a lifetime of good health.

Born Learning – <http://www.bornlearning.org>

Born Learning is a public engagement campaign that helps parents, grandparents and caregivers explore ways to turn everyday moments into fun learning opportunities. Web content is available in English and in Spanish.

Child and Family Webguide – <http://www.cfw.tufts.edu>

An essential directory to hundreds of sites containing child development research and practical advice on topics selected on the basis of parent recommendations, professional feedback, as well as support from noted child development experts.

Child Fun - <http://www.childfun.com>

Child Fun is a family website with many things of interest to adults and kids—craft ideas, coloring pages, newsletters, and forums.

Colorin Colorado - <http://www.colorincolorado.org>

Colorin Colorado is a free web-based service that provides information, activities and advice for educators and Spanish-speaking families of English language learners (ELLs).

Everything Preschool - <http://www.everythingpreschool.com>

This site contains over 30,000 Preschool Education Activities separated into over 100 Themes, 26 Alphabet Areas, & Lesson Plans. Parents and child caregivers can adapt the activities to their own situation.

Family Fun - <http://www.family.disney.com>

FamilyFun is your online source for arts & crafts, recipes, and parties for every occasion. Get expert tips for activities and crafts.

Family TLC – <http://www.familyTLC.net>

Parenting tips, family activities, articles on child development, and many child-friendly and age-appropriate activities are featured on this site.

Early Learning from Fred Rogers Center –

www.fredrogerscenter.org/resources/early-learning-environment/

The Fred Rogers Center provides a searchable database for early childhood educators and families of children ages birth up to age 5 to find resources and other tools related to digital media.

First Steps – <http://www.firststepskent.org>

This website provides resources and links for parents and caregivers in Kent County. It also provides information about the early childhood systems building with information on First Steps, the Great Start Collaborative and the Great Start Parent Coalition.

Get Ready to Read – <http://www.getreadytoread.org>

A web site that provides parents, educators, health-care professionals, and all advocates for children with information to build early literacy skills by integrating emergent literacy screening and learning activities into routine early childhood education, child care, and parenting practices.

Get Set 4 Kindergarten – <http://www.getset4k.org>

This guide to school readiness includes four sections that change monthly: kindergarten skills readiness, getting ready to read, health and wellness, and an information printout. Notably, each section includes book and website recommendations.

Helen DeVos Children's Hospital - <http://www.devoschildrens.org>

This site includes health articles on extensive topics, an online house call tool to determine when to call the doctor and a site for kids about understanding health issues.

Kids Health – <http://www.kidshealth.org>

Kids Health is an all-encompassing site that will appeal to parents, kids, and teens. Practical parenting information, homework help, teen advice and straight talk from professionals throughout the world as well as doctor-approved health information about kids from birth through adolescence make up the core of this site.

Parents as Teachers – <http://www.parentsasteachers.org>

Parents as Teachers is the overarching program philosophy of providing parents with child development knowledge and parenting support.

ParentTime – <http://www.parenttime.com>

This website offers free advice for parents and parents to be. Offers comprehensive parenting tips on pregnancy, newborns, and infants.

PBS - <http://www.pbs.org/parents>

Parent's guides to children's media, early math, and raising boys are just a few of the ones available online. Click on Fun and Games for a wealth of activities to do with your child.

PNC Grow Up Great – <http://www.pncgrowupgreat.com>

A comprehensive, bilingual, school readiness initiative to help prepare children from birth to five for success in school and in life. Website offers tips and activities.

Preschool Rainbow – <http://www.preschoolrainbow.org>

Preschool Rainbow provides information and resources on preschool activities and lessons, as well as parenting tips and products.

Reading rockets - <http://www.readingrockets.org>

Reading Rockets offers a wealth of reading strategies, lessons, and activities designed to help young children learn how to read. Content offered in English and Spanish.

RIF-Reading is Fundamental – <http://www.rif.org>

Parents can click on topics such as motivating your child to read, choosing good books, reading aloud, activities and articles. Kids can find games, online books, and activity labs.

Teaching Tolerance – <http://www.tolerance.org>

The site is dedicated to reducing prejudice, improving intergroup relations and supporting equitable school experiences.

Zero to Three – <http://www.zerotothree.org>

Lots of information on infants and toddlers for both parents and professionals.

Websites For Kids

Fun Brain - <http://www.funbrain.com>

Who ever thought learning math could be so much fun? Test your math skills with these fun and interesting games. Includes some teacher and parenting resources.

A to Z Animals – <http://a-z-animals.com/>

A website that is an A-Z encyclopedia of animals children can explore to learn more about their favorite animal.

Mother Goose – <http://www.mothersgoose.com>

This site offers FREE games, crafts, rhymes, stories, videos, recipes and clip art for young children, families and teachers.

Sesame Street - <http://www.sesameworkshop.org>

Games, videos and activities for preschoolers brought to you by the characters of Sesame Street.

Starfall - <http://www.starfall.com>

A free website to teach children to read with phonics. For preschool, kindergarten, and first grade. Exciting phonics games and online interactive books.

Connect to Local Events

BigBinder – <http://www.thebigbinder.com>

An upbeat blog for parents in Grand Rapids; focusing on free or inexpensive local events, cultural experiences for children, keeping kids active, and getting children involved in the community where they live.

GR Kids – <http://www.grkids.com>

A website for parents of kids from 0-12 years old, including a comprehensive event calendar, give aways, blog, day camps, classes, links to area parks, academic resources and area story times.

Macaroni Kids – <http://www.grandrapidseast.macaronikid.com>

A website for parents, including a comprehensive event calendar, camps, classes and other helpful information.

West MI Parents Network – <http://www.westmiparents.org>

A great resource for parents to find playgroups, attend discounted group activities, find babysitters, give advice, get advice, find preschools and print local coupons.

Early Learning Communities

What It Is: The Early Learning Communities is a collaborative, community-based partnership to enrich the quality early learning experiences of young children by strengthening the skills of early childhood caregivers and educators. First Steps and the Grand Rapids Public Schools are leading the initiative, in partnership with many other community organizations.

How It Works: The Early Learning Communities are focused on the neighborhoods around Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Academy, Burton and Coit Schools. It provides professional development, training, and support services to educators and caregivers, including certified teachers in Pre-K through 3rd grade, teachers in Head Start as well as private preschools and child care centers, in-home child care providers, and parents. The type and intensity of the professional development and training varies among the groups.

Caregivers and parents have the opportunity to attend Play & Learn Groups in which children participate in literacy-based activities and providers watch coaches model best-practice instruction. The curriculum for the Play & Learn Groups is aligned with Michigan Department of Education expectations for kindergarten readiness.

Additionally, coaches work one-on-one with in-home caregivers, helping them to strengthen their interactions with children, improve the home environment, and create activities to help prepare children for kindergarten. Parents participating in the program can receive home-based education and support services through Bright Beginnings.

The Early Learning Communities also are developing a variety of strategies to strengthen the transition to kindergarten for participating preschool-aged children.

Play & Learn group times and locations are as follows:

Mondays

Madison Square Church, 1441 Madison Ave SE – 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Tuesdays

Harrison Park Elementary, Art Room, 1440 Davis NW – 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Martin Luther King Leadership Academy, 645 Logan St SE, 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

Wednesdays

Messiah Baptist Church, 513 Henry SE – 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Hope Reformed Church, 2010 Kalamazoo SE – 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Thursdays

Booth Family Services, 1215 E. Fulton – 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Grand Rapids Main Library (2nd Floor), 111 Library St. NE – 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Coit Creative Arts Academy, Room 209, 617 Coit NE – 2:30 – 4:00 p.m.

Fridays

Burton School, 2133 Buchanan SW - 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. or 10:30 – 12:00 p.m.

For additional information, please call **616-819-6761** and ask for Barbara Todd/Margarita Hernandez.

For information on other Playgroups for parents in addition to above, please find locations for Bright Beginnings groups at: <http://www.kentisd.org> and click on Early Childhood/Bright Beginnings.



Join a group of parents and providers committed to the children of Kent County. Meetings provide training on early childhood topics and leadership skills. The group works with local and state policy makers to improve early childhood systems. Meetings take place once a month on a Thursday evening from 5:45 to 8pm. Free dinner and childcare are provided for those who register. Meetings take place at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 250 Commerce Avenue SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503. For more information on upcoming activities, contact gsparents@firststepskent.org or 616-632-1007.



Be a part of the



Parent Coalition!

2015 Meetings

- January 15 – Image Counts
- February 12 – Internet Safety
- March 12 – Legislative Night
- April 16 – Moving to Learn & Autism Awareness
- May 14 – Legal Issues in Parenting
- June 11 – Mentoring

GREAT START CONNECT

As part of our Great Start Child Care Quality Project, the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) is launching a new system of online early learning resources called Great Start CONNECT, including a new statewide database of licensed/registered child care and early education programs in Michigan.

Who is Great Start CONNECT for?

It's for you – Michigan's 14,000 licensed/registered child care providers and the families who want to find you!

How does Great Start CONNECT work?

It's easy! Simply log-in and upload information about your child care and early education setting, skills, programs and openings. You can even add photos! You'll be able to register for professional development/training as well.

Using Great Start CONNECT, families searching for child care can access this database 24 hours, seven days a week. Great Start CONNECT provides parents with the opportunity to quickly and conveniently search for and contact child care providers and preschools who match their needs.

What else can Great Start CONNECT do?

Plenty! Families and those caring for young children can use Great Start CONNECT to find community resources and supports through their local Great Start Collaborative and their Great Start Regional Child Care Resource Center.

Sounds good to me. What do I do?

Simply log-in to Great Start CONNECT today at <http://www.greatstartforkids.org/> Click on "Great Start CONNECT," select "Log-in," then enter your valid e-mail address and your GS CONNECT password.

If you have difficulties accessing Great Start CONNECT, our Local Service Center for Kent County is the Kent Resource Center at: **616-447-5678**.

Want to make a difference in the lives of babies around Kent County? Help us keep 'em covered!

Diaper Drive 2015

Can you help us collect over 100,000 diapers this year? Find out how you can get involved in our ongoing diaper drive at www.diaperdrivekent.org.





Kent District Library Early Literacy Headquarters for Kent County Families

For a complete list of programs such as our Early Childhood Essentials classes for caregivers and parents and a full menu of Storytimes, including Babytime, Toddler Time, Preschool Storytime, Family Storytime, Evening Storytime and Rhyme Time Music and Movement, visit www.kdl.org/events.

Visit our KDLville interactive early literacy play spaces available at each KDL branch.

Alpine Twp. Branch

5255 Alpine Ave. NW

Alto Branch

6071 Linfield Ave.

Byron Twp. Branch

8191 Byron Center Ave. SW

Caledonia Twp. Branch

6260 92nd St. SE

Cascade Twp. Branch

2870 Jacksmith Ave. SE

Comstock Park Branch

3943 W. River Dr. NE

East Grand Rapids Branch

746 Lakeside Dr. SE

Englehardt Branch

200 N. Monroe St. (Lowell)

Gaines Twp. Branch

421 68th St. SE

Grandville Branch

4055 Maple St. SW

Kentwood

(Richard L. Root) Branch

4950 Breton SE

Krause Memorial Branch

140 E. Bridge St. (Rockford)

Plainfield Twp. Branch

2650 5-Mile Rd. NE

Sand Lake/Nelson Twp. Branch

88 Eighth St.

Spencer Twp. Branch

14960 Meddler Ave.

Tyrone Twp. Branch

43 S. Main St. (Kent City)

Walker Branch

4293 Remembrance Rd. NW

Wyoming Branch and the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

3350 Michael Ave. SW



KDL
Kent District Library
www.kdl.org

616-784-2007

18 locations, 1 convenient
phone number

Long distance call 1-877-243-2466



What is the best gift you can give your child? A library card!

Visit one of our 8 easy locations!

Main Library

111 Library Street NE ■ 616.988.5400
 Mon–Thu 9:00–9:00 | Fri–Sat 9:00–6:00
 Sun 1:00–5:00*

*Labor Day to Memorial Day

Madison Square Branch

1201 Madison SE ■ 616.988.5411
 Tue–Wed 10:00–6:00 | Thu 12:00–8:00
 Fri–Sat 10:00–6:00

Ottawa Hills Branch

1150 Giddings SE ■ 616.988.5412
 Tue 10:00–6:00 | Wed 12:00–8:00
 Thu–Sat 10:00–6:00

Seymour Branch

2350 Eastern SE ■ 616.988.5413
 Mon–Tue 12:00–8:00 | Wed–Thu 10:00–6:00
 Sat 10:00–6:00

Van Belkum Branch

1563 Plainfield NE ■ 616.988.5410
 Tue 10:00–6:00 | Wed 12:00–8:00
 Thu–Sat 10:00–6:00

West Leonard Branch

1017 Leonard NW ■ 616.988.5416
 Mon–Tue 12:00–8:00 | Wed–Thu 10:00–6:00
 Sat 10:00–6:00

West Side Branch

713 Bridge NW ■ 616.988.5414
 Tue–Wed 10:00–6:00 | Thu 12:00–8:00
 Fri–Sat 10:00–6:00

Yankee Clipper Branch

2025 Leonard NE ■ 616.988.5415
 Mon–Tue 12:00–8:00 | Wed–Thu 10:00–6:00
 Sat 10:00–6:00

Ride to Read

Ask at the desk of any Grand Rapids Public Library about free round trip bus rides on a Rapid bus to and from the library!

There's so much to see and so much to do at the Grand Rapids Public Library!

Taking your children to the library is one of the best and most important things you can do for them. Put a monthly visit to the library in your plans for spending more time with your children.

Books

Movies

Holiday Programs

Magazines

Music

Craft Programs

Let's Play!
 Family Place
 Libraries

Storytimes

One Book, One
 City for Kids

Summer Reading
 Challenge

Mayor's
 Book Club

eBooks/
 eAudiobooks



616.988.5400 ■ www.grpl.org

Learning... on the go!

At Home:

You can turn everyday household chores and activities into fun learning games for your child.

Doing Laundry:

Laundry is a frequent activity that young children love to join in – from watching clothes tumble to matching up socks. Laundry activities can build math and cooperation skills. Feeling useful also helps children feel good, which encourages them to continue to want to be helpful. Your child can:

Make piles of the light clothes and the dark clothes.

Find matching pairs of socks.

Find all the shirts to put into a pile for folding.

At Meals:

For many, meals are a time when the whole family comes together. Mealtime discussions can help your child's development and foster learning. Mealtime interactions help children use language to analyze sequence, and predict while promoting a joy of language.

- Ask your child to tell you a story about their day or tell them a story about your day.
- Create family traditions at meal times such as a song that you always sing or a game like "I Spy" that you always play.
- Let your child help make the meal – tear the lettuce for the salad, stir the spaghetti sauce or put napkins on the table.

Source: Tips were developed for Born Learning by Mind in the Making, a project of the Families and Work Institute. For further information on early learning tips for parents, visit www.bornlearning.org.

At Bedtime:

Help your child wind down at the end of the day and discover ways to make bedtime less stressful and more calming for all involved.

Creating a bedtime routine that your child comes to expect makes the transition from an active day to a quiet time easier.

- Create a consistent bedtime schedule that your child can count on.
- Create traditions: First, we take a bath and brush our teeth, then we read a story, give a kiss and go to sleep.
- Your preschool child can take an active role in planning bedtime traditions and use special time for listening to stories, making up stories or for talking about the day.



Learning... on the go!

Traveling:

Are we there yet? Turn that trip or errand into a simple, fun learning game that helps your child make sense of the world around her/him. Use driving time to enhance your child's natural curiosity and find ways to interact and connect with your child.

In the Car

Use car time to talk about your child's day. Ask specific questions: ("Did you draw in preschool?" or "Did you eat a cheese sandwich?") Talk with your child about where you are going in the future ("We are going to the market on the way home") to help him/her develop thinking and planning skills. Use car travel as a time to sing. Play a tape or CD, or sing songs you know or love.

On the Bus

Riding public transportation exposes your child to different people and new things.

On a Walk

Taking your child on a walk is not only good exercise, but also allows them to experience nature and learn about the outdoors. Focus on the present moment and being with your child. Look at the walk through your child's eyes. How might a bug look to your child? What sounds do cars or birds make? Is it cloudy, warm or cold?

- Make up rhymes or sing marches as you walk. Try walking and singing or chanting fast, then slow.
- Help your child learn to be safe by stepping at corners and driveways and showing him or her to look both ways for cars.

Public Places

Errands can equal education. Your everyday outing or errands can be a chance to connect with your child and to encourage her/his early learning.

At the Grocery Store

Learn valuable tips to help keep you and your child's trips to the grocery store stress free and educational.

- Let your child make food choices. Should we buy apples, oranges or grapes today?
- Have your child find the items listed in your coupons.

At the Park

Parks and playgrounds are very active places for children. Discover ways to transform activity into learning.

- How fast can you run toward the big tree?
- Which slide is bigger, the red one or the silver one?
- Have your child count the number of swings.

At the Library

Libraries are full of learning opportunities and are wonderful places for exploring language and books.

- Fill out an information card for your child's own library card.
- Ask your child to pick out their favorite topic in the children's section.
- Teach your child about proper care and borrowing and returning books.

THREE YEAR OLD PRESCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

Preschool scholarships are available to children in Kent County through the Great Start Kent County Early Childhood Scholarship Fund. It is a one year scholarship available to children who are three years old. Children who complete the scholarship program will attend a tuition-free preschool the next year (either a Great Start Readiness Preschool program or Head Start), giving them two years of quality early childhood education prior to kindergarten. To receive a scholarship, children must:

- Meet income guidelines (200% of Federal Poverty Level or below)
- Live in Kent County

Priority will be given to children who meet those guidelines AND have additional needs.

Applications may be found at: <http://www.firststepskent.org/programs/early-learning-communities/early-childhood-scholarships>

For questions, please call: **742-8903**

FREE PRESCHOOL OPTIONS

Great Start Readiness Preschool Program

The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) is a state-funded preschool program for four-year-old children with at least two factors which may place them at educational risk in their early years. Parents incur no costs for the program. Research on preschool programs and specific research on GSRP indicates that children who are provided with a high-quality preschool experience show significant positive developmental differences when compared to children from the same backgrounds who did not attend a preschool program.

Head Start-Early Head Start

Health, education, parent involvement and social services create the foundation for Michigan Family Resources' programs and services. Using a holistic approach, it focuses on the physical, social, emotional and educational growth of children from birth to age five. Every child deserves a good start. That's why Head Start assists with medical and dental exams and why they feed kids a meal and snack each day. They, of course, prepare them to be successful in school. These are the building blocks every child needs. Two different program options are available to meet the individual needs of eligible families: Head Start - Early Head Start.

To see if you qualify for these programs and place your child's name on an intake list, please call the Kent County free preschool hotline: **616-447-2409**.

10 signs of a great preschool

If your child is between the ages of 3 and 6 and attends a child care center, preschool, or kindergarten program, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) suggests you look for these 10 signs to make sure your child is in a good classroom.

1. Children spend most of their time playing and working with materials or other children. They do not wander aimlessly, and they are not expected to sit quietly for long periods of time.
2. Children have access to various activities throughout the day. Look for assorted building blocks and other construction materials, props for pretend play, picture books, paints and other art materials, and table toys such as matching games, pegboards, and puzzles. Children should not all be doing the same thing at the same time.
3. Teachers work with individual children, small groups, and the whole group at different times during the day. They do not spend all their time with the whole group.
4. The classroom is decorated with children's original artwork, their own writing with invented spelling, and stories dictated by children to teachers.
5. Children learn numbers and the alphabet in the context of their everyday experiences. The natural world of plants and animals and meaningful activities like cooking, taking attendance or serving snack provide the basis for learning activities.
6. Children work on projects and have long periods of time (at least one hour) to play and explore. Worksheets are used little if at all.
7. Children have an opportunity to play outside every day. Outdoor play is never sacrificed for more instructional time.
8. Teachers read books to children individually or in small groups throughout the day, not just at group story time.
9. Curriculum is adapted for those who are ahead as well as those who need additional help. Teachers recognize that children's different background and experiences mean that they do not learn the same things at the same time in the same way.
10. Children and their parents look forward to school. Parents feel secure about sending their child to the program. Children are happy to attend; they do not cry regularly or complain of feeling sick.

Also ask if the program is accredited by NAEYC. These accredited programs complete a rigorous self-study and external review to prove that they meet standards of excellence in early childhood education.

Want more information?

Send a self-addressed, stamped, business size envelope to:

NAEYC

Box 517

1509 16th Street SW

Washington, DC 20036

Questions to guide family decisions about Preschool choice

These questions reflect what research says are the most important qualities and components of an early care and learning setting. They do not address basic health and safety that is generally covered under licensing standards. If a program is licensed by the state, they must meet health and safety standards.

It is recommended that families interview the school director or principal and spend some time visiting and observing in the preschool classroom. Use these questions to guide your decision making process:

Before Visiting:

- Ask for a copy of the program's learning goals and philosophy (sometimes these are listed online in a preschool's website).
- Do the program's goals match the goals you have for your child?
- Is the philosophy in line with your beliefs about child development?
- Do the goals address all areas of your child's development?
 - Social and emotional
 - Language and Literacy
 - Numbers/Math
 - Science Exploration
 - Creativity
 - Physical Development
- Ask for a copy of the school's discipline policy (sometimes listed online).
- Are you comfortable with the discipline policy?
- Are positive guidance techniques used when challenging behavior occurs?

Questions to ask the Principal or Program Director:

- Is the program licensed? If it is exempt from licensing does it meet the school district's standards instead?
- Does the program work to meet the Michigan Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten?
- Is the program accredited? By what organization: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), American Montessori Society...
- What are the credentials of the staff? Do they have Early Childhood specialization?
- Have the majority of the teachers been at the program for at least three years?
- What is the adult to child ratio?
- Are there no more than 20 children in a class?
- Does the room have separate learning centers (reading, art, dramatic play, writing, blocks) with interesting equipment and materials to encourage learning?
- What curriculum is used to guide teaching? Is it research based? Do they have a written description of the curriculum?
- Does the curriculum prepare children for Kindergarten based on the Michigan Early Childhood Standards of Quality: Early Learning Expectations?

- Does the class follow a consistent daily routine? Does the routine offer a variety of activities throughout the day? (Art, pretend, outside, reading, science, etc.)
- Do children have unstructured outdoor play time every day?
- Does the class take field trips?
- Do activities change so the children have a chance to learn new skills?
- Do the teachers have access to trained professionals? (Social worker, mental health consultant, behavior specialist, etc.)
- Does the school provide accommodations/support for kids with special needs?
- Are parents welcome to drop in without making an appointment?
- Does the teacher have regular face-to-face parent conferences, phone, written or e-mail communications with families? How often?
- Does the school have a number of ways for families to be involved in the program (newsletter, volunteer, family events, book or toy lending library, etc.)
- If the teacher does not speak the language of your family, how will they communicate?

Spend at least an hour in the classroom; ask yourself:

- Do I feel welcome?
- Are the teachers warm and caring with all of the children?
- Do the teachers handle problems and conflicts in a positive manner?
- Do teachers engage in one-on-one conversations with children?
- Do teachers work with children individually, and in small groups? Is whole group instruction limited to a short amount of time?
- Does the staff show acceptance and respect to all children regardless of culture, race, language, differing abilities?
- Do children appear happy and engaged in activities?
- Do children have opportunities to select what they want to do at times throughout the day?
- Are the children encouraged to walk and interact with each other?
- Do teachers use a variety of methods to teach letters, numbers, words, etc.?
- Does the classroom have a library with a variety of books and other reading materials accessible to children throughout the day?
- Do the books reflect diversity? Are they devoid of stereotypes?
- Do the books reflect the languages of children who are English Language Learners?
- Do the teachers encourage active, hands-on learning such as learning science and math concepts with water and sand?
- Do the display areas on the walls contain children's unique artwork, writing samples and photographs of class activities?
- When the children are outside, are the teachers encouraging their play?
- Do the children have enough room indoors and outdoors to move around freely without interfering with other children's play?

For more information on high-quality pre-K: www.preknow.org.

This calendar provides a year-long guide of literacy and early learning activities featuring the Michigan Early Learning Standards of Quality for Pre-Kindergarten. The photos feature children and their caregivers who are currently attending the Early Learning Communities Play and Learn Groups and classrooms from child care and preschool centers from Kent County, Michigan.

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www.firststepskent.org www.greatstartkent.org

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