



HARRISON CHILDREN'S CENTER FEBRUARY 2013 NEWSLETTER

February is the time of the year where the classroom is extremely busy and often an octave higher than normal. In addition, "cabin fever" often finds its way into our classrooms. Unfortunately, we have not been blessed with a significant amount of snow. (I say unfortunately, because the children LOVE playing out in the snow on the courtyard) Hopefully, we will get one good snow storm before March blows in this year.

We try every day to find ways to "get the wiggles out" with indoor movement activities. These activities help children learn to control their bodies, follow instructions, listen, respect others in a shared space and stay healthy. You will often find obstacle courses set up, balls rolling, and weather permitting, our daily walks.

Dr. Seuss/Rhyming: While the children have thoroughly enjoyed their unit on Winter Animals it's time to move on. February begins our unit on Rhyming and Dr. Seuss. We will be practicing rhyming, singing rhymes, clapping syllables, and reading the wonderful books written by Dr. Seuss. In addition, to coordinate with our reading, we will be watching videos of Dr. Seuss books. This brings life to the books. The culmination of our rhyming unit will be our yearly Dr. Seuss Pajama/Pizza Party on March 1st. We also will be having Green Eggs and Ham for lunch that day. This is the one month of the year where the curriculum is set. So.....practice rhyming at home, read lots of rhyming and predictable books. Oh....Mom and Dad need to find respectable pajamas!! (I always wait to see if any Dads are adventurous enough to join in with pj's. Yes, flannel sweat pants and sweat shirts are acceptable)

Second Step Program: The children are responding nicely to the Second Step Early Learning Program. We spend 15 minutes every morning doing fun activities that help with self-regulation and social-emotional competence. Many of you have mentioned the listening song the children are singing to support our Second Step Program. The words are as follows:

(Tune: Sung to “Are You Sleeping?”)

Eyes are watching, (touch the outside of your eyes)
Ears are listening, (cup your ears with your hands)
Voices quiet, (put pointer finger to your mouth)
Bodies calm, (hug yourself)
This is how we listen,
This is how we listen,
At group time,
At group time.

They love this song and it really helps them calm down and settle into group time. Feel free to change the last two sentences to fit what you are doing, it can work wonders!

Some parents have asked the question; why add a social skills program? Every year we complete questionnaires for school districts regarding the incoming kindergarten students. They typically consist of academically oriented questions. Last Spring Harrison School District changed their questionnaire to address the social emotional functioning of children. I asked the question; “Why there was such a drastic change?” Their response was that children are entering kindergarten with the appropriate academic skills. They feel the challenge is that programs are not preparing children enough in the area of social emotional development. While the nation plugs away at National Early Childhood Learning Standards, we need to keep in mind that children need to explore, play, learn to share, take turns, and be kind to their friends. These skills are essential in order to prepare our children for a successful future. We are committed to addressing the “Whole Child” and preparing them in every aspect for kindergarten and years beyond.

Parents Helping Parents Drive: The Harrison Children's Center is supporting The Child Abuse Prevention Center in their annual Walk-A-Thon on April 28th, 2013. The much needed funds will go toward community education, parenting workshops, and helping vulnerable families with the most important job...raising healthy and happy children. We often hear of opportunities to lend a hand to children by donating clothing and toys. This is an opportunity for Parents to Help Parents, which in turn will help provide a better life for children.

On April 28th at 9:30 a.m. the walk begins at Rye Playland for either a 5K walk or a nice ½ mile stroll. (The ½ mile stroll sounds good to me!) Harrison Children's Center will have their own table, with drinks, food and fun for the family. Our "Parents Helping Parents" Donation jar will be on the sign in table daily until Thursday March 28th. (It will be locked up every evening) Our goal is to raise \$500.00 and become a "Sandal Sponsor." I hope you join us in donating to this cause and participate in a fun day for the family. (Cash or Checks to Child Abuse Prevention Center. Tax ID 13-3113298)

"Lend a hand. Help a child. Strengthen a family"

Parent/Teacher Conferences: I would like to thank parents for taking the time to meet with your classroom teachers in order to discuss your child's experience and progress at Harrison Children's Center. For those who missed conference times, please feel free to schedule a conference or phone conference with your child's teacher. If you ever have any questions or concerns do not hesitate to contact us, anytime. Communication is essential in our partnership.

Future Enrollment: While this may seem too early, our spots are filling quickly for September 2013. If you have any friends or relatives considering HCC for their children please have them call to set up a visit. If they need to hold a spot for later in the 2013/2014 year because their child is not quite of age, they should also inquire now.

Happenings at HCC for February:

Mon. Feb. 4th – Music with Miss Monique
Tue. Feb. 5th – American Sign Language
Wed. Feb. 6th – Art with Miss Doreen
Thurs. Feb. 7th – Nature of Things (Animals)
Mon. Feb. 11th – Music with Miss Monique
Wed. Feb. 13th – Art with Miss Doreen
Mon. Feb. 25th – Music with Miss Monique

Important Reminders and Closings:

*Closed on Monday Feb. 18th for Presidents Day

*Closed on Tuesday Feb. 19th for Staff Training

*Friday March 1st 5:30 – 7:30

Dr. Seuss Celebration Family Pajama Pizza Party

*Art Exhibit / International Luncheon is Sunday April 14
Harrison Town Hall 12:30 – 2:30 p.m.

*Walk-A-Thon is Sunday April 28th

Rye Playland Beach 9:30 a.m. start time

