

# Brighter Beginnings Newsletter

## February 2018



We have had a lot of fun with our Dinosaur Theme this month, especially with our own dinosaur expert on hand, Mrs. Pineau ☺. In February, we will be talking about emotions and friendship skills. We will be learning about Zones of Regulation which is a program that teaches children to use colours to help them express how they are feeling.

This month we will also be introducing Independence Zone. Our little superheroes will be encouraged even more to complete their arrival and departure routines independently. So, we ask that you give your child a hug, say goodbye and we will help them finish getting ready to go play in Adventure Zone.

Finally, we will be celebrating Valentines Day on Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>. Children are invited to bring 3 or 4 cookies for a cookie exchange. Also, if your child is bringing Valentines for their friends, they can just write their names on the Valentines and we will ensure they are distributed to everyone. There are 19 students in your child's class.

Hope to see everyone at the Winter Fun Morning on Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>! Remember to dress warmly and to bring a helmet for your child.

## Contact Information

To let us know of your child's illness/absence or to discuss your child's program, please contact both Lise Pardell and Tracey Pineau:

Office Phone: (780) 467-7137

Email: [lisep@eics.ab.ca](mailto:lisep@eics.ab.ca)  
[traceyp@eics.ab.ca](mailto:traceyp@eics.ab.ca)

## Birthdays this Month

Brody (AM)

Fergus (AM)

Kaleb (PM)



## Important Dates:

February 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>: ISP Meetings

February 7<sup>th</sup>: Winter Fun Morning at 9:00am at OLPH School

February 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>: Teacher Convention (No Classes)

February 14<sup>th</sup>: Ash Wednesday Mass at 12:30pm at OLPH Church

February 16<sup>th</sup>: Professional Development Day (No Classes)

February 21<sup>st</sup>: Social Communication FOP at 9:00am and

Listening Skills FOP at 11:00am

February 27: Music Therapy FOP at 5:30pm

February 28<sup>th</sup>: PLAY FOP at 5:30 pm





# Occupational Therapy Corner

Jen Szydlowski: [Jennifer.szydlowski@eics.ab.ca](mailto:Jennifer.szydlowski@eics.ab.ca)



Hello Brighter Beginnings Families! Welcome to February - the month of valentines and friendship!

In keeping with our classroom theme of feelings and emotions, we will continue to use the Zones of Regulation and Alert program language that we introduced in January. We will talk about our engine speeds and our colour zones and describe why we are in these zones. Please continue to practice describing and labelling your emotions and clues to help identify what emotion you are feeling - and link it to a Zone colour!

This month, we will also bring attention to our bilateral coordination skills when working on crafts and activities. Bilateral coordination is the ability to use both sides of our body in a smooth, controlled and organized (coordinated) manner. We often think of using our two hands together but bilateral coordination also applies to using our legs together when walking, pedalling, jumping, or climbing stairs. This is an important task that involves body awareness, a stable posture, and the motor planning required to coordinate the two sides of the body to do two different activities.

The best way to work on these skills is to practice them in a fun way. As our little ones may still be exploring which will be their dominant (worker) hand and which will be their helper (stabilizing) hand, allow your child to try and to figure out which is their preferred hand through a variety of experiences. Activities that use two hands together doing the same thing (ex clapping) are easier and activities that use two hands together doing different things (ex stirring) are more advanced.

We will emphasize the use of the 'helper hand' in the classroom when using scissors, drawing or colouring, dressing and opening and closing snack containers and backpacks.

**Easiest: Activities to encourage using hands together doing the same tasks:**

clapping, drumming, rolling play dough, tearing paper, folding paper, catching and throwing a ball with two hands

**More advanced: Activities where hands work together but doing two different tasks:**

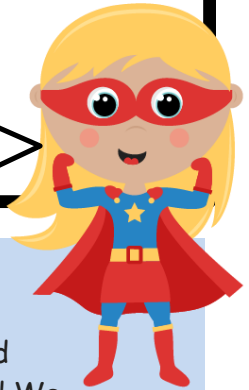
holding paper to colour, snipping paper, straws, and play dough with scissors  
stringing beads, lacing cards, tracing using stencils  
opening containers or Zipoc bags, twisting off lids  
stirring batter, pouring water, scooping, spreading jam on toast  
doing up buttons and zippers  
wind up toys

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions!

# Let's Talk About Speech and Language

Kelly Cassan: [kelly.cassan@eics.ab.ca](mailto:kelly.cassan@eics.ab.ca)

i can  
**TALK**  
you into  
ANYTHING.



## February Newsletter 2018

This month at Talk Time we will be doing a number of activities about Valentine's Day and Friendship while we practice speech sounds, language skills, and social skills. We will read We Thinkers! Volume 1 stories: Body in the Group and Group Plan. Some of our activities this month will include:

- Giving speech flashcard Valentines to friends
- Hide and Peek chocolates
- Reading books about friendship and emotions (e.g., Pigeon books by Mo Willems).
- Playing cooperative games. See attached handout on cooperative games, or go to this website for more ideas: <https://www.scribd.com/document/182871897/30-Cooperative-Games-for-Preschoolers-pdf>

## Early Language and AAC Target Vocabulary This Month:

February 6 - 10	yes 	no 	maybe 	not 	February 13 - 17	work 	listen 	see 	say 
February 21 - 24	come 	wait min 	friend 	play 	Feb 27 - Mar 3	hello 	I'm sorry 	goodbye 	funny 

**Speech and Language Tip of the Month:** This month we are learning about Friendship, Emotions, and the Zones of Regulation. Here are a few language strategies to help children regulate their emotions and learn social skills:

- Create social stories or social scripts developed specifically for your child to help them learn a new skill, prepare for an activity or event, or modify a behavior. Social stories should clearly describe the situation, people and feelings involved and provide the child with coaching or choices for what to do when those situations occur.
- Create opportunities for positive social experiences such as smaller group sizes or having older children mentor younger students to build up self-confidence in social settings. Pair children with peer models.
- Cooperative projects and games can help children improve their social skills. Encourage social skills like turn taking, being a good sport, and topic maintenance when doing activities and playing games as a family.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns!

Kelly Cassan, R.SLP, CCC-SLP

Phone: (780) 934-7936

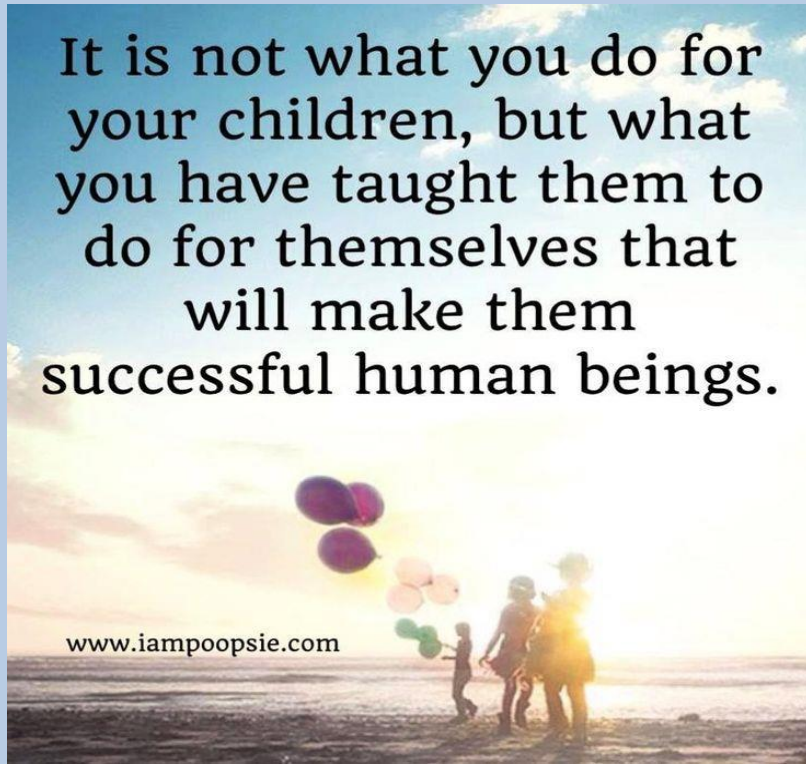
Email: [Kelly.Cassan@eics.ab.ca](mailto:Kelly.Cassan@eics.ab.ca)

Thought for the month...



It is not what you do for  
your children, but what  
you have taught them to  
do for themselves that  
will make them  
successful human beings.

[www.iampoopsie.com](http://www.iampoopsie.com)



If parents have ideas they would like to share  
or topics they are interested in for our  
"Thought of the Month," please email  
[lisep@eics.ab.ca](mailto:lisep@eics.ab.ca) and [traceyp@eics.ab.ca](mailto:traceyp@eics.ab.ca) by  
the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.

