

Brighter Beginnings Newsletter

December 2017



December is already here and Christmas is in the air!

We will be taking the opportunity to explore different Christmas activities. We will be learning about the Nativity and the birth of Jesus Christ, as well as exploring fun Christmas art, books and sensory explorations!

We are also starting to introduce our "**Independence Zone**" to the classroom. Parents are encouraged to say goodbye to their children at the classroom door. This gives them an extra opportunity to learn independence, and teachers are there to help if they need it. We have already seen amazing growth in this area!

Finally, we hope that everyone will be able to join us for the **BB Christmas Party** on December 20th (times listed below). Parents are welcome to join us for the last hour of class, when children will be invited to sing a couple of Christmas songs, and maybe someone very jolly will stop by for a visit...

Contact Information

To let us know of your child's illness/absence or to discuss your child's program, please contact Tracey Pineau or Megan Fortier:

Office Phone: (780) 467-7137

Email: traceyp@eics.ab.ca
megan.fortier@eics.ab.ca

We also want to send out a friendly reminder that it is very important to attend FOPs that you have registered for at the beginning of the year as **Alberta Education funding is dependent on attendance of these FOPs**. We certainly understand that life happens, so please just ensure that if you are unable to attend a FOP that you let us know as soon as possible which FOP you will attend in its place.



Important Dates:

December 12th: Santa's Workshop Tinkerlab 9-10:30am

December 12th: Christmas Crafts FOP 11-12:30pm

December 20th: Christmas Party

AM Class Party 10:30am - 11:30am

PM Class Party 2:30pm - 3:30pm

December 24th - January 4th: Christmas Break



Occupational Therapy Corner

Jen Szydowski: Jennifer.szydowski@eics.ab.ca



Hello Wonderful Brighter Beginnings Families!

As we move into December and anticipate all the festivities that are to come, I thought this would be a good time to talk about some ideas to help our little ones maneuver the overload of excitement that December brings.

With Christmas comes lots of change to routine, late nights, bright lights and noise ... as well as lots of new or unfamiliar people and faces and expectations. One way to help our little ones navigate this time of sensory overload is to allow plenty of opportunity to participate in 'heavy work'. Heavy work is when we use our bodies to push, pull, lift or carry and is a great tool for calming or alerting (waking up) our bodies. With snow on the ground, outside play offers a great opportunity for heavy work.

Here are some ideas for heavy work activities at home:

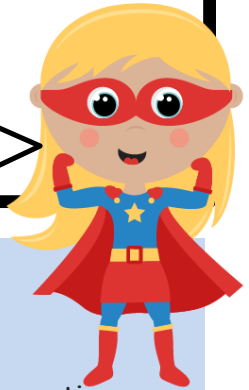
- Play, play, play outside! Bundle up and shovel the driveway together, make a snowman, make snow angels, go tobogganing, push or pull someone in a sled
- Help with the groceries - push the shopping cart, carry the bags into the house, help put the groceries away
- Help with the chores - pushing/pulling a full laundry basket, vacuuming, washing/drying the floors - especially on the hands and knees!, clean the fronts of appliances, cupboards or drawers by using a spray bottle and wiping clean, spray and wipe off the table after meals, push in the chairs
- For those days when it is too cold to stay outside for long, be adventurous! - rearrange the furniture, take cushions off the couch and make a fort using a heavy blanket over top, 'go on a trip' and fill up a suitcase on wheels and pull it around or fill a backpack to carry, do a scavenger hunt with a twist - hop, crawl, jump like a frog from place to place, do animal walks or 'move the walls' (push against the walls), make a fort with a blanket over the kitchen table and be on hands and knees - play cars, draw big pictures, colour, play a game or do puzzles - all on hands and knees!
- Push, pull or carry - baskets or boxes of toys or books, pull a sibling or friend around on a blanket or push them in a box (car), pull the garbage can to the curb
- Some heavy work for the mouth - chew gum, eat chewy or crunchy snacks, sip water or drink thick liquids (milkshake, applesauce) through a straw. The thickness of the straw and the thickness of the liquid can be varied to change the degree of heavy work (sucking) required

Have a very Merry Christmas and enjoy lots of fun in the snow!!

Let's Talk About Speech and Language

Kelly Cassan: kelly.cassan@eics.ab.ca

i can
TALK
you into
ANYTHING.



This month we will be doing a number of Christmas activities, songs, and stories. We will practice speech sounds, language skills, and social skills in the following activities:

Decorating a Christmas tree

- Understanding describing words and following directions
- Practicing the word "On"
- Practicing speech sounds or words to earn decorations to add to the tree
- Gingerbread Man activities

Answering questions and sequencing events

- Practicing the words "Me" and "Eat"
- Practicing speech sounds or words to create our own gingerbread man

Find items to add to Santa's sleigh when we sing Jingle Jingle Sleigh

- Categorizing and describing functions of items.
- Practicing the words "Get" and "In"

Open doors or gift boxes to find surprises and wind-up toys

- Practicing grammar skills such as he/she
- Practicing the words "Help" and "Want"
- Practicing speech sounds or words to open doors or gift boxes

Our weekly words will be:

December 3 - 7



December 10 - 14



December 17 - 21

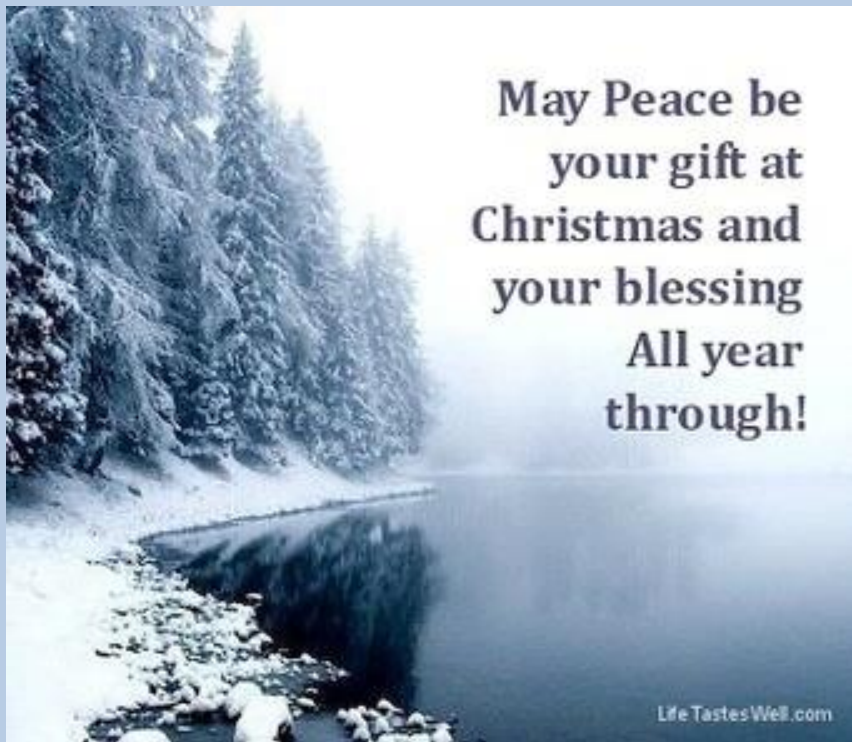


Speech and Language Tip of the Month: Pay attention to body language. When a child is looking toward or reaching for something, they are communicating. When they show an emotion or reaction, they are communicating. Talk about what they are reaching for, "Oh, you want the bubbles!" Talk about emotions and reactions both in your child and in other people. For example, "You are happy to play with your cars," or "You feel frustrated; you need help," or "Your friend looks excited for his turn," or "That surprised me!" If your child uses pictures, Touch Chat, or sign language to help them communicate, have the adults around them use pictures, Touch Chat, or sign language to model communication in addition to using words.

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

Thought for the month...



If parents have ideas they would like to share or topics they are interested in for our "Thought of the Month," please email megan.fortier@eics.ab.ca or traceyp@eics.ab.ca by the 25th of the month.

