

Brighter Beginnings Newsletter

February 2019

We have had a lot of fun with our Dinosaur theme this month, especially with our own dinosaur expert on hand, Mrs. Pineau!

Our amazing students have been doing a great job with their arrival and departure routine! We will continue with our Independence Zone to encourage them to complete more and more of their routine on their own.

In February, we will be talking about emotions and friendship skills. We will continue learning about the zones of regulation - using colors to help children understand and express how they are feeling. We will celebrate Valentine's day on February 14th. Children are welcome to exchange cards with their friends if desired. If your child is bringing cards for their friends, they can just write their own name on their card, and we will make sure they get sure they are distributed to everyone. There are 18 students in the AM class and 17 in the PM class.



Contact Information

To let us know of your child's illness/absence or to discuss your child's program, please contact Tracey or Meg:
Office Phone: (780) 467-7137

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

Birthdays this Month:

Kaleb
Luke
Fergus



Important Dates:

February 4, 5, 6: ISP Review Meetings February 6: Early Out
February 7 & 8: Teacher's Convention (no classes)
February 12: Music Therapy FOP 5:30-7pm
February 15: PD Day (no classes) February 18: Family Day
February 27: Speech Sounds part 2 9-10:30
Faith Filled Families 11-12:30





Occupational Therapy Corner

Jen Szydowski: jennifer.szydowski@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

i can
TALK
you into
ANYTHING.



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 also work on feelings in the classroom this month, so I will lead small group activities to target emotion words and social skills in play. We will read We Thinkers! Volume 1 stories: Thinking Thoughts and Feeling Feelings. Some of our activities this month will include:

- Hide and Peek chocolates
- Reading books about friendship and emotions
- Playing games (Don't Break the Ice, Air Hockey)
- Practicing scripts for common play activities (e.g., kitchen, cars, board games, etc.).

Early Language, Core Board, and Touch Chat Target Vocabulary This Month:



Speech and Language Tip of the Month: This month we are learning about Friendship and Emotions. The Zones of Regulation offers ideas and strategies to help children understand emotions and build sensory regulation skills. 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

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Classroom Prayers

Please feel free to use these prayer at home with your children - they would be happy to share this part of their school day with you!



Circle Time Prayer
(Sung to the tune of Twinkle Twinkle Little Star)

Jesus, Jesus, hear my prayer
Help me love and help me share,
You are Teacher, Healer, Friend
I know Your love never ends.
Jesus, Jesus, hear my prayer,
I am glad that You are there!

Valentine's Grace
(Sung to the tune of "Row Row Row Your Boat")

We thank God for snacks
And our family
Hugs and Kisses and Valentines
For all the friends we love.

