

Brighter Beginnings Newsletter

March 2019



February was a short but busy month for us at Brighter Beginnings!

We had fun getting in touch with our emotions as with learned about "Feelings" and "The Zones of Regulation".

This month our theme is "Outer Space". We are happy to have our resident space expert, Mrs. Fortier, lead us through this stellar topic!

We would like to create an "International Space Station" in our Adventure Zone with the students. If you have any big boxes or throw away (and child safe!) loose parts that might suit this project, we would certainly appreciate the donation!

Finally, we will also be talking about preparing our hearts for the very special season of Lent.

Contact Information



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

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Birthdays this Month:

A.M.: Gabby
P.M.: Colton



Important Dates:

March 8: PD Day (no classes)

March 12: Mindfulness Practice with Children FOP 5:30-7:00 p.m.

March 19: Yoga for Kids FOP 5:30-7:00 p.m.

March 18 -19: "Wild Child" program visits BB

March 24: PD Day (no classes)

March 25-29: Spring Break





Occupational Therapy Corner

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This month we will focus on crossing the midline. Crossing the midline refers to the ability to reach across the middle of the body with the arms or legs and to cross over to the opposite side. Examples include being able to draw a horizontal line across a page, without having to switch hands in the middle, or sitting cross-legged on the floor.

Being able to cross the midline (an imaginary line down the center of the body) is an important developmental skill. It is needed for reading and writing, for being able to reach toward your foot to put on a sock or shoe with both hands, for participating in many sports and many other day-to-day activities. Your children have opportunities to cross midline every day when they make the sign of the cross.

Children who have difficulty reaching across their middle may actually get stuck in mid-reach and have to switch hands or they may compensate by turning their body to reach toward the opposite side. Poor midline crossing also makes it difficult to visually follow a moving object from one side to the other, and eventually to follow words from left to right while reading.

Here are a few activities that you can try at home:

- Bat balloons or bubbles with both hands on a bat, tennis racket or paper towel roll
- Roll balls to the right and left of centre, encouraging both hands on the ball
- Double drums or bongos (or two pots/containers turned upside down!): challenge your child to bang the right 'drum' with the left hand and the left 'drum' with the right hand
- Floor play - on all 4's, lying on tummies, or sitting and leaning on one hand - place the toys, games or puzzle pieces all around and encourage your child to use only one hand to play.
- Play sorting games that require reaching across the body: place objects to sort on the left side and containers to place them in on the right side.
- Steering wheel (found in many playgrounds): encouraging using the same hand to turn the wheel all the way around
- Alternating hand-over-hand activities such as pulling along a rope while on a scooterboard
- Make figure 8's and other motions with streamers or a flashlight in a darkened room; one hand at a time and crossing left and right
- Use dry erase markers on a large mirror or window to make horizontal lines (roads) across the surface, rainbows, diagonal lines from corner to corner or large sideways figure 8's; play X's & O's and have your little one make the grid
- Place stickers on one arm (or draw with washable markers or shaving cream on one arm) and have your child remove the stickers (or wash off the picture) with the opposite hand
- With a group of friends, play circle games to music while sitting cross legged on the floor, such as passing a balloon, ball, toy, or 'Hot Potato'.
- Play body awareness games like the Hokey Pokey and Simon Says
- Participate in activities at home such as dusting or wiping down the table after a meal

Some information and ideas from TherapyStreetForKids.com

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 exploring Space and St. Patrick's Day throughout our activities and books! Some of the games and activities will include creating a space scene, finding gold coins for a pot of gold, and playing Pop Rocket. We will also learn about community helpers through books and activities. We will talk about objects community helpers need to do their jobs, how those objects are used, and who uses each one.

Early Language and AAC Target Vocabulary This Month:

Feb 25 - Mar 1	March 4 - 7	March 11 - 15	March 18 - 21
need 	who 	where 	show 

Speech and Language Tip of the Month: Read books frequently with your child to build his/her language skills.

- Talk with your child and ask him/her questions, make comments about the characters, objects, how they look, and their actions.
- Reduce the number of questions you ask; instead, try making comments about each page and wait for your child to reciprocate.
- Use simple books with few words or short sentences and colorful drawings on each page.
- Books that have repetition are great for developing vocabulary. It is a good idea to read the same book on several different occasions so your child can become familiar with the book and begin to predict what will happen.
- Use as many descriptors as possible when talking about pictures and illustrate their meanings with actions or gestures (e.g., Look at the **tall** [reach arms up high], **skinny** [place hands close together] tree **swaying** [make swaying motion] in the wind!).
- Make predictions about what will happen next or what would happen if...
- Go to the library and look at books appropriate to your child's age and interests. As he/she reads each book, ask questions like "Who is the main character?" "What do you like about this story?" "How do you think it will end?" "What was your favorite part?" Make sure you balance each question with one or two comments of your own to extend the conversation and model conversational skills. Many libraries have wonderful parent-child programs and activities.

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

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