

Brighter Beginnings Newsletter

June 2019



Where did the year go? Seems like just yesterday we were welcoming your children to our class. It has been a wonderful year!

We have had a lot of fun learning about spring and only have a few weeks left to talk about Summertime Fun! We will be taking more time to go outside to play so please send your child to school in playground friendly shoes (no flip flops please). Sunscreen and hats are also recommended.

We are going to have a pool party on June 20th - rain (indoor) or shine (outdoor)! Please send your child with swim gear, a change of clothes, a swim diaper (if applicable) and a towel.

We have had a bit of a schedule change for the last week of school. Please note that regular classes will run Monday-Thursday. There will be no regular classes on Friday, June 21st. On the 21st we are hosting our end of the year party at Broadmoor Lake Spray Park. Families are invited to come join us for some spray park fun. Everyone is asked to bring a healthy nut-free snack to share. Hope to see everyone there!

Thank you!

A huge thank you to everyone who made this year such a success!

Thank you parents for your dedication to your child's education!

Thank you to parent council for including our littles in school events like hot dog day and the sleigh ride!

Thank you to the wonderful Madonna and BB staff and consultants, we couldn't have done it without you!

Birthdays

June	-Maddy (pm)
July	-Ryder (pm), Coleman (pm), Blake (am) -Xavier (am), Cristian (pm)
August	-Nicholas (pm), Logan (am)

Important Dates:

June 17-20 - School days

June 20th Pool Party -Last day of classes

June 21st Broadmoor Spray Park 10:00 am - 1:00 pm (drop in)



Occupational Therapy Corner

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



Hello Brighter Beginnings Families and welcome to summer! I wanted to leave you with some simple and fun activities that you can do this summer to playfully work on the many skills that are developing.

- Play outside - at the park or the playground - pushing, pulling, hanging, swinging on the equipment all help to strengthen the muscles in the hands
- Use buckets, shovels, scoops, measuring cups to scoop and pour sand or water; filling a bucket or watering can and carrying it helps to work on hand strength and is 'heavy muscle work' which can be calming; pouring from a watering can also works on hand-eye coordination
- Sand - bury objects in the sand to be dug out and 'found'; bury body parts in the sand - a great way to learn the names of body parts and the sand can increase awareness of these body parts; draw roads, simple pictures or shapes in the sand
- Take a pail on a walk and collect treasures - sticks, rocks, leaves, flowers; sort them into piles and look for what is the same and what is different - visual perceptual skills; try to pick up several small rocks in one hand and move them around in the hand - small muscles in the hands; make a pattern (stick, rock, stick, rock) or a pile with several items and then remove one item while your child's eyes are closed and see if they can tell what is missing or changed or, play 'I spy' games - these activities work on visual scanning, finding objects in the midst of a cluttered or busy view and learning to keep one's attention focused for short periods of time
- Play games with dice and pegs - cupping and rolling the dice in the hand is a great way to develop the muscles in the palm of the hand and pinching pegs and small games pieces helps to work on the refined 'pincer' grasp
- Blowing bubbles is a great activity - it is 'heavy muscle work', encourages taking deep breaths and can be calming; it works on eye-hand-mouth coordination (holding the wand and targeting the hole in the wand) and eye-hand coordination for popping the bubbles. Play with whistles, horns, harmonicas, party favours for the same benefits as well as work on breath control - 'how many blows can you do in a row?'
- Squeezing spray bottles and water toys using one hand or squeezing out sponges are great ways to strengthen the muscles in the hand. Have fun washing the car!

- Use sidewalk chalk to make large pictures using lines, circles and crosses or big rainbows crossing over the middle of the body; have your child 'paint' over the chalk with water and a brush or a squirt bottle.
- Make mazes with chalk on the driveway for your child to walk through or to trace through with chalk or a wet brush or a car.
- Use a skipping rope or hose to make shapes on the grass. Have your child follow the path of the shape by walking or crawling over the rope/hose. Use the skipping rope on the driveway and have your child 'trace' the shape with a wet brush.
- Put an assortment of two matching summer objects into a large bucket or tub (filled with water and maybe even bubbles to increase the fun). Take turns pulling out two objects that match and put them together on the ground.
- Puzzles are great for many areas of development and you can even make your own. Draw a simple picture, cut it into shapes and then paste it back together onto a blank piece of paper.

It has been wonderful working with all of you this year. Have a playful, adventurous and fun-filled summer!



Let's Talk About Speech and Language

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

The school year is winding down and everybody is feeling excited about summer vacation! This month I will be finishing up year-end assessments and meeting with families to celebrate your child's growth over the last year. We are also planning for next year and helping children transition if they are moving to other schools or other classrooms.

Speech and Language Tip of the Month:

Summer is a great time to take a break and enjoy time as a family. Take advantage of your time together by engaging in quality conversations. Follow your child's lead by talking about what interests him/her. Take back and forth turns, keeping the conversation going for as long as possible. Here are some ideas to help you engage in quality conversations with your child (from *Greenberg, J. & Koohi, A.L. (2016). How to Build Language and Literacy Through Powerful Conversations. The Hanen Centre*).

Make storytelling a part of your day: While visiting a place your child has been to before, encourage him to tell you what happened the last time he was there. Ask questions and make comments that help him clarify what he means and include all the important details. For example, "Oh, you played Frisbee the last time you were at this park! Who did you play with?" Your child learn:

- How to tell and understand stories, which is critical for effective conversations and story comprehension
- More complex language (e.g., vocabulary, past tense verbs)

Make explanations part of your day: Talk about how and why things work. Ask your child to think of an explanation for the actions or emotions of a character in a book or TV show. For example, "Scaredy Squirrel seems really frightened to leave his nut tree. Why do you think he is so afraid?" Your child will learn:

- An understanding of cause and effect
- How to think critically
- Story comprehension
- New vocabulary

Get your child involved in solving problems: Draw your child's attention to small problems that arise throughout the day, and encourage him to think of solutions. For example, "Oh no, we've run out of glue to finish our art. What can we do?" When possible, give your child a chance to try out his solution, even if you think there's a better one. Your child will learn:

- How to think critically
- New vocabulary

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













