

April 2012



Mount Kisco Child Care Center

PARENT CONNECTION – A family newsletter

AH, SPRING!

The sounds and smells of Spring make it a wonderful time and vibrant time at Mount Kisco Child Care Center. This Spring, we are excited that for the first time ever, we will be transplanting seeds that germinated this Winter in our Greenhouse, into our gardens. The children are eager to start to watch their gardens grow!



Children from MKCCC led parents, families & staff in Mount Kisco's St. Patrick's Day Parade last month



During **the week of April 22-28**, MKCCC will be celebrating the NAEYC **Week of the Young Child** (www.naeyc.org) in/around MKCCC with children's art on display at the **Mount Kisco Library**, and food prepared from *Feed Me Fresh* recipes available at **Ladle of Love** in Mount Kisco, **Table Local Market** in Bedford Hills and **Taste Gourmet Market & Catering** in Somers. Please visit those places in April to see MKCCC "around town." There will also be a **Literacy Adventure** on April 20th at the TeaHouse in Mount Kisco's Leonard Park, and we hope to see you there! And finally, the annual **MKCCC Book Fair**, sponsored by Scholastic, will take place Monday through Thursday. A volunteer sign-up list will be available in the Toddler Gallery.



On Saturday **April 28th**, our annual **Spring Clean-up Day** will take place. An activity for parents, we spruce up the grounds of the Center on this day, rebuilding raised gardening beds that need repair/replacement, cleaning out debris around our perimeter, planting flowers around the Peace Pole and so-on, starting at 9:00 AM. All adults are welcome and refreshments will be served.

In the Spotlight – Toddler Teacher Vanessa Cicchelli receives national award

Our very own Vanessa Cicchelli will receive the Terri Lynne Lokoff/Children's **TYLENOL®** National Child Care Teacher Award, given by The Terri Lynne Lokoff Child Care Foundation, at a dinner in Philadelphia on April 19th. The foundation, named for Ms. Lokoff, a child care teacher whose life was tragically cut short, is dedicated to improving early care and education in America. The award is attached to a \$1000 gift to Vanessa and her classroom. In total, 52 award recipients will be honored at the dinner which will be streamed live on the foundation's website, www.tllccf.org. Congratulations, 'Nessa!



Mark your calendar:

April 5th:
Poker Night to benefit
MKCCC at Quaker Hill
Tavern

April 22-28:
Week of the Young Child

April 28:

Spring Clean-up Day

April 26th:

**Last Day to place your
Mother's Day Flower
Sale order with Renee**

June 15:

Family Concert to
benefit MKCCC

Thanks, Terri McNair!

MKCCC secured a grant from Kohl's and Kohl's (Bedford Hills) volunteers will be helping in our gardens on April 19th thanks to your suggestion!

Congratulations!

A new sister for Jayden,
Aaliyah Keira Chaney
born March 2nd.

News from the Classrooms

The **INFANTS** have been taking advantage of the early spring weather. There has been lots of outside activity. The sandbox has become a favorite daily activity for some, while others have enjoyed crawling up and down the hill by the fence and grabbing every stick and rock they find. We have also take “signs of Spring” walks which usually include throwing rocks in the stream to watch the “Kersplash!” The infants enjoy spring.

The **TODDLERS** have really been enjoying observing the changes in nature now that Spring is here. The children are anxiously awaiting to see what happens with the seedlings they planted in our Greenhouse and look forward to transplanting them into their garden beds in a few weeks. With help from the Adults from My Second Home, the toddlers will plant a flower garden this year outside their classrooms. Then they will observe how rain helps seeds and flowers grow and end April talking about what’s growing. The toddlers are also having a great time taking care of our composting worms – feeding them, wetting them and watching them. In March toddlers learned about doctor visits and how to stay healthy. In the



classrooms, the toddlers will talk about the celebrations of Easter and Passover early in April.

The **PRE-SCHOOL** children are also excited for Spring! They are getting their gardens ready for their sprouts that have been growing in the Greenhouse, and they’ve been watching and feeding their worms. The pre-school children have been studying many things recently, including healthy eating and exercise, pond life and babies. They also enjoy their visits with the Seniors and the therapy dogs.

The **SCHOOL AGE** children spent a lot of time outdoors enjoying the mild temperatures. While inside, their “Challenge Time” projects have been a success – they’ve made robots, pyramids and more! Also, the children are having a blast while playing “Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego” in the Computer Lab, an educational video game that challenges the children to find and solve clues from places around the world they visit while playing!

All Parents are reminded to check your child’s cubby and update to Spring clothing.

Feed Me Fresh *by Dr. Susan Rubin*

You’ve been reading a lot this issue about how excited the children are about what’s growing in our Greenhouse. Classroom seedlings include beets, brussels sprouts, lettuces, peas, rainbow chard and spinach and many of these seedlings have been started with easy, “green” methods that you can try at home. The seedling containers you see in this photo are actually toilet paper cores cut in half and placed in take-out and/or reusable plastic containers, filled with seed starter mix. Since the paper core is bio-degradable, using them as mini-planters makes transplanting the seedlings a snap!



JEWEL *by Nancy Loden, Intergenerational Coordinator*



Christy Ruvituso, Stacey Ford and I made a presentation at the New York State Intergenerational Network (NYSiGN) conference on March 15 at Manhattanville College in Purchase, and had a great time! The JEWEL gardening program, adapted from the MKCCC Feed Me Fresh program, was well received, so much so in fact, that an organization from Dobbs Ferry is visiting us on April 9th to observe and learn!

We are continuing with our dog therapy on Tuesday mornings. At the end of April Elspeth’s visits with the older adults will move to Tuesday afternoons and a new therapy dog will be coming to the JEWEL program in the morning. Along with dog therapy, we are continuing with music, a variety of arts and crafts, a scavenger hunt, gluing ripped paper and keeping watch over the seeds growing in the Greenhouse. The seeds that were started in the Greenhouse last Fall are sprouting and soon will be ready to transplant into the garden in April. The intergenerational gardens are ready for the JEWEL classes to start planting when we get the green light!

Preschool A has elected to try the JEWEL Program in the classroom with great success! The older adults and children have grown so comfortable in the classroom multiple activities go on simultaneously. The staff from MKCCC and MSH agrees that the location has added a new dimension to the program.

The Bottom Line from Ruth Goodman, MSW

Happy Spring! The air is warm. The days are long and mild. More daylight. More time for outdoor activities. All good, right? So why does my child seem cranky or oppositional? Spring fever happens at every age. The school routine may be feeling a bit stifling, just as work may for us. Although a stop at the park on the way home may feel like the last thing you have the energy for, it may go a long way toward making the evening more pleasant for everyone. Should you find this “spring fever” to be persistent or overwhelming, please give me a call or stop by. I am always happy to help.

The Parent Connection is now available online! To read past issues of this newsletter, click on “Parent Connection” on our website.