

# CHILDREN'S CHATTER

F.I.R.S.T.: Friendliness, Innovation, Respect, Service, Trust

MISSION: To be the leading provider of quality child care for the children and families we serve.  
A publication by and for the Associates of A Children's Place.

## Teaching children to love learning through reading

As parents, we wonder what we can do to encourage a love of learning in our children. Every day they are building their language skills through their normal daily routines. At A Children's Place, we see many opportunities for their growth and development.

One of the most important things we can do to build a love of learning is to read to our children. Reading gives them many opportunities to make the connections between recognizing patterns and word structures and also helps to increase skills in vocabulary, problem-solving and socialization.

There are many great ways to boost your child's interest in reading, as follows:

### Birth through 12 months

Choose chubby books that your infant can easily hold or textured books that will help him to learn different textures. Bright colors and shapes intrigue curiosity.

### 12 months to 24 months

Make story time a daily routine. For instance, bath time is a great time to give your child a waterproof book that you can read with them and then they can play with it in the bathtub. Also, small props to accompany a story (such as a stuffed animal that



appears as a character in the story) help children to make connections between the stories they hear and outside objects.

### 2 years old to 3 years old

Keep reading their favorites. Repetition teaches them to be the expert so that they can help to tell the story. Ask questions like "I wonder what will happen next?" to encourage them to make predictions about where the story will go.

Also, find a theme that they enjoy, like dogs or boats, and then find many different books with that theme.

### 4 years old to 5 years old

Let your preschooler read to you. They will use their memory and imagination based on the pictures they see. You can also make a book together. Let the child help to write or dictate the plot and illustrate the pictures. Help them to learn that anyone can create a book.

Joining a book club or frequently visiting the library will ensure that your child has a good variety of books to choose from. Let them help to pick out the books. Make this a family project; something that you can do to spend quality time with your child. The bottom line is that when your child feels that you are taking an active interest in their learning, they will enjoy it as well.

“Where Culture and Children Meet”

## January is Transition Month!

If your child is moving to a new classroom soon, please take a few moments to go into that classroom and meet your child's new teacher and talk to them about the upcoming change. They will be happy to see you!

### Reminder on daily drop-off

Parents, please remember that the daily drop-off time at A Children's Place is 10:30 a.m. If your child will be arriving after 10:30 a.m., you must have prior approval from the Program Manager.

### Early Childhood Unit

The Early Childhood Unit has several activities planned in January, following the theme of winter. We will be making snowflakes and hope to get a chance to step outside and play in snow. As we observe Jan. 17 as Martin Luther King Jr. Day, we will learn about his "dream" and its influence on our nation and make "dreams" of our own. We plan to celebrate Jan. 19 as National Popcorn Day with a popcorn treat.

In February, we will learn about friendships and will send cards to our friends on Valentine's Day to let them know how special they are to us. We'll also observe Feb. 12 as Presidents Day by learning what a president is, what he does and why we have one.

As we begin the new year, we will brush up on our numbers, colors, shapes and letters. Each day, we will pick a letter of the alphabet and learn about different things that begin with that letter. The 4-year-old class will begin to practice tracing and writing each letter.



### Health Notes...

It is generally believed that drinking milk is the best way to build strong bones.

Calcium intake is certainly important in the bone-building process, but studies now suggest that physical activity is equally important.



In a study of 76 children between the ages of 8-11, calcium intake levels and physical activity rates were measured. Bone mineral density was the highest in children where both activities were present. Researchers say that children between the ages of 8 and 11 years old are at a crucial time for bone density growth. They suggest that children drink three 8-ounce glasses of milk and engage in 25 to 40 minutes of vigorous physical activity each day. Vigorous activity is defined as running, playing ball, jumping rope, etc.

This particular study was done on children in the prepubescent age group. However, it is never too early to start good diet and exercise practices. Including calcium-rich foods, such as milk, cheese, and yogurt into their diet as well as encouraging regular exercise when children are younger will ensure good habits when they reach this crucial stage in their physical development.

*Sheila VanHook, LPN*

### Infant and Toddler Unit

With winter in the air, we are going to learn about the weather and what it brings: snowflakes, ice, cold air and wind. We're hoping for a good snow to allow our children to experience its taste and texture. We also have several holidays to celebrate in January and February, including "Winnie the Pooh Day" on Jan. 18; Groundhog Day on Feb. 2; and Valentine's Day on Feb. 14.



Also during the next two months, we will learn more about the types of animals that live in winter climates. Bears, penguins, rabbits and deer will be a part of our study about wintertime things.

## Visiting with Santa



Santa Claus paid a visit to A Children's Place on December 21. The children got a chance to talk with him for their last-minute Christmas lists.

## Happy Birthday

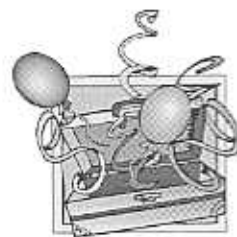
### January

January 7  
Sheila VanHook

January 12  
Christine Vaughn

January 13  
Kristie Goodin

January 26  
Ashley King



### February

February 8  
Shirley Webb

February 20  
Beth Kidd

## Photos from the A Children's Place Christmas Album



The staff and their families enjoyed a Christmas dinner, and played silly "Reindeer Games".



Children from our Early Childhood and School-Age units sang Christmas songs at a Winter Program on Dec. 9.

## Meet Our Staff

Melissa Walker is the Saturn (5-7 year old) school age teacher. She has been with A Children's Place for the past year, after her son, D.J., was born. She worked with the center for two years prior to that. She has lived in Danville since 2000, when she and her husband James moved here from Germany, where he was stationed in the Army.

Melissa was born in Minnesota, and has four sisters and two brothers. As a child, her parents were in the military and the family moved around a lot. When she was 4, they moved to Texas. They have also lived in Georgia and North Carolina. Because many of her siblings are younger, she started taking care of children at a young age. She babysat for other people at the age of 12. At 16, she was a primary childcare provider for a 6-month-old. During her senior year of high school, she spent 2-3 hours each day as a peer tutor.

In September 1999, Melissa started working at the Illeshiem Child Development Center in Germany, and then Woodlawn Children's Home after moving to Danville. Since accepting her position at A Children's Place, she has earned her Child Development Associate for Preschool aged children. She enjoys working with children of all ages.

Melissa's favorite hobby is playing video games. She loves this hobby so much that she received an X-box for Christmas. Melissa believes this shared interest in video games helps her to relate so well with the children in her class.

## Welcome New Associates



Tiffany Parrett  
Kayla Carrier  
Ashley Durham  
Ashley Robbins

## Fun Facts about Food

- In a year's time, you spend more than 15 full days doing nothing but EATING!
- You have about 10,000 taste buds in your mouth.
- The world's favorite snack food is **popcorn**.
- Scientists tasted as many different animals as possible and said the worst one was **mole meat**.
- Every year you will eat about 170 bags worth of groceries.
- Fewer than half of the world's population use knives, forks and spoons to eat with. The rest use chopsticks, a knife or just their hands.
- A single chocolate chip will give you enough energy to walk 150 feet.
- An average person spends four full days going to the bathroom.
- There are about 800 kernels on an ear of corn.
- Adults have 60,000 miles of blood vessels in their body!



## New toothbrushes and covers needed

As we start a new year, we want to remind parents that it's time to bring in a new toothbrush and cover for your child.



A Children's  
Place

A service of Ephraim McDowell Health

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