



CHILDREN'S HOUSE FEBRUARY 2019 NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY THEMES

Chinese New Year

Black History Month

Mardi Gras (K)

Ground Hog Day

Healthy Habits

Valentine's Day

Dental Health

The Heart

Presidents' Day (K)

- ❖ Lincoln
- ❖ Washington

...and any other topics the children express an interest in!

Please feel free to share any information or materials you may have relating to the above themes.

Staff are always looking for posters, hands-on materials or additional tidbits of information that would make a lesson at circle time more interesting or lively!

UPCOMING EVENTS

2/5 Chinese New Year



Mondays & Tuesdays through February Springfield College Occupational Therapy Students will be on site for Internships!

Children's House will host 5 students this semester. (See more details later in newsletter.)

2/14 Valentine's Day Party

(See more details later in newsletter)

2/18 Center Closed Presidents' Day
Have a nice long weekend!

2/20 FIA Meeting at Children's House
4:30-5:15

All families are welcome to attend! Agenda item suggestions can be sent to Pam at: pflowers@childrenshouseinc.org

VALENTINE PARTY

Our party will be held on Thursday, February 14th. Children are welcome to exchange Valentine cards.

We ask that cards be sent to the center signed, but *not* addressed to a specific child. This makes it *so much* easier for the staff, takes less time to distribute and prevents hurt feelings because every child in the class will receive a card from those who choose to participate.

We prefer cards not be sent to children *not* in your child's classroom for the same reason.

If you choose to participate, please bundle the un-addressed cards together (rubber band or all in one big envelope) and drop them off in your child's classroom Valentine box.

Refreshments are welcomed! **Please remember our "Nut Free" policy and include a complete recipe list with all home baked items.** Food items purchased from store also need ingredient lists for staff to be able to serve. We are not able to serve items labeled, "processed in a factory that also processes nuts" or anything similar. We also cannot serve food items containing artificial sweeteners.



The children like fresh fruits and veggies with dip as well as some of the more "sweet" items.





INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS...

MOST of us are pretty happy about the relative lack of significant snowfall this year so far; but we're not out of the woods yet!

We will do our best to keep the parking lot and sidewalk clear of snow and sanded or salted when icy.

Please let us know if you feel the lot or sidewalk need attention. **It is also a good idea to avoid the ramp on icy days.** The area at the end of the ramp can become thick with ice because of the drainage from the overhang. We are careful to salt this area, but it doesn't always go through the layers.

On icy days, *expectant* mothers are welcome to park along the front of the building (in front of the downstairs classroom window in handicapped parking spot – *not along the sidewalk, please*) to shorten the walk in and out of the building.

All other parents are prohibited from parking in front of the downstairs classroom and the sidewalk.

The spot in front of the downstairs classroom is specially designated for handicapped parking. Please **only** park in this spot if you are an **expectant mom coming in on an icy day** and you plan to be in and out quickly OR if you have a **current handicap placard displayed**.



MORE WINTER OR EARLY SPRING?

Punxsutawney Phil is the official ground hog for Ground Hog's day!

The question is... Will he see his shadow on February 2nd?

If the groundhog does NOT see his shadow, we will HOPEFULLY have an early spring!



Note: He DID NOT see his shadow! Possibly an early spring to come!

WELCOME SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENTS

Once again this year, we have the pleasure of hosting students from Springfield College. Students will be in most classrooms on the Mondays and Tuesdays throughout the month. They will be on site from approximately 8:00 am until noon as part of their Occupational Therapy field work experience.

Each student has been assigned to a specific classroom but may observe other rooms periodically throughout the first half of the semester. *Please note: Students will never be left alone with any child and will ALWAYS be under the direct supervision of our staff.*

This is a great opportunity for all of us. We get the extra set of hands to help in the morning and the students gain valuable experience working with varying ages of children.

DONATIONS APPRECIATED!



Over the past couple months several parents donated items to the center. We've received some really nice toys, extra clothing and a few pieces of infant classroom equipment as well! We appreciate *everyone's* generosity!

What we are really in need of at this time is scrap paper for use in the classrooms and some winter outdoor items that we can share with children who might not have their winter gear at the center. Recycled paper with one side clear would be perfect for our purposes. Hats, boots, snow pants and mittens would be very welcomed.

Some additional items we could always use are old towels and wash cloths. You might imagine with the cleaning tasks we do around here that the towels and "rags" we use to clean up art projects and messy lunches are always in the wash!

If you have any items to donate, feel free to leave them in the staff lounge. *Thanks!!*



WE ARE CURRENTLY ENROLLING!

Over the next couple months, we plan to complete the renovations to the new Toddler classroom downstairs. The current T1 group will relocate to the new room and, after some minor renovations to the current T1 room, Amanda's Infant 3 group will be moved upstairs. Amanda's room will then be changed over to a new Toddler room – making space for some of our current babies to move to the new age group. These changes will open a couple of part time Toddler slots and a few Infant slots too.

Anyone interested in enrollment can access information about Children's House via our website: www.childrenshouseinc.org or contact Pam Flowers at: pflowers@childrenshouseinc.org or at 782-4448.

Please feel free to take a brochure from the clear plastic holder out by the front door if you would like to refer a new family to Children's House.



Remember there is a **referral bonus*** - a \$50 WalMart gift card *or* a \$50 **tuition credit** for currently enrolled parents who refer new families to our programs!

(*See Pam for details about referral bonus program)

DID YOU KNOW??

Did you know? Extra menus and newsletters are available on the credenza in the main hallway at the beginning of each month. Just in case you were unable to print what we send out, feel free to pick up a copy there.

However, we are trying to cut costs (and be "green-minded") - so if you prefer a printed copy and can print from your own computer, we would appreciate it. It helps to limit ink and copy paper use here at the center. Every little bit helps!



Menus/Newsletters are also available for download on our website: www.childrenshouseinc.org.

Did you know? We have several children on site receiving Early Intervention or other types of specialized supports.

Parents may see individuals seated in classrooms who are using tablets to document observations of the child to whom they are assigned or who appear to only be focused on one child – seemingly ignoring other children in the class. These specialists, for the most part, are also not greeting parents at drop off or pick up.

Be assured, they are not employees of Children's House and always work under the direct supervision of our staff. They will not interact with the other children in the group, unless there is an emergency that unfolds directly in front of them. Of course, if your child speaks to one of them, they will politely respond, but will avoid prolonged contact.

Did you know? Staff and children really enjoy it when parents come into the classrooms to read a story, share a talent or family tradition or participate in a craft activity. If you ever have a little extra time in your schedule, you are *always* welcome to spend it with us!

Did you know? Tuition covers a 9-hour time slot here at Children's House. We can't have our staff work longer than 9 hours daily so it would be a huge challenge to try to maintain our staff to child ratios if children were consistently here longer days than all our staff. Of course, we do try to be accommodating when an emergency is the reason for the extended day.

We really need parent support and understanding on this matter. Children thrive on routine. At the end of a busy, educational and stimulating day, they are anxious to reconnect with their families.

For everyone's well-being, please try to have your child attend on a somewhat consistent, but no more than, 9-hour schedule. *Thank you so much.*



EMERGENCY MEDICATIONS & TREATMENT PLANS (IHCP's)

MUST REMAIN CURRENT AND NEED A PHOTO ATTACHED

All children who have any type of emergency medication and/or individual health care plans at the center must keep these medications and documents *current*. **Treatment plans expire annually.** Both the document and the medication need to have a small photo attached. Photos are not required for NON-emergency medications.

Every child currently enrolled should be all set with photos but may need to get an updated form from the physician's office. Please ask your child's teacher to confirm for you and document expiration dates. The staff cannot administer outdated medications and cannot administer medication at all with an outdated plan, so we all really need to stay ahead of expiration dates on forms and on medications.

If your child is diagnosed with asthma, seizure disorder a severe allergy or any type of potentially life-threatening condition and a new treatment plan and medication are needed, please attach a small photo to the medication box and/or plan. Always be careful to avoid covering important information on the medication. If you aren't sure – just clip the picture to the form and we will attach it – sizing it on the copier if necessary. This is an *extra measure* to ensure that the *right child* receives the *right medication* in the event of an emergency.

Our policy is to exclude children from care if medication or forms needed to administer emergency medication are missing or outdated. We try very hard to be flexible and understanding when possible for physicals and lead tests updates, but it is extremely important to have all we need to care for a child with a potentially life-threatening condition.

EZ -EFT FORMS AVAILABLE

Many of our families are now taking advantage of this program that makes paying tuition much more convenient. Feel free to contact Pam Frogameni at pfrogameni@childrenshouseinc.org if you would like to set up automatic Electronic Funds Transfer tuition payments. She will be able to answer any questions you might have and can send you the correct forms to complete. Completed forms can be placed in the tuition drawer.

DOOR SECURITY & ACCESS CARD USAGE

Most parents have been great about remembering to use their access cards. We really appreciate your efforts to keep the card handy at drop off and pick up times!



We've also seen parents being very careful about not letting those they don't recognize in. We continue to require that parents (despite how awkward it is) NOT let other individuals into the building. We know that you begin to recognize families you see regularly at drop off/pick up. However, because we can't share if a sudden custody issue arises, everyone must implement the policy consistently. So even if you recognize the person coming in behind you, we ask that you – as politely as possible – ask that person to swipe their card. If the center was already informed of an issue, the card would be deactivated.

We appreciate everyone's efforts in keeping the children, staff and *everyone* in our building safe!

