Early Years are Learning Years

Mon. 4/11: Teacher/Staff Appreciation Day/Lunch
Tue. 4/12: Crazy Clothes & Giving Back Day
Wed. 4/13: Parent/Caregiver Appreciation Breakfast and Volunteer Day
Thu. 4/14: Book Swap and Volunteer Day
Fri. 4/15: Ice Cream Social
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G1</th>
<th>G2</th>
<th>102</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zoo Animals and Our Friends</strong></td>
<td><strong>Spring is Here</strong></td>
<td><strong>Plants, Flowers and Bugs</strong></td>
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<td>In the coming months, G1 will be spending some time learning about zoo animals and friendships. We will discuss the types of animals that live at the zoo and how they are cared for. We will then cover the importance of friendships. We will spend some time talking about and practicing sharing and getting along with our friends. We will also focus on how we care for our friends!</td>
<td>Warmer weather is on the way and in preparation our classroom will start our exploration of Spring. This will encompass why we need umbrellas when it rains and watching how caterpillars turn into beautiful butterflies. The children will enjoy activities such as putting polka-dots on umbrellas, creating caterpillars with pom-poms and ink blot butterflies. Books read will include <em>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</em>, <em>One Rainy Day</em>, and <em>Rain Play</em>.</td>
<td>We will begin the month learning about plants and flowers. We will care for our plants and flowers that are already growing in the playground and grow some more flowers from seeds inside! The children will do some fun and creative art projects as well as use all of their senses to explore the season. Following our flower unit, we will explore rain and thunderstorms. We will talk about why rain is important and how thunderstorms make us feel.</td>
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<td><strong>Hello Spring</strong></td>
<td><strong>Spring, Weather, and Bugs</strong></td>
<td><strong>Little Scientists</strong></td>
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<td>We are going to have fun with the arrival of spring. Many of our activities will be based on the season like rainbows, flowers, our environment blooming, and how rain makes flowers and grass grow. We will also celebrate the children during the <em>Week of the Young Child</em>. Other topics will include recycling, Earth Day, and the circus. We look forward to the excitement as we learn and play. Good-bye winter and hello spring!</td>
<td>We are so happy to welcome spring. We will begin our celebration of this beautiful season by exploring the changing weather it brings us. We hope to see lots of sunshine but this season can bring wind, rain, and even snow. This is also the time of year we see a return of those birds that migrate in the fall and insects begin to creep back into our world – two fun units we will share with the children. May and June will find us in the garden and down on the farm.</td>
<td>Spring has sprung! The Jewels are very excited about the up and coming activities. We will be exploring community helpers and preparing scientific experiments in the months to come. In May, we will have a special visit from Arelis’ mother who is planning to do a science activity with the class. We are also looking forward to our annual Multicultural Celebration when we can all share something about our heritage.</td>
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Physical activity is an important part of children’s lives; it has a tremendous impact on physical, intellectual and emotional development.

According to the National Association of Sports and Physical Education, each day, young children should:
- get at least 30 minutes (for toddlers) and 60 minutes (for preschoolers) of structured physical activity (adult-led)
- get at least 60 minutes unstructured physical activity (free play)
- not be inactive for more than 1 hour at a time (except for sleeping)

Ms. Latoya Brown, our Social Work Intern, has researched some great outdoor options for the Spring and Summer:

Looking for great bike trails? Enjoy riding along with your child on a **mile long bike trail** at one of the largest parks in Richmond!  
**James River Park:** (Belle Isle downtown or Pony Pasture): 22nd and Riverside Drive, Richmond; 804-646-8911

How about giving your child a chance to explore/play on some of the **best playgrounds**? Top picked playgrounds for children of all ages:

**Meadow Farm/ Crump Park Playground:** 3400 Mountain Road, Glen Allen (has a separate play area just for toddlers and huge picnic area!)

**Humphrey Calder Community Center Playground:** 414 N. Thompson Street, Richmond (this park is covered with sand and includes toddler friendly swings, seesaws and miniature train!)

**Deep Run Park:** 9900 Ridgefield Parkway, Richmond (this park is completely shaded, includes two ponds for fishing, picnic shelters, paved trails, and a huge soccer field!)

If it gets too hot outside, you can give your child a chance to challenge themselves and explore at some of the **best museums** in Richmond!

**The Virginia Aviation Museum:** 5701 Huntsman Road, Richmond International Airport (kids experience flying a computerized flight simulator, full size airplane they can climb into, and learn how jet engines generate power!)

**The Science Museum of Virginia:** 2500 West Broad St, Richmond (enjoy hundreds of hands-on exhibits)

**The Children’s Museum of Virginia:** 2626 West Broad St., Richmond; 804-474-7000; (specials on the 30th of each month)
Highlights from the *Pediatric Dentistry* Parent Workshop

Dr. Kodis from MCV was very helpful in shedding some light on the importance of early dental care. We had a wonderful turn out, but for parents who could not attend here are some of his recommendations:

- A child’s first dental visit should take place when his/her first tooth appears or by his/her first birthday!

- When planning the first dental visit, discuss it just like you would a visit to the grocery store, grandma’s house, or a neighbor’s house. If you make too much of it, your child may think this is something to worry about.

- Children do not need a large amount of toothpaste on their toothbrush. A small “smear” across the bristles is best for children unable to spit and a pea-size amount is best for those capable of spitting.

- You should be following behind your child after he/she brushes until approximately age 8, when they have the necessary dexterity to brush correctly.

- Children (and parents) should avoid soda (diet and regular), sports drinks, and juice (limit to 4 oz. per day)! It is better to get nutrients from fresh fruit then fruit juice.

- Try your best to decrease the artificial sugars your child consumes.

- Model appropriate teeth brushing and flossing.

- Toothbrushes should be changed every 3 months.

- Thumb sucking, pacifiers, and sippy-cups should be avoided after age 2.

- For more information on dental health and kid-friendly activities go to:
  - HTTP://WWW.AAPD.ORG
  - HTTP://WWW.ADA.ORG
  - HTTP://WWW.CREST.COM
  - HTTP://WWW.COLGATE.COM

UPCOMING EVENTS

**PAC MEETING:** Tuesday, April 26th from 6-7pm; Childcare/Dinner provided.

**FAMILY PAC PICNIC:** Friday, May 13th; more information to follow

**PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES:** Monday, May 16th— the CDC will CLOSE at NOON.