



CROSSINGS

Newsletter

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

After a rather quiet March, April is shaping up to be a busy month here at Kid Country! Our colleagues from Helping Hands Children's Therapy Services will be here to offer free screenings to all children in our preschool classrooms. We highly recommend all children in these programs get screened. If you have not signed the permission slip yet, please do so. If your child is enrolled in one of our younger classrooms, but you'd like to have him/her screened, please let us know and we will get you on the schedule.

We are also going to celebrate the Week of the Young Child during the entire week of April 11. We will have special activities, dress up days and an overall message of working together throughout the week! All of this to celebrate the little people in our lives! Kid Country is honored to be a part of the growth and development of every child that comes through our doors, and we enjoy the extra celebration that this week brings every year.

I also want to thank everyone for your patience during our construction phase. We have been doing construction since last summer when we started the floors, and I'm ready for it to end!! The painting should be finished in April, and I'm hoping we can also finish the replacement of the FRP board in all the classrooms this month as well. I do truly appreciate your understanding - the rooms are going to look awesome when we get everything done!

Have a great month everyone!

Donna
Miss Donna



April

Birthdays

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 3rd Anastasia F | 10th Panth S |
| 4th Jade S | 11th Ariel N |
| 4th Emberly H | 13th Sullivan M |
| 6th Avery T | 16th Mason T |
| 8th Ryan A | 17th Olivia H |
| 9th Arianna F | 18th Benjamin I |
| 9th Charles M | 19th Gianni A |

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Week
of the
Young
Child





YELLOW DUCKS

March was all about enjoying outdoor experiences and learning about spring elements. With the warm weather, the Yellow Ducks were able to experience the outdoors beyond going for walks. The teachers expanded their outside adventures by playing on the little playground. Playing on the playground enhances many developmental domains such as physical, social-emotional, and math concepts. The children can move and explore within their personal abilities. The social-emotional advantages include interacting with peers, especially the Purple Parrots. Children learn from adults; however, they also learn from their peers. When the Ducks interact and observe the older children, they are connecting abilities to activities. Finally, the developmental domain of mathematics is influenced outside through spatial relations and angles. Outdoor play incorporates important learning methods as well as fresh air for the children!

In addition, the Yellow Ducks were also introduced to the concept of caring for living things through our spring unit. The Ducks enjoyed activities such as *Egg Carton Garden* and *Garden Party*. During these activities, the children interacted with fake plants, flowerpots and plastic garden tools as they practiced watering, digging with shovels, and planting. Knowing infants learn about the world through their senses, the Yellow Duck teachers created safe, interactive and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor learning environments. While exploring the environments, the teachers conversed with the Ducks about what they were experiencing. Overall, the month of March was filled with nature as well as new memories and experiences. Moving forward, we will continue exploring the outdoors and incorporate new learning environments. We know that contact with nature is a source of amusement, curiosity and inspiration for children and can also reduce the stress of being indoors! We are hoping to get out every day if the weather permits!



Miss Karen, Miss Amy, and Miss Gina

PURPLE PARROTS

The month of March brought rainbows, green, and transportation to the Purple Parrots classroom. The Purple Parrots were busy learning the colors of the rainbow, all things GREEN, and different types of transportation vehicles. What a busy month!

The Purple Parrots kicked off the month with Dr. Seuss week! The Purple Parrots have read a couple of the Dr. Seuss books throughout the week, “The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go” (Dr. Seuss). The Purple Parrots have been loving reading during circle time! Reading can enhance children’s imagination and curiosity and helps them develop their brain, ability to focus, and communication skills. The Purple Parrots completed an activity that went along with each Dr. Seuss book we read. Some of the activities included dotting fish, painting Dr. Seuss’ hat, and a green eggs and ham dramatic play activity. Everyone had a blast celebrating Dr. Seuss’ birthday!



Purple Parrots continued...

The next few weeks were filled with rainbows and the color, GREEN for St. Patrick's Day. The Purple Parrots explored the visual arts to learn the different colors of the rainbow. Some activities included watercolor painting, painting with cars, and rainbow coffee filters. The Purple Parrots used a variety of art materials to create masterpieces. Allowing the children to explore the arts in a variety of ways and develops their cognitive, social-emotional, and multisensory skills.

That sneaky little leprechaun did it yet again! That little leprechaun took a visit to our classroom and left some goodies behind! The Purple Parrots celebrated St. Patrick's Day all week long by learning about all things GREEN with a green sensory bin, painting shamrocks, and a fine motor coin drop. The Purple Parrots dressed in all green and ate a special treat of Lucky Charms on St. Patrick's Day!

We are excited to see what next month will hold for us! With the weather getting warmer we will be spending a lot more time outside, please remember to still send your child in a jacket as the morning could still be a little chilly outside.

Ms. Kathy, Ms. Emily S, Ms. Emily K



RED ROBINS

March was an exciting month for the Red Robins! The children explored a fun week of Dr. Seuss where we enhanced our fine motor skills as we created fun, colorful artwork using a variety of art medias. The Robins also enjoyed all things rainbows and colors this month! The children engaged in a colorful, fun science experiment while exploring colors. The Robins were encouraged to discover cause and effect relationships when the baking soda, vinegar and food coloring mixed to create a fizzy colorful explosion! So cool!

The Robins then strengthened their fine motor skills through a variety of activities including stringing beads, using glue sticks to complete artwork, and drawing with chalk on the pavement outside. The sidewalk chalk was just the beginning as the children and teachers were excited to continue to spend more time outdoors as the weather warmed up.

**Ms. Kelly, Ms. Julian,
Ms. Rhi, Ms. Grace,
& Ms. McKenzie**



While outside, the Robins enhanced their gross motor skills as they played many games together including, Duck Duck Goose. Riding bikes around the big playground is another great way for the Robins to strengthen those large muscle skills and balance.

The Robins are looking forward to what the next month brings as we settle down on the farm! The Robins will be learning all about barns, farm animals and the types of food grown on a farm.

GREEN FROGS

The Green Frogs have blasted off into space for an exploration of the planets and stars! We began our study by creating planets for the solar system. We worked cooperatively while we painted the planets in our solar system. The Green Frogs painted with tin foil, paint brushes, and sponges to create different textures in the paint. The Green Frogs are currently building their name rockets! As we use our fine motor skills to write and glue down letters, we also worked on our letter recognition.

To further explore the galaxy, we used our fine motor skills to create space shuttles, complete with a window for our bright astronauts faces! The Green Frogs also used their creativity to decorate their space shuttles with stickers and an array of different colors. As we soared around the galaxy, we saw all kinds of constellations that the Green Frogs created using their fine motor skills with chalk and stickers. The Green Frogs put star stickers on a black paper and connected their stars to reveal their unique constellation. They then named their creative constellation.



As we continued our exploration into space, we saw a shooting star! The Green Frogs created their own shooting stars by cutting a streamer and attaching it to the star. We measured the Green Frogs and had them cut the streamer to their height. As we did this, we discussed numbers and the letters of their name that was written on the star. As we continue to explore the solar system, we will expand our vocabulary and discuss each planet more in-depth.

Ms. Fran, Ms. Valeria and Ms. Kelsey



ORANGE OWLS

The Owls took off this month with all things transportation! We flew high, dove low, and zoomed cross country as we discussed how each mode of transportation works, are built, and why we need each of them. The Owls especially loved being able to then put their skills to the test as they created their own boats, planes, and racetracks. To create their boats the Owls were encouraged to choose various parts of a water bottle, tape, paper, straws, and other forms of media. With these items they were to create a boat that would float across our sensory table filled with water. Some knew that adding paper would be detrimental while others wanted to try paper along with tape to see if it would become water resistant. This project was a great way to encourage hands on cause and effect as well as critical thinking.

We closed out the month venturing into building and construction. A lot of talk about construction was brought up while adventuring in our modes of transportation. Within these talks it lead our Owls right into how buildings are made, why each one is important, and both tools and materials needed to create such grand structures!

Ms. Bailey, Ms. Holly, Ms. Victoria, Ms. Julie



BLUE GILLS



Spring is finally here, and what better way to celebrate Spring than to build the best leprechaun trap in the world! We heard that leprechauns are pretty lucky fellows and that they have lots of gold coins, so we decided to try to trap a leprechaun so we could have some of that lucky goodness. Now the first thing we needed to do was to make a plan. We all put our ideas together and came up with a fool proof plan, because those leprechauns are pretty tricky and clever. Boxes were the first idea, but we had to decide what we were going to do with them. Well, we colored those boxes the colors of the rainbows and added some green glitter to them to be attractive to their eyes. But we didn't stop there. We then decided to turn the boxes into a hotel for the Leprechaun to take a nap. Next we figured that if we built our trap around a block structure, maybe it would fool a leprechaun. So we built a really big block structure around our trap and even taped some of the extra rainbows to the blocks to make it more inviting.

We then had the question "how are we going to get him in there?" Well we heard that they like cereal, so we put a big long trail of it leading to the trap. Throughout the day we kept checking that trap to see if a leprechaun made an appearance, but no luck. We then decided to go outside for a bit to make the room a little quiet. When we came back to our classroom, were we in for a really big surprise! **OUR TRAP WAS SPRUNG!** There were cereal pieces all over the place and a big mess! We didn't have any luck catching that leprechaun, but he left us a whole lot of gold coins to enjoy. Boy did we have a lot of fun creating that trap and the best part is that we worked together as a team to get the job done because cooperative play and learning to communicate is what it is all about! Please don't forget the warmer weather is approaching. Please make sure that your child comes to school every day in the appropriate outerwear. We will be going outside everyday unless it's raining.

Ms. Rhonda and Ms. Wendy

BLUE DOLPHINS

The lucky month of March brought warmer weather for the Blue Dolphins. The children loved the fresh air after a busy day at school. Kid Country strongly values the development possible outside and the school age program is no exception. The children explore and excel in their social skills and gross motor abilities while outside. They have the supervised freedom to play games, run around, interact in the outdoor kitchen, and utilize the equipment.

Playing games require many social skills including learning and teaching the rules of the game. The teachers encourage the children to share the games they love. This not only provides variety to the games played but practicing the ability to teach and explain a game is an important skill in communication. The Blue Dolphins cannot wait to have more outside time, especially with the extended daylight.

In addition, the Blue Dolphins spent time planning their spring break and discussing everyone's plans. The children attending Kid Country during the Manhattan Districts break expressed the activities they would enjoy and materials needed. The children who will be staying home or going on vacation spoke about their families' plans. The Blue Dolphins show excitement when they can share their thoughts, feelings, and future plans with the group. We are ready to spring forward into April and hope for warm days to come!

Ms. Rhonda, Ms. Donna K., and Ms. Wendy



April Happenings

KID COUNTRY CHILDCARE

- 7th & 8th Helping Hands Screening
- 11th - 15th Week of the Young Child Celebration
- 14th Ice Cream Social 4pm
- 15th & 16th No School Manhattan & Peotone

Save the date!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW! JOIN US FOR OUR 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OPEN HOUSE ON FRIDAY, JUNE 3RD. FOOD, GAMES, PRIZES, AND MORE!

The garden is in need of gardening tools!



If you have any old used tools lying around not getting used, we would love to put them to use!

