



CROSSINGS

Newsletter

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Director's Message

Happy New Year everyone! We are so excited to be starting 2022 with you as part of our Kid Country family! 2022 marks our 20th year providing early education and care in Manhattan, and we are so excited to have reached this milestone! We will continue our year-long celebration and culminate it all with a Kid Country family party on June 2! Watch for more details of all our little activities and events leading up to the big one on June 2!

As we think about everything, we want to accomplish in 2022, a full team is at the top of our list! Our teaching team is the heart of Kid Country, and we are doing everything we can to get back to a full group of teachers for the year. Early this year we will be rolling out more features of our sign in/out app, so be on the lookout for news about that too! We will also continue our upgrade of our 20-year-old building by

replacing windows, getting a full re-paint, and generally updating our classrooms!

Later this month we will begin our 2022-23 registration process. Please think about your childcare needs for this summer and next school year so you are ready when the packets go home. Maybe thinking about summer during January will warm us all up a bit!

We wish for every Kid Country family to have an absolutely wonderful 2022 filled with health, happiness and peace! Happy New Year everyone!

Donna

Miss Donna



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

9th — Miss Gina
10th — Olivia E.
16th — Miss Mary
18th — Landon O.
18th — Finley A.
21st — Erica W.
28th — Miss Fran

HAPPY
Birthday



Yellow Ducks

December was a cheerful and memorable month in the Yellow Ducks filled with holiday firsts, smiles and activities. The teachers inspired the holiday magic by decorating the classroom with multi-color lights, holiday icons and a Christmas tree. A garland with lights was secured above the changing table to be viewed by the children as they completed a diapering routine.

A visit from Santa kicked off the holiday activities, as smiles were shining from ear to ear by all. Santa's visit was followed by a week of holiday extravaganza which has the Ducks feeling the holiday spirit down to their mistletoes! The Yellow Ducks participated in painting ornaments, decorating cookies, and listening to Kid Country's Christmas carolers (Blue Dolphins). Along with the holiday experiences, the Yellow Ducks were still working on strengthening their overall gross

motor development. Gross motor skills are the abilities that develop through using the large muscles of the body in a coordinated and controlled way. Movements of the whole arms, the legs and the trunk are all gross motor movements. The Yellow Ducks teachers consistently encourage tummy-time, assisted sitting and playing on the floor for the younger infants. Nevertheless, this month the teachers wanted to mix up and challenge the older infants' gross motor skills. This was accomplished by setting up tunnels for them to crawl through and introducing a climbing cube/slide. The mobile children had a blast utilizing their whole body to engage in the gross motor activities.

All in all, the Yellow Ducks had a month full of tremendous achievements and creating new memories. We are excited for the new beginnings in the New Year!

Miss Karen, Miss Amy, and Miss Gina

Purple Parrots

Happy holidays from the Purple Parrots classroom! The Purple Parrots were busy getting in the Christmas spirit this month! The toddlers worked on both their fine and gross motor skills by creating artwork and dancing around the classroom to Christmas music! To end the month the Purple Parrots celebrated with a Christmas party along with a week full of fun activities!

The toddlers used their sensory skills to create handprint candy canes to display in the classroom as well as play in shaving cream to drive the cars through like snowmobiles. The teachers painted the toddlers' hands red, and they stuck them to the candy cane to create a handprint. The Purple Parrots laughed as the teachers painted their hands. The toddlers also used paint to create a present by painting a paper with red and green paint and sticking a bow on top. The Purple Parrots also created winter hats out of cotton balls.

To conclude the month, the Purple Parrots celebrated with a Christmas party! To start the fun the toddlers enjoyed a special sweet treat! The toddlers used their gross motor skills to have a snowball toss with their peers, this enhanced taking turns and communicating with their classmates. The toddlers worked together to decorate a Velcro

Purple Parrots Continues...

Christmas tree! The Purple Parrots also enjoyed a Christmas craft by coloring and putting stickers onto a stocking! The teachers encouraged the toddlers to use their fine motor skills to peel and stick the stickers on the stockings as well as use their pincer grip to color.

To wrap up the month, the Purple Parrots had a week full of winter extravaganza! We celebrated the last week by decorating ornaments, explored in a snow sensory bin, decorated cookies, and enjoyed a special snack with pajama day, just to name a few things!

We cannot wait to see what the new year will bring!

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



Red Robins

The Red Robins spent the month of December getting into the Christmas spirit! The month of December was focused on fine and gross motor activities. Fine motor skills are incredibly important because they help build dexterity and strengthen the muscles in their fingers and hands. Fine motor skills foster the necessary life skills for example, using utensils to eat, learning to zip up coats and using art materials such as crayons. The Red Robins experienced a variety of art projects this month that enhanced their fine motor development. The Robins enjoyed creating with unconventional art materials to create their very own polar bear. The Robins engaged the muscles in their hands as they used glue sticks throughout the project. When the weather allowed, the Robins enjoyed time outside to enhance their gross motor development by climbing, jumping, and running around the playground.

The Red Robins enjoyed the holiday festivities at Kid Country! The children were excited to hear stories from Miss Donna and Miss Emily as they ate colorful holiday cookies with chocolate milk. The children loved being in their warm pajamas listening to stories about Christmas magic. The Robins could also be seen looking out the window to see Santa Claus during our festivities. The Red Robins'



holiday party was a success! The children enjoyed strawberries and bananas made to look like Santa hats. The children loved wearing their silly holiday glasses and enjoyed many games including a snowball toss! The Robins wrapped up the month of December with Kid Country's Christmas Extravaganza. The days leading up to Christmas were packed with exciting games and activities for the children to engage in.

The Red Robins team is looking forward to all that the new year brings!

Ms. Kelly, Ms. Jessica, and Ms. Jenna

Green Frogs

Christmas cheer filled the air in the Green Frogs room this month as we prepared for Santa's arrival! To help deck our bare walls the Frogs painted a large tree for the classroom. We then used our fine motor skills to cut out shapes and decorated them for our tree. The Frogs read many stories about Santa coming down the chimney, so we created our very own fireplace where each Frog decorated and hung a stocking.

To practice letter writing and recognition, the Green Frogs teachers had light bulbs cut out to create our light bulbs names. Each Green Frog wrote the letters of their name on the light bulbs and then strung them on paper. We wanted to share our Christmas cheer with the whole building, so we hung them in the hall for all to see!

The Frogs discussed what they are going to leave out for Santa to snack on, but then were wondering what about the flying reindeer? We decided to create a yummy snack for them to! Several ingredients including sunflowers seeds, Cheerios, oats, and the all-important glitter were used to make the reindeer snack. Each ingredient was given a specific measurement such as "2 scoops or 4 scoops". The Frogs took turns identifying the numbers and placing that number of scoops in their bag for the reindeer. They were careful to mix the yummy



snack and are now ready to sprinkle it on the front lawn to guide the reindeer to their house.

The Green Frogs had a great time at our classroom Christmas party! We had several games such as fishing for candy canes, reindeer ring toss, and stacking marshmallow snowmen! We concluded our Christmas celebration with a Kid Country Christmas Extravaganza! We made ornaments, decorated Christmas cookies, and painted snowy pictures with marshmallows! We also played Christmas games and discussed our favorite things about Christmas.

We wish everyone a Happy New Year!

Ms. Fran and Ms. Molly

Orange Owls

This month brought cheer and joy as we celebrated Christmas on many different levels! The use of fine motor skills came in handy as we created fun Rudolph reindeers with their handprints, cut out unique snowflakes, and beaded our own candy canes! The week of Christmas brought laughter and comfort as we held our annual Christmas parties in each classroom! The Owls partook in a very yummy snack that consisted of creating a Christmas tree out of ice cream cones and frosting and topped it off with M&M's. During our party, the Owls created reindeer food with their friends to sprinkle out on Christmas Eve.

The holiday months are always busy for everyone, so we decided to take a circle time to talk about what we wanted for Christmas and all about our elves and Christmas decorations. We also discussed different traditions that we have with our families and friends! Many shared similar traditions such as decorating the Christmas tree, looking at Christmas lights, and making Christmas cookies to decorate.

We want to thank every parent for giving us the time we need to recoup from the holidays and busy times the week after Christmas. We have all seen our

Orange Owls Continues...

share of struggles this year and could not thank you more for the opportunity to spend more time with our family and friends!

Ms. Bailey and Ms. Krista



Blue Gills

The Blue Gills ventured into the world of the gingerbread man. The Gingerbread Man is a great folk tale filled with silly rhymes and stemmed into many activities for the Blue Gills. The Gingerbread Man supplied many learning concepts for the Blue Gills from counting to early reading skills with rhyming concepts. Ms. Rhonda and Ms. Wendy took the reading the Gingerbread Man tale to the next level by comparing and exploring five different versions of the tale. This created different perspectives for the children regarding the same plot. By providing different perspectives the children expand

their thinking methods. It was a fun month of the Gingerbread Man filled with lots of learning concepts and laughter.

To close out the shorter month in the Blue Gills classroom we celebrated the upcoming holiday week with a holiday bash. The children were all smiles throughout each planned activity and loved our fun snack. We even had a special gift exchange with our peers, it was a lot of fun seeing everyone open their small gift. The Blue Gills will enjoy a short break and get right back down to learning fun after the new year.

Ms. Rhonda and Ms. Wendy

Blue Dolphins

The month of December is always a special time in the Blue Dolphins classroom. The children have many stories to share with the exciting holiday happenings in their homes, school, and at Kid Country. The children are also here extra during the break from “big-kid” school and the Blue Dolphin teachers had many fun games and activities planned. The children played inside games such as ornament shuffleboard,

pin the nose on the reindeer and cup games. The classroom was filled with cheering and laughter as they engaged their competitive sides.

In the spirit of the holiday season, Ms. Donna K. organized for the children to create holiday cards for children at Lurie’s Children’s Hospital. Each child was able to create as many cards as they would like to send. This act of kindness filled the classroom with

love and hope for the children at Lurie’s. The Blue Dolphins showed off their cards with pride before sending them to the children. We are so proud of the kindness our Blue Dolphins have shown to the community of Lurie’s Children’s Hospital.

We hope everyone has a very Happy New Year!

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

Upcoming Events – January

- 3rd — Kid Country Re-opens, Normal Business Hours
- 17th — Martin Luther King Day – Kid Country is OPEN
- 24th — 2022-23 Registration Begins
- 27th — Parent Breakfast

