



APRIL BIRTHDAYS:

- 1st -- Skylar G.
- 2nd -- Myah M.
- 4th -- Emberly H.
- 6th -- Avery T.
- 6th -- Stevie V.
- 8th -- Ryan A.
- 9th -- Arianna F.
- 9th -- Charles M.
- 10th -- Ava D.
- 26th -- Logan R.
- 27th -- Alexis G.



Our New Admin Team

We have a new admin team! I decided to take this opportunity to think about my vision of Kid Country as an organization and how to best manage the company. I figured if I had to make some changes, I might as well look at the entire picture and go big!

I am proud to announce that Miss Melissa is now our Director of Enrollment. She has been a part of our admin team since last summer, but she now has a title and a specific lane and list of duties. In her role as director of enrollment she is responsible for handling all our new leads, conducting tours, onboarding our new families and dealing with anything that is parent/family/child oriented. Miss Melissa has pretty much grown up here at Kid Country, and she is a natural fit for this position with her knowledge of all our classrooms and policies. Melissa will celebrate her 17th anniversary with Kid Country this year and holds an associate degree in early childhood education from Joliet Junior College.

I am equally as proud to announce that Miss Emily is now our Director of Personnel. She just joined our admin team but is already off running strong! As director of personnel, Emily is responsible for everything related to staffing: scheduling, hiring, onboarding, professional development, and

supporting our teaching team. Emily will celebrate her 11th anniversary this year and holds a bachelor's degree in early childhood education leadership from Rasmussen College. She is also finishing up her master's degree in human resource management from Keller Graduate School of Management, which is going to be perfect for her new role here at Kid Country.

In case you are wondering, I will still be here as Director/Owner and gradually focusing my time on operations, growth and the "big picture" of Kid Country as a whole, as well as training our new directors! You are always welcome to reach out to me but know that you are also able to contact either of these administrators when you have questions/concerns in their areas.

Help us welcome both Miss Melissa and Miss Emily to their new roles as directors! I am extremely proud of both ladies for the growth they have shown as early childhood educators, and I cannot wait to see them put their mark on the administrative side of Kid Country!

Donna

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YELLOW DUCKS Blue Gills

The month of March was a lucky time in the Yellow Ducks classroom. The Yellow Ducks accomplished many milestones developing their gross motor skills. By developing these skills, the Ducks grow and gain independence, and support them to explore the world around them. Gross motor skills are movements related to large muscles such as legs, arms, and trunk.

The younger Ducks, which fall between the 0-to-3-month age group, practiced their gross motor skills through tummy time. Tummy time is a great activity to foster the Ducks develop of their core muscles in the neck, back and shoulders. This development is crucial as the Ducks grow older and begin to crawl. The next group of Ducks, which fall between the 3-to-6-month age group, also engaged their gross motor skills through tummy time, but were more focused on rolling over from front to back and back to front. Rolling encourages the Ducks to develop skills allowing for them to increase their purposeful movements.

The older Ducks ranging between the 9- to- 12-month age group, worked on pulling themselves to a standing position as well as taking steps while holding the furniture. We practiced this skill by placing toys along the top of the shelves to get the Ducks to pull them to a standing position. This strengthens their muscles and coordination to walk along the shelves to retrieve the toys they desire to play with. All gross motor skills are important for the Ducks overall development.

Ms. Leslie, Ms. Karen, and Ms. Aurelia



I have to say the excitement for the month of March was all about that little man, The leprechaun. For days and days, the Blue Gills discussed the history and stories of the leprechaun. We brainstormed hard about how we could possibly catch this little man and what we could do once we had him. The sheer thought of having all his gold so that we could buy all the things we dream about was a wonderful motivation to create the best trap! As a group, the Blue Gills discussed all the things that we could use in the classroom and what we would need to gather. We made our plans, executed them to the best of our abilities and waited.

After a couple of hours of sitting and staring at the trap we decided to take a break and have some fun outside. When we returned, we could not believe our eyes. He visited and sprung our trap, but we did not catch him. He made an unbelievable mess of the classroom. The leprechaun left evidence of paint on the floors and mirrors, toys strewn everywhere, and our trap was demolished. The only positive aspect about the whole situation was he must have had sympathy for the Blue Gills' efforts and left us treats and some fake gold. It kind of made all our efforts worth it in the long run.

Moving forward, we are excited that we will get to spend more time outside. Bring on the nicer Spring weather!
Ms. Rhonda

GREEN FROGS

The Green Frogs focused on number recognition during March. The children identified the number on a tree and added the corresponding number of leaves to the tree by dipping their finger in yellow, red, or green paint. The children were able to use their individual style to create the trees. In small groups we played "Show Me Fingers". Ms. Fran called out a number and the children responded using their fingers to demonstrate their understanding of number recognition. This game

implements a fun method of learning numbers and allows the teachers to observe the progress in the objectives. In addition, the Frogs hopped into a fun game of Letter Hop which is one of their favorite inside games to play. We gathered around the carpet and one Frog hops to a letter. The Frog then identifies the letter and its sound. When needed peers are always willing to help if a child was not sure of a letter or a sound.

The Frogs have expanded their skills during Letter Hop by calling out who's name starts with the letter.

Of course, in March we are always visited by a sneaky Leprechaun. The Frogs worked together to create a trap to catch him and this year we were incredibly determined to get him! But, yet again, he was too sneaky for us. When we returned to the classroom after playing outside the Leprechaun had not only sprung our trap but made a mess of our room! The Frogs were good sports as they helped to clean up the room. When everything was returned to the typical routine, we sat down for lunch and discovered he had turned our milk GREEN! Crazy Leprechaun!

We all enjoyed Dr. Seuss week this month! After the Frogs read *Fox in Socks*, they participated in sock day! We played the rest of the day crazy socks! The Frogs created paper colorful socks with markers and stickers. The Frogs used their knowledge of letters to identify the letters of their name, on the stickers, and placed them in correct order on their sock. We celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday by creating striped Cat in the Hat hats. We had lots of giggles and smiles as we paraded around the room in our silly hats.

The Green Frogs will now begin their exploration of the Rainforest! We cannot wait to experience the Rainforest as a class. Ms. Fran, Ms. Wendy, and Ms. Stephani

PURPLE PARROTS

The Purple Parrots are excited for a new season! The transition to the spring season has inspired more outside time. We encourage the toddlers to play and explore while outside. Playing outside has many benefits and supports the play-based philosophy of Kid Country. Those objectives include engaging motor skills, strengthen coordination, self-awareness, acknowledgment for the environment, and peer interactions. The Parrot teachers will continuously bring inside activities outside to enrich experiences by achieving more learning objectives. March provided several opportunities to create colorful art and complete fine motor activities while breathing in the fresh air.

In addition to outdoor fun in the sun, the Parrots focused their attention on color recognition and transitioned into St. Patrick's Day celebrations. The Purple Parrot team decorated the classroom with the colors of the rainbow! Color recognition creates a connection of learning opportunities for the toddlers, it is visually engaging, expands vocabulary with the addition of descriptive words, and exhibits the developmental processes occurring with each child.

Activities the toddlers accomplished in March to encourage and engage their development were car painting, sensory play with shaving cream and food coloring, and coloring rainbows. These activities fostered the growth of each child's sensory

experiences, fine motor skills, and social skills with their peers and teachers.

The Purple Parrots also had so much fun celebrating Dr. Seuss Week! The Purple Parrots celebrated Dr. Seuss Week by relaxing in pajamas, wore crazy socks, arrived decked out in green, wearing cool hats, and getting dressed up in blue and red. Dr. Seuss Week was remarkably successful in the eyes of Purple Parrots with almost complete participation.

Overall, the Purple Parrots strive during their outside time and the teachers will continue to nurture their love for outside play and gross motor development. As the weather continues to warm up the amount of outside time will lengthen, please be sure to dress your child in appropriate outdoor

play wear.

Ms. Victoria, Ms. Kathy, and Ms. Emily



RED ROBINS

The month of March brought warmer weather which meant lots of outside time for the Red Robins! Outside time promotes beneficial learning conditions for young children such as different textures, space to run and play, and plenty of fresh air. The Red Robins took full advantage of every weather appropriate day to shake out our cabin fever and exercise. While outside the children climbed the outdoor equipment utilizing all skills of balancing and the continuous development of movements in a sequence to achieve a

physical goal such as reaching the top of the slide. The playgrounds supply a different setting for the children to interact, imagine, and grow surrounded by nature.

In addition, academically the Red Robins have been focusing on colors by creating rainbows and Spring themed artwork. The Robins dove into different methods of exploring art such as coloring with markers, using watercolors, discovering how to use glue sticks, and exploring their fine motor skills using scissors. Art provides a great outlet to connect many complex learning objectives. For example, the Red Robins were introduced to the skill of gluing and cutting paper, these skills require a more complex thought process to introduce controlled fine motor skills.

Overall, the month of March was perfect for the Robins. The generous amount of outside time allowed for more imagination development as well as strengthening of social skills. The Red Robins will venture into understanding Spring and the many features of the season.

Ms. Krista, Ms. Jenna, Ms. Jessica, and Ms. Jasmine



ORANGE OWLS Blue Dolphins

The Orange Owls flew far out into the galaxy this month to study space! We used a more scientific influence this study. We first hypothesized what could be found in space and who may travel through the galaxy. The Orange Owls were extremely excited to learn about the moon and what its phases are.



They were encouraged to identify the different phases using the insides of Oreo cookies! This hands-on experience intrigued the Owls with how the moons of the solar system seem to change. We asked that each child look up at the night sky and then report back to us the next day about what phase the moon was in. The Owls' teachers believe that the connections between home and school activities strengthen development.

The Owls explored stars, constellations, and other atmospheric elements of space such as asteroids and meteors. Within these concepts, the Owls worked on their number and letter recognition skills with various matching, count and clip, and scavenger hunt activities. These activities promoted the children's development of schema and recognition of everyday objects. The Owls discussed astronauts exploring space and we took a poll as a class about who would want to be an astronaut. The Orange Owls created their own astronaut suits with a variety of art materials and applied their fine motor skills to cut out the shape of the suits. The Owls were able to focus on their spatial

relationships and hand-eye coordination while practicing their cutting skills. We discovered how astronauts eat food in space and how they float around in their spaceships! They were introduced to the concept of gravity by dropping paint covered pom poms onto their papers at various heights. The Owls discovered that the pom poms would always fall and splatter paint!

Overall, the Owls wrapped up this month discussing interesting facts about each planet in our solar system. We discovered the

different types of elements each planet is made up of such as rocks, iron, metals, and even ice crystals! The Owls learned in depth information about each planet's environment, land, temperature and whether the planet has any moons. For example, did you know that Venus is the only planet in our solar system that spins backwards? We did not either!

The Owls continued to make connections throughout the unit. The Orange Owls will be zooming into April as we learn all about different types of transportation! Ms. Molly, Ms. Kelly, Ms. Abbey, and Ms. Christal



The Blue Dolphins have finally made it to the light at the end of the e-learning tunnel! The Blue Dolphins have worked diligently with making the situation of e-learning work for the past year. They have sacrificed a lot but expressed it all in stride as they plugged along getting all their

work done. From mastering the navigation of the apps beyond their years, to following two or three different schedules a day, they conquered it with a positive attitude and usually a smile.

The children expressed how they wished

school could just be the way they were. They wanted to be back in their classrooms, engaging with their teachers

face to face. They wanted to have lunch at school and play at recess with their friends. The children desired normalcy. Well, on March 22nd they were granted their wishes by returning to full days at school. The children were so happy and excited to be back in school full-time! The teachers are also so excited for them! Let us finish this year with a bang! Ms. Rhonda and Ms. Donna

