



Countryside Montessori School December Newsletter



The holidays are fast approaching! I hope everyone will find some time to sit back and just enjoy their children. Things get so busy and hectic during the holiday season as we all begin to prepare for our family traditions. It is sometimes hard to just sit back and enjoy our children. I am usually so busy from the time I get home until I go to bed that I don't even make time for me let alone just sitting and playing a game with my children. However, our children are growing and changing so much each day and if we don't stop and take time to enjoy them they are going to be all grown up before we know it. I can remember when my oldest attended Countryside for the first time. Now, they are seventeen and seniors in High School. They are now looking at colleges and planning their futures. I am hoping to be able to spend some quality time with them this holiday season. I hope that you will also take some time and enjoy your children. My mom always tells me that the cleaning can wait and the laundry will be there tomorrow. I remind her that yes the cleaning can wait; however, the laundry will be double tomorrow!! 😊 So, I am not saying to put off the laundry (at least not at my house) BUT the cleaning definitely can wait!! 😊 😊

We are continuing to collect gifts for our annual Toy Drive to benefit a local charity. Please bring an unwrapped gift no later than Wednesday, December 10th. If possible, please allow your child to pick out a \$5 toy and bring it to Countryside to donate to this wonderful cause. Toys will be delivered to the Crisis Nursery and given to children whose parents are unable to care for them do to extenuating circumstances. The Preschool children will be asked to talk about their donated toy during circle time.

Inclement Weather: Just a reminder that when there is inclement weather the school may close. The phone blast will go out and the message will be on the school phone and a message will be sent via PresciouSatus. This year you will see one of the following messages: School is closed, Delayed start, OR Extended Day Program ONLY. We apologize for any inconvenience the inclement weather may cause to your work day but the safety of the children and staff is important. We hope that you will be understanding during the winter months.

Mother's Holiday Parties are scheduled for children enrolled in the Toddler Room as well as the Preschool/Kindergarten rooms. This is an opportunity for you to see your child in action their classroom. Children will show you their favorite things to do while at school and then they will sing their winter songs and you can enjoy snack time together.

Winter Break begins December 19th. Dismissal for this day is a little different due to our Mother's Holiday Party for our Preschool/Kindergarten classroom. If your child is enrolled in our **Preschool/Kindergarten** program they will leave when the party ends at 11:15 a.m. We need parent cooperation as our parking lot will be FULL. We need all parents to leave promptly at 11:15 a.m. so that our **Toddler Room** parents can pick up their children at 11:30 a.m. If your child is enrolled in our extended day program they will be able to attend their normal day. For children enrolled in our **Mom's Day Out** and **Toddler** programs, you will have a normal day and pick up at your scheduled time.

Reminders:

December 18
December 19
December 19

Toddler Room Mother's Holiday Party 10-11:15 a.m.
Preschoo/Kdg Moother's Holiday Party 10-11:15 a.m.
Classes end at 11:15 a.m. and Winter Break Begins
Preschool/Kindergarten Dismissal 11:15 a.m.
Toddler Room Dismissal 11:30 a.m.
Mom's Day Out Dismissal 12:30 p.m.
School Resumes to normal schedule
Saving Sight Eye Exams 9:30 a.m.

January 5
January 30



Infant Room

Classroom Phone: 314-873-2262



With Thanksgiving behind us, December is here and the New Year is fast on its tail! This past month, our friends have been super busy growing up on us. Sophia celebrated her first birthday on November 23rd. It's hard to believe she will soon be transitioning to Moms Day Out. Nolan will celebrate his first birthday at the end of December. He is really on the move walking and enjoying his new found mobility. He is also down to just one evening bottle at just eleven months! Irene has mastered the art of crawling and is into everything she can get her hands into. Plus, she has transitioned to our table foods menu which she absolutely loves. Gabriella is pulling herself up to standing position and is probably our fastest crawler around these days. She loves crawling over the pillows and a teacher or two, if given the chance. Sebastian has been spending some time exploring our exersaucer. This gives him the opportunity to strengthen those core muscles as well as interact with our friends who walk, crawl & pull up. Brooke is trying so hard to get herself into the crawling position. She hasn't quite figured out how to get her legs out from under herself but it won't be long before she masters this skill and is off to the races! Jack, our newest and youngest friend, is adjusting well to our schedule and his new environment. He is also trying to roll to his side and explore. Jule is crawling and exploring all over the classroom. She has been enjoying exploring our play house, chasing after her friends and trying to pull up to standing position.

In December, our friends will be exploring a winter theme full of fun snow and winter animal activities. Ice painting, penguin pile ups and a few other fun activities. Here is one of songs to sing at home with your little Eskimo!

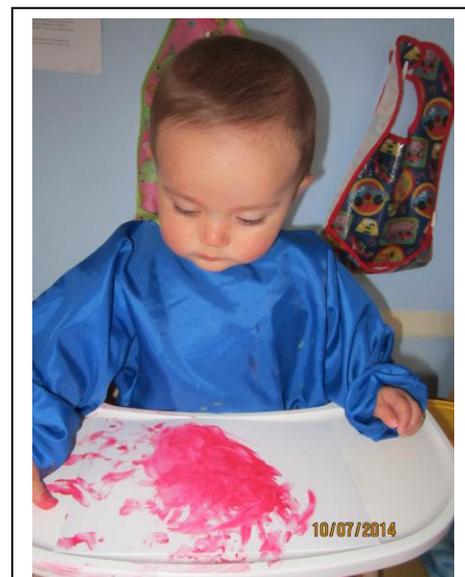
I'm a Little Penguin

I'm a little penguin, black and white.
I waddle to the left and I waddle to the right.
When I'm feeling hungry, splash and splish!
I jump in the water and catch a fish!

Enjoy all that December has to offer and we will see you next year! 2015 here we come!



Exploring Pumpkins



It's Art time!

Mom's Day Out Program/One Year Old's

Classroom Phone: 314-704-5255

What's Happening in Mom's Day Out?

We hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and that it was a time spent with family. It was nice to spend a few days gathered with loved ones, focusing on all we have to be grateful for.

We had beautiful weather over the holiday and the few days that followed, but it looks as if the temps have dropped again. The cold temperatures often mean we are unable to go outside. So, we have to find creative ways to get out gross motor time. We have a tunnel that the children crawl through, a parachute for large group play, the climber, and we dance and march to music. We also pick up the mats and rugs in the front room and let them use the space to move around freely. We want the children to move around in the safest way possible, so please make sure your child has a pair of indoor shoes or slippers with rubber grippers on the bottom.

The children continue to grow and change before our eyes. Anderson is beginning to repeat short phrases in an effort to form sentences. Eli is learning to carry his work to and from the table during Montessori time. Ethan is turning two this month and will be making the transition to the toddler room. He will be able to join his friends that have already moved up. Henry is forming sentences and talks to his teachers and friends all day. He especially loves to make us laugh. Michael is working on only using his pacifier during nap time and he is doing great at it. Molly is learning to use a spoon independently, which can be messy but she smiles with each successful spoonful. Navya has made several friends and seems to enjoy playing side by side with them. Parker seems to enjoy Montessori time and is working on keeping her work organized on the table. Preston is doing great following the classroom routine and transitions. He moves from room to room with little teacher assistance. Quinn K is coming in to the classroom and quickly getting involved in an activity with little to no difficulty separating from mom. Quinn T is so independent and smiles each time she accomplishes a difficult task.



Sensorial Time



Indoor Gross Motor Time

Toddler Program

Classroom Phone: 314-704-3419

Happy winter! We can't believe how quickly this year has flown by! And, we are excited for the New Year. This month we will practice using tongs with our tongs transfer work. We will use the tongs to move different colored pom pom balls from one bowl to the other. We will also be practicing a lot with lacing. The children will practice lacing string around different shapes. We will continue learning our numbers, colors, and shapes.

We will be talking about arctic animals this month! Penguins, polar bears, and sea lions! We will talk about where they live, what they eat, and the climates they live in. We will also be making different kinds of art about these arctic animals!

Parents are more than welcome to be a classroom volunteer. We are always looking for people to make play dough, read to the class, and bring in flowers. We can have classroom readers weekly from 8:40-8:50am. You may choose books from school, your house, or the public library. Flowers can be brought in each week, and play dough will be every other week. The sign-up sheets will be hung in the classroom. Please feel free to add your name to any of these volunteer sheets!

As a reminder, please make sure your child is dressed in layers and bringing the appropriate outerwear to school. We try to go outside every day, even if it is only for 5 minutes. We recommend getting a set of warm mittens and a hat that can stay at school. Please remember to label all of your child's outerwear to prevent lost or misplaced items. We hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season!



A Pudgie Little Snowman

A pudgie little snowman
Had a carrot nose
Along came a bunny
And what do you suppose?
That hungry little bunny
Looking for his lunch
Ate that snowman's carrot nose
Nibble, nibble, crunch

I'm a little snowman (sung to I'm a little teapot)

I'm a little snowman short and fat
Here are my buttons, here is my hat.
When the sun comes out I cannot play.
Slowly, I just melt away.



Fun in the Leaves!!!!

Preschool/Kindergarten Program

Classroom Phone: 314-704-3401

Winter is coming as we head into December! I would like to remind everyone about our toy drive going on now through December 10th and also our mother's holiday party on December 19th from 10-11:15 (more information will follow). As the weather gets colder and flu season is here, we do ask parents not to send their children to school if they are not feeling well or are sick. If you have to give your child medication before arriving to school, your child should not be attending school. You are risking the health of other children and staff members in the classroom. Thank you for helping to keep our classroom environment healthy and clean of germs!

We have new things to talk about this month. First, we will be learning about South America. Children will have opportunities to help build a rainforest in our classroom and learn about the different animals that live in the Amazon rainforest. We will also be talking about all the different countries in South America and their native flags. We will continue to talk about living and non living and plant and animals.

As the seasons change, so do our activities in the classroom. In the Practical life room, we will be making igloo mosaics and snowman pricking. We will have bubble making, jar opening and mirror polishing too. The pouring, scooping and tweezing work in the Practical Life room have all increased in difficulty. We have chop sticks the children will work with to improve their fine motor skills.

The Fireplace

This is how I chop the wood,
Chop the wood, chop the wood.
This is how I chop the wood
On this wintry day.

(Second verse)
...stack the wood...

(Third verse)
...carry the wood...

(Fourth verse)
...build a fire



The Red Rods are sometimes used to create a maze.



Our
Thanksgiving
Feast



Upcoming Events

Saint Louis Science Center First Friday: Battlestar Gallactica-So Say We All

Friday, December 5, 2014

Saint Louis Science Center in Forest Park

Learn the real science behind science fiction. The event features hands-on activities and culminates with a free 10:00 p.m. screening of a classic science fiction movie in the OMNIMAX® Theater. 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

<http://www.slsc.org/first-fridays>, (314) 289-4400 or (800) 456-SLSC

Chanukah: Festival of Lights

Saturday, December 6, 2014

Missouri Botanical Garden

A traditional Jewish holiday celebration that includes festive Israeli music and dance, a menorah-lighting ceremony and Chanukah merchandise provided by local vendors and the Garden Gate Shop. 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. (314) 577-5100 or (800) 642-8842

Kwanzaa Holiday Expo

Saturday, December 13, 2014 until Sunday, December 14, 2014

Better Family Life Cultural, Educational and Business Center

This expo features African-American vendors selling products such as apparel, custom-made jewelry, fine art, books, household goods, self-care products, fine fabrics and food. 10:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. (6); 12:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. (7) www.betterfamilylife.org

THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride (Dates Vary)

Now until Wednesday, December 31, 2014

St. Louis Union Station

Set to the sounds of the motion picture soundtrack, passengers will relive the magic of the story as they are whisked away on THE POLAR EXPRESS™. On board, hot chocolate and treats will be served as passengers read along with the classic children's book, *The Polar Express*, by Chris Van Allsburg. Santa and his helpers greet passengers at the North Pole and then board the train, where each child is given the first gift of Christmas - a silver sleigh bell. Chefs aboard each car lead passengers in singing Christmas carols on the ride back to St. Louis Union Station. Families are encouraged to wear their pajamas for the ride! Holiday Magic musical entertainment, family activities and seasonal vendors will add to the festive atmosphere at St. Louis Union Station. The Polar Express Panoramic Light Show will play on the ceiling of the Grand Hall at St. Louis Union Station each evening that Polar Express train rides depart from the station. Also character dinners -- featuring both adult and children's buffets and an elaborate holiday dessert buffet -- will take place in the Grand Hall on Polar Express excursion nights. Ticket prices begin at \$38 depending on date and class of service. Exact dates, fares and excursion times are available by visiting www.stlpolarexpressride.com or calling (314) 942-6942.

Ways to Volunteer at Countryside

Mom's Day Out Parents

- ~Making play dough
- ~Donating fresh cut flowers

Toddler Parents: Sign-up sheets are located in the classroom

- ~Making play dough
- ~Donating fresh cut flowers for the tables in the classroom
- ~Storytime (time and day will vary)
- ~Sharing a special talent

Preschool/Kindergarten Parents: Sign-up sheets are located in the classroom

- ~Making play dough
- ~Donating fresh cut flowers
- ~Wednesday morning story time (8:30 a.m.)
- ~Sharing information about your Culture/Country
- ~Help the staff in the classroom when a teacher is absent

Newsletter: Send information to JMHanser@aol.com (deadline for submission is the 25th of each month)

- ~monthly community events
- ~child friendly recipes
- ~any idea or information you think other families might enjoy





FREE CHILDREN'S VISION SCREENING

A free vision screening is being offered to your child. This screening involves taking a scan of your child's eyes with the Plusoptix auto refractor.

The vision screening requires no physical contact with your child and poses no risk to their health. A trained technician will conduct the vision screen, and you will be notified of the results the day of the screening.

If the screening detects any possible vision disorder, you will receive a packet of information including the screening results and a follow-up questionnaire to be filled out and returned to us after your child's eye exam.

Many parents may not know a vision condition exist because young children are unaware of or cannot yet verbalize their "fuzzy vision." Through KidSight, Saving Sight is able to communicate vision abnormalities to parents when their children are too young to do so themselves.

Screening Detects

Nearsightedness	Anisocoria
Farsightedness	Misalignment
Astigmatism	Anisometropia
Possible Cataract	



All children will be screened on January 30th beginning at 9:30 a.m.

