

Cedar Room Newsletter & Programing Update - Feb 2019



Children's Interests

Why is this important?

A key part of an emergent curriculum is anchoring our developmental milestones and challenges in the children's own interests. *How Does Learning Happen*, our pedagogical programing tool, tells us that children learn best when they are, Engaged, able to Express themselves, have a sense of Belonging, and have met their physical and mental Well-Being. Emergent curriculum, meets these needs by it's very nature.

Building Houses - Enclosure Schema

Over the past month, the cedar children have been continuing their vigorous exploration of all things construction. Thank you to everyone who responded to our in-room documentation regarding what elements we could add to the building center. So far, we have added some large popsicle sticks, as well as bolts of cloth, The children where unsure at first, but have now readily incorporated these elements into their building, fulfilling such rolls as pathways, carpeting, roofing, and more.

In particular this month, the children have been exploring the Enclosure play schema, using blocks to designate rooms, and often roofing them over for small animals, cars, and the like. This schema incorporates undersetting and exploration of size relativity, measurement, balance, and understanding other's perspective(Empathy).

The boys have created their own play house out of different materials. This house has various different rooms including a bedroom and walkway.



Exploring the popsicle sticks by creating different letters



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Taking Turns

One of the hardest things in life is waiting. We don't like to do it, and neither do children. However, as adults, we have had a lot of practice waiting, and we know that there is a reason behind the waiting - the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

In our program, there are multiple times throughout the day where the children are able to practice their waiting skills. One of these key opportunities are high-interest toys. For example, many children want to ride the Gold Bike, but only one can at a time. The children are not forced to wait, but those who do are rewarded with an eventual turn. This clear set of turn-taking steps allows children to understand what they are waiting for, communicate their wants and needs, and have an age appropriate wait, curated by their educators.

Another one of the tools in our repertoire to help develop these skills are large group games and songs. For example, during the "Good Morning Train", every child is given the opportunity to say their own names. The other children have learned to respect their peers while it is their turn because they know they will get, and want to be shown the same respect. Even once they have said their name, they wait for everyone else to have their turn.

In order to support this development at home, consider clearly outlining what needs to happen when your child is waiting. First/Then statements go a long way to help your child break down what needs to happen and why they are waiting. For example "First we will go the store, then we will drop off Daddy's Letter, THEN we will be back home."

Second Step

Identifying feelings in others

This second step unit focuses on the development of empathy skills, not only identifying emotions in ourselves, but understanding how to identify them on others. One part of this unit that is particularly impactful is one that highlights how different people can have different feelings about the same thing. For example, one child might be excited to go fast on the bikes, while another may be scared.

One way you can support this development at home, is to continue to verbally identify, compare, and affirm your own feelings and your child's. For example, "I am excited to see the fireworks, but you look scared. Is it because they were too loud last time? Should we stand further back this time?"

<https://www.thistleoaks.ca/blog>

Check out the Thistleoaks blog for more information

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Beanie Buddy

Staring this month, we will be introducing a new project to support us in bringing elements form the children's own home life into the classroom in order to foster a sense of belonging across spaces.

Every weekend, our beanie buddy (Name still to be decided by the children) will travel home with a different child. Beanie will come spend the weekend at their home, participating in family activities including but not limited to mealtimes, trips to the store/restaurant, visiting extended family, etc...

Beanie will also come with their Journal, in which you encourage you to record at least one activity Beanie shared with your family. You can also E-mail them and any pictures you'd like to share to Clasroom5@Thistleoaks.ca

These pictures and anecdotes will be collected into a small story/photo album that children can enjoy with beanie throughout the weekdays.



Events

Feb 5th - Field Day - We will be spending the morning in the field - sledding down the hill if there is snow, or playing large group games. Please ensure your child is well prepared to get wet/muddy

Feb 14th - Valentines day. We will be preparing a special treat in the week before. On Friday, we will be doing a card exchange. If you would like to bring cards, please label the ONLY with the "From" portion, so that your child can hand them out independently. Due to food restrictions, we ask that no chocolates are given.

Feb 17th - Family Day - CENTER CLOSED

As always. The last Friday of the month (the 28th) is PJ day. Bring slippers, pyjamas, and a laid-back attitude to enjoy this day.