

May/June 2021



# Brown County Early Learning Center

## A Note from the Director

Dear Parents and Staff,

As we are ending our third month, I realize how much these little minds have absorbed! I visit the classrooms daily and can really see the changes in the staff and children. The children are learning through play and the staff are learning so much from the curriculum! **May 7, 2021 is Teacher Appreciation Day!** Please take a moment to let the teachers know how much you appreciate them! Here are some ideas of ways to show the teachers you appreciate them:

1. Have your child pick a flower for their teachers.
2. Have your child color a special note for their teachers.
3. Give your child's teachers a cookie or cupcake.

I am sure your child can figure out something special for their teachers. I am proud to say I have some of the best teachers here at Brown County Early Learning Center!!

We are hoping for nicer weather and more outdoor time. But with Illinois weather we can never be sure of the temperature. Please remember to bring a jacket just in case!

Thanks again for sharing your children with me. I am very blessed!

Sincerely,  
Connie



### May Birthdays

Weston P. May 5  
Richard P. May 17  
Henley G. May 18  
Riley K. May 23

### June Birthdays

Jackie June 1  
Callan H. June 2  
Henley H. June 13  
Vada G. June 22  
Kenzie June 23  
Sofia M. June 27

**TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK**  
**MAY 3-7**



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# INFANTS

In Infant A we are doing many activities! We have been taking advantage of the beautiful weather we've been having and have spent some time outside! To celebrate Easter, we fingerpainted pop-up Easter eggs with the children's pictures inside. The kids love to fingerpaint and is one of the ways we can practice our fine motor skills. Another activity the infants love is reading which helps with language development. We spend some time everyday reading and looking through books. As I read to the kids, they like to watch, listen, and touch the pages. We have continued learning baby sign language that includes the words "more," "eat," and "all done." We are always working on our traveling and balancing skills. We do tummy time everyday to help the children build neck and shoulder muscles. We spend our time practicing fine/large motor skills, working on our language development, building relationships, and traveling and balancing skills.

We are excited to have a new infant start in Infant A! We can't wait to continue to build and connect with your children. We love seeing the progress they all have made so far and we are looking forward to watch them develop.

Ms. Alexis

I feel it is very important to incorporate the family into our classroom. This includes being reminded of their family. We already have several family trees on the wall. The children enjoy looking at them daily. When the children find their family on the wall you can see their excitement. If you haven't already done so, please complete and return it with your child.

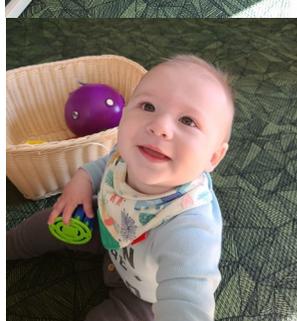
We continue to work on sign language. The children use these signs at meals and have picked up on them very quickly. We read a lot of books throughout the day. We have been interacting and observing the children for information to use on Teaching Strategies Gold. The lesson plans are based on the needs of the individual child.

We had our first tornado drill. In our room, we put four children into an evacuation crib and wheel them into the shelter classroom. They did amazing!

We will be going outside whenever possible. Please bring shoes, coats, and sunscreen. We are hoping to have warmer weather soon.

I look forward to watching your child learn and grow!

Ms. Shirley



# TODDLERS

We have been working on:

- \*communication skills
- \*Sharing
- \*Weather
- \*Transportation
- \*Problem Solving Skills
- \*Gross and Fine Motor Skills

Some of the Toddler's favorite activities include:

- \*Snack
- \*Bubbles
- \*Riding Bikes
- \*Being Outside
- \*Art

Future areas we will focus on include:

- \*Hand-eye Coordination
- \*The 5 senses
- \*Flowers
- \*Increasing peer interaction



# 2 YEAR OLDS

Hello families,

What an exciting first few months! We've worked on our schedules and routines, our sharing (or not sharing our germs), and what we can do to make others and ourselves feel better if we are mad, scared, or angry. We've also worked on our tornado and fire drills, and aside from the initial sound startle, we did great!! We've also been working on our art skills, science discussions, exploring the nature space, and playing with others.

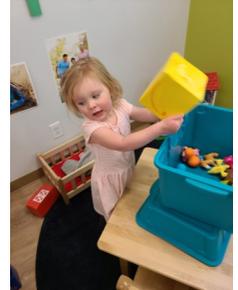
In the coming months, we will focus more on using our manners, and how to touch and talk to our friends in a kind way. We've come to really enjoy the nature area outside of our classroom so we will spend more time in that area as well. We especially like to watch for squirrels, bunnies, and cats. We will also be celebrating Mother's Day, Father's Day, and Memorial Day, along with a few birthdays!!

I'm so excited to see my little friends work on their potty training, enjoy new friendships, and have a wonderful spring!

Also, if you haven't brought in or emailed a family picture or 3, please do so when you can.

Thanks so much and happy spring!

Ashley Kukert





# PRESCHOOL

Over the next couple of months we are going to be witnessing a lot of transformations in Pre-K. The children will have the opportunity to plant seeds and care for the plants themselves. Our program will then blossom into a segment on butterflies and how they develop from egg to adult. We will also be exploring the world of the frog and experience the magic of hatching the eggs into tadpoles and then watch them transform into frogs.



## **STAFF SPOTLIGHT**

I am the youngest of 2 (older brother). I love to spend time with my niece and nephew. I love to travel.

### **GRACE HASCHEMEYER TODDLER TEACHER**

*These are a few of my favorite things*

Color: Blue

Flower: Sunflower

Drink: Monster

Sports Team: Cardinals

Animal: Cat

Children's song: Wheels on the Bus

Children's book: It Looked Like Spilt Milk

Food: Mashed Potatoes

Vacation Spot: Anywhere with a beach

My Favorite Thing about working at BCELC is:

My co-workers and the kiddos



### **HOBBIES**

I like watching horror movies, journaling, coloring, and fishing.



Here at the Brown County Early Learning Center we use The Creative Curriculum. “The Creative Curriculum® is research-based and supports the development of the whole child. High-quality, comprehensive resources empower educators to intentionally teach and care for our youngest learners during the most critical and formative years of development.”

One of the areas of development that the Curriculum builds on is social-emotional development. There are 3 Objectives within the social-emotional area and these are broken down into different dimensions.

Objective 1: Regulates own emotions and behaviors

1. Manages own feelings
2. Follows limits and expectations
3. Takes care of own needs appropriately

Objective 2: Establishes and sustains positive relationships

1. Forms relationships with adults
2. Responds to emotional cues
3. Interacts with peers
4. Makes friends

Objective 3: Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations

1. Balances needs and rights of self and others
2. Solves social problems

Teachers use the objectives as the basis for their observations and lesson planning. Creative Curriculum offers various resources that can assist teachers in planning their activities. One of these resources is Mighty Minutes. These are quick activities that a teacher can use in their lesson plans or as an extra activity throughout the day. On the following pages is an example of a Mighty Minute activity. It is aligned to Objective 1b but can also be used to observe related objectives. In addition to social-emotional development, this activity can be applied to Physical (Fine Motor) Development, Language Development, Cognitive Development, and learning Math skills.

Another resource is Intentional Teaching Activities. These engaging activities provide instructions to help teachers individualize the activity to meet the developmental needs of each child. They also make it very easy for the teachers to enter any observations directly into the Assessment area of Teaching Strategies Gold. An example of an Intentional Teaching Experience follows the Mighty Minute example. This example focuses on Objective 3b but can meet other related objectives as well.

Teachers will use the assessments to help recognize areas that need extra attention and then plan their lessons accordingly. The assessments will also be used for parent-teacher conferences.

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Can You Do This?

**59**

**Objective 1**  
**Regulates own emotions and behaviors**

**b. Follows limits and expectations**

Related Objectives: 1c, 3a, 7a, 8a, 8b, 10a, 11b, 12b, 13, 21a, 23, 24, 26

### What You Do

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1. Invite the child to do what you do, e.g., "Watch me [put the block in the bucket]. Your turn. Can you [put the block in the bucket]?"
2. Always use the same cues: "Watch me...," "Your turn," and "Can you...?"

- Use this activity to help young children learn classroom routines (e.g., putting away toys, placing a book on a shelf, throwing away trash) and self-care skills (e.g., pulling up a zipper, washing hands, fastening a shoe).

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"Has the reminder idea worked? What have you noticed?"

6. **Comment on their hard work.**

"Solving problems is hard. You worked together to come up with a solution!"

**Objectives & Dimensions**

**Primary Objective/Dimension:**

- 3b. Solves social problems

**Related Objectives:**

- 1a. Manages feelings
- 2b. Responds to emotional cues
- 8a. Comprehends language
- 9a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary
- 10b. Uses social rules of language
- 11a. Attends and engages

**Materials**

**Questions to Guide Your Observations**

- How did the child participate in the group discussion?
- Was the child able to demonstrate an understanding of the rights and feelings of others?
- How did the child communicate his ideas?
- How long was the child able to attend to the discussion?

**Related LearningGames®**

**Additional Ideas & Background Information**

**Background:** In group settings, problems will inevitably arise that affect the whole class, e.g., fighting on the playground or excessive noise during choice time. Using a group problem-solving process helps build your classroom community. Children learn the responsibilities required for community living and will be more likely to accept and follow their own solutions.

# LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

## Playdough: Did you Know?

### It Develops Fine Motor Skills

All the squeezing and rolling helps build muscles in their hands. This will be useful for holding a pencil and using scissors.



### It Enhances Hand-eye Coordination

Using tools with playdough, such as rolling pins and cookie cutters helps by forcing them to manipulate the items increasing their hand-eye coordination.



### It is Calming For Children

Squeezing playdough helps ease tension, releases excess energy, improves focus, and helps express emotions.



### It Supports Literacy and Numeracy

Playdough allows a child to count, make shapes, and use vocabulary to describe what they are making.



### It Encourages Creativity

Children are able to use their imaginations to make unlimited creations.



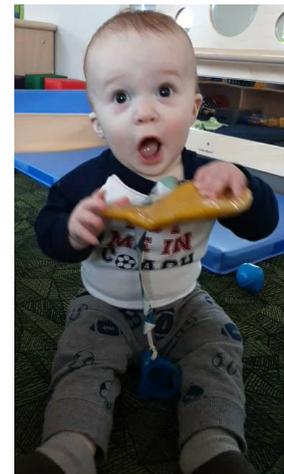
### It Improves Social Skills

It encourages them to share the tools and take turns. Children can also create together and talk to each other.



### It Promotes Playtime

Playdough encourages children to focus on playing instead of technology. They use multiple senses while exploring and creating.



Source: <https://sunshinehouse.com/blog/7-benefits-of-playing-with-play-dough>