



Director's Desk Summer 2014

Wow! Time sure flies when you are having fun! Summer should be fun and for the CCC kids, it certainly has been.

We feel so fortunate to have swimming pools and lessons, outside classrooms, nature trails and gardens to enhance our regular curriculum during the summer months. Being outside is so important for children. Research shows that when adults remember their childhoods, it is the places that they remember more distinctly than the people who were there with them.

This makes a very strong case for assuring that we are always diligent about providing children with the best possible environments for those memories to be created. Here at the CCC, our model of creating childcare centers in former residences supports this case very well. Especially in summer, children feel as if they are in their own back yards as they run and play and experience the sights and sounds of the natural surroundings.

This environment is the perfect place to learn as well as play. The CCC kids listen to the birds, work in their gardens, watch things grow and taste the fruits of their labors daily. What an exciting way to spend their days.

Additionally we have lots of water play, exercise and vitamin D. To top this all off we add in puppet shows, scientists, sports, dance and an ice cream truck resulting in the perfect summer for young children.

We are very grateful that we can safely and affordably provide all this to the CCC families. We sincerely hope your summers outside of the CCC are going beautifully as well.

Enjoy the rest of this wonderful season. See you in the fall.

Polly



Summer in the Garden



Preschoolers help plant flowers in the garden.

The Toddlers dig in the garden.



Anyone who drives into our parking lot can't help but comment on the beautiful towering sunflowers in our garden. Before Ms. Kristen left on summer break, she set to work with the Preschool and Pre-K classes to prepare the ground. She and the children did some weeding and then the CCC Garden Crew came in to till the soil and make it ready to receive the packets of Country Childrens Center Sunflower Seeds. We love that they are doing so well.

This is in no small way due to the efforts of Ms. Monika who, on a weekly basis, gardened with some of the Toddlers and the Preschool and Pre-K children. Taking two children at a time, Monika was able to talk about what the children were seeing and guided them on how to treat the garden. The garden is another perfect place in nature for children to explore by touch, feel, smell, and eventually taste. Sensory exploration is crucial to children's learning! In fact, the children have a garden bed set aside for DIGGING ONLY. The children learn that it is ok to dig in the box that does not have any plants or flowers growing in it and that it is not ok to dig where the plants are growing. In essence, Monika models appropriate garden behavior. Together the children and Monika observe, share information, (it takes soil, water, and sunshine to make plants grow), share experiences, ask questions, and, in general feel, comfortable in the environment, (it's common to see bugs, spiders, and worms.) The children are also learning that a garden has to be taken care of so it can produce food. They are learning that it takes time for things to grow; they are learning patience. Many of the children are enjoying the colors of the plants and their flowers. It's been a really good summer for gardening and we are grateful to be able to provide the children with this hands-on experience.

Hope you're enjoying summer as much as we are here at Watson/Baby Blue!

Jean Nathanson
Watson Site Director



Busy Bees at the Farm

Summer at the Farm has been very busy. Between gardening, nature walks, hip hop dance, Mad Science, sports with Dylan, puppet shows, ice cream truck visits and swimming we have been enjoying our summer.

After all the planting, watering & weeding with Cristina in the garden, we are enjoying our harvest. We water our harvest with our handmade water cans made out of old milk jugs. Each one of us made a watering jug. On more than a few occasions the children have picked string beans and peppers, washed them and eaten them at lunch. When the toddlers were out in the garden Spencer picked a cucumber and took a bite out of it with a huge smile on his face. We also planted tomatoes, potatoes, strawberries, cucumbers, squash, pumpkins and sunflowers. If you haven't taken a moment please walk out to the garden and look at how beautiful it is.

Be careful of the "Fairy Gardens" we have been busy making. Out of recyclables, sticks & rocks we have made tiny little fairy houses. They are all over the property and the children have really been enjoying talking about them and how many fairies are in each one.

Most recently Jungle Week has been a blast. Our nature trail was decorated like a jungle. We hid different types of "jungle animals" throughout the nature trail and all the classes enjoyed walking through the "jungle". The Jungle Breakfast was a huge success!! Picking a banana and box of cereal off a tree...what fun! My four boys still remember this as one of their very favorite memories!

Last week for 'Great Outdoors' week the Preschool II and Pre-K rooms had an outdoor BBQ. Parents brought in BBQ food and they had a fun time eating outside.

As you can see our summer is going great and we plan on enjoying the rest of it just as much!

Noreen Cotter
Farm Site Director



Helping harvest the veggies in the garden.

One of the many fairy houses on the Farm property.



Summertime at Kitchawan Barns



A Pre-K child playing basketball with Mr. Dylan, CCC's sports instructor.

The Preschool class reading a story around a pretend campfire.



Kitchawan ended the school year with a wonderful Pre-K graduation. We were all sad to see some of our friends go but are happy to have new ones joining us. All the classes have been coming up with great ideas to keep the children (and themselves) cool during these warm summer months.

The babies have been going on lots of “Word Walks” to expand the babies’ vocabulary. On these walks the babies are exploring their surroundings – picking up objects of interest examining them and the bringing them back to the classroom for further examination and to display them. They have visited the Kitchawan garden very often. There the babies have been using all their senses to explore. They love to touch the dirt, feel the plants and smell the flowers. Some of the babies have also enjoyed watching bugs doing their thing throughout the garden. All in all the babies have been getting outside as much as possible.

The toddlers have had lots of fun in the garden. They visit the garden almost every day. They have picked some of the string beans and brought them in to taste. They have touched the different plants and talked about the differences in the leaves. They love to smell the flowers and the mint! Some of the children really like the taste of the mint leaves – others not so much! They enjoy light water play on the deck with the kitchen set and play pond with various plastic animals in it. They also love to take rides on the horse swing hanging in the back yard!

The Preschool has been adjusting very nice to the staff changes that have taken place this Summer. As most of you already know we have a new head teacher in the preschool class – Ms. Jessica. The children have really enjoyed all the new learning activities she has done with them. Ms. Lee Ann has been getting ready to take over for me when I go on maternity leave. Along with the other classes the preschool has enjoyed lots of fun outdoor activities. They have gone on nature scavenger hunts, and bug hunts. They love to talk about all the things they observe on their walks. Working with Ms. Monika they have helped our garden grow very nicely this Summer. Since the preschool children are the ones who started most of the vegetables from seeds in the Spring it is exciting for them to see their plants finally growing vegetables. Of course all the children are enjoying their swimming lessons at our Farm location. They love the bus ride, the swimming and everything about the whole experience!

Caroline Paterno, Kitchawan Barns Site Director



Mixing it up at Bedford Hills—Multi-Age Preschool

After a summer of joint efforts among the Toddler, Preschooler and Pre-K classes to create our new “GREEN” recycled garden space, (thanks to the generous help of Daniel Mond -CCC parent), we are embracing another new and exciting journey at Bedford Hills CCC. Beginning this September, 2014, we will be combining our preschool and PreK classes, to create three multiage classrooms.

After much research, various meetings, and contemplation on how it would work at our center, we are very excited to embark on a new journey. Traditionally, CCC has had our classrooms separated by age. However, we have come to realize that not all three year olds learn at the same rate or are interested in the same things. The same goes with all four and five year olds. Quoting from an article written about implementing a multiage preschool, “A mixed age preschool classroom is a rich learning environment that offers time and support for their young learners, respecting differences in their learning styles and paces.” In a recent parent and staff meeting here, Polly Peace, CCC’s Executive Director asked everyone to close their eyes (and I ask that you do the same for a moment) and picture your childhood neighborhood...Who were your friends? Were they all the same age? Didn’t the older children lead and help the younger children? Didn’t the younger children learn from the older ones and step up to greater challenges in games? Relationships were more like a family, which is the goal that CCC has always strived for.

We have incorporated, as part of the day, a separate Kindergarten Readiness group, to ensure that the children moving on to Kindergarten will be well-prepared. We are well aware that our youngest preschoolers will need a different pace and we are prepared to help them. In addition, Bedford Hills is getting a piano to be able to offer musical enrichment and piano lessons; as well as a great new loft space to encourage dramatic play, social skills and a quiet space for all of the children. We know we will have challenges to face, but are very positive about all of the successes we will get to celebrate within the diversity of this new model. We are so excited about all of these upcoming changes, and know that it will make Bedford Hills CCC even more unique and special than it already has proven to be.

Shanna Krizan

Bedford Hills Site Director



Creating the new garden beds with Daniel Mond.

The wonderful Multi Age Preschool Team.





Field Goods is available at the CCC—Sign up for deliveries and help raise money for the center! It is open to the whole CCC community.

**fresh foods from
small farms™**

How Does It Work?

It's easy! Just go to Field-goods.com to sign up for a subscription to receive a weekly bag of Hudson Valley Produce right at your CCC location. Field Goods selects the 5-8 different types fruits and vegetables you will receive. Subscriptions cost \$22, \$27, or \$32. \$2 per bag delivered will come back to the school all year long. All the products are either Certified Organic, organically grown, use integrated pest management or implement small farm farming methods. **Produce bags will be delivered to CCC each Friday, depending on your site.**

It is loads of fun to see the harvest surprises. Field Goods delivers 150+ varieties of fruits and vegetables and more than a dozen types of local cheese and bread. Field Goods' *In the Bag* newsletter, gives you information about the produce and how to prepare it.

Field Goods delivers ALL YEAR! You can sign up anytime **with no long-term commitment.** Winter deliveries include frozen produce (from Kingston-based Winter Sun Farms), root veggies, hardy greens, mushrooms, greenhouse products and more.

What people are saying about Field Goods...

"I LOVE vegetable day."

"I am having so much fun experimenting with new food and recipes."

"Excellent quality, value, variety."

"My kids like Baby Turnips and Kale...who knew?"

"Great newsletter. Makes me want to cook."

"THANK YOU for changing the way my family eats!"

Field Goods offers great value and variety, convenient delivery, fresh and delicious produce, and supports local farmers.



What's not to love?

To sign up & learn more, go to Field-goods.com

Call 888-887-3848 or Email info@field-goods.com





Contact Numbers

Main Office: 914-242-0520

Bedford Hills: 914-242-0520 Ext. 203

The Farm: 914-242-0520 Ext. 111

Kitchawan: 914-242-0520 Ext. 601

Watson: 914-242-0520 Ext. 412

White House: 914-242-0520 Ext. 301

After School: 914-242-0520 Ext. 302

The Country Childrens Center

Upcoming Events

***Saturday, October 25th
The CCC Fall Family Festival***



***Saturday, November 15th
Fall Benefit Concert and Children's Art Silent Auction
At the Katonah Library***

