

Early Learning Center

Where Families Connect to Learn, Grow and Play!

Contact us at: www.bellevuecollege.edu/childcare 425-564-2240

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May 2015

Dear ELC Families,

It can be a busy time, with all the **celebrations and transitions** that happen in May and June. Still, we seem to sense as communities that these are important times to mark, to gather to review happy memories and create new connections.

At the ELC we will have three opportunities, two **Open Houses and the Annual Potluck Picnic**, to gather and celebrate the learning and growing we have done together, as ELC children, staff and families! If your schedule permits, please know your whole family is welcome!

Transitions and celebrations are also in line for two preschool teachers who are moving on to new positions in May: Sarah who will go use her newly acquired MA in Educational Policy at Child Care Aware, and Megan who has a new home with her fiancé in Puyallup and accepted an Assistant Director position in that community. Both teachers brought unique and appreciated strengths to the ELC. While we will miss them, we are proud of their success and **wish them the very best.**

Change, even when it is positive or expected, can create stress and worry too. Teachers leaving means there will be some staffing and scheduling changes in different classrooms. Fortunately the children at the ELC get to know other teachers within their pods, as well as the specialists, so we were able to create a plan that while we go through the hiring process, **every child will still be connected to an experienced teacher who they know well.** Please let us know if you or your child, have any questions.

Warmly,
Kelly Davidson
Director, ELC

Dates to Remember



5/13

Infant and Toddler Rooms
Spring Open House
6:30-7:30 PM



6/3

ELC Annual Family Potluck Picnic at Robinwood Park



BELLEVUE
COLLEGE

6/19

Bellevue College Graduation at Key Arena
7:00 pm



6/25

Preschool Rooms
Year End Open House
6:30-7:30 PM

For a sampling of what your child's class enjoyed most in April, what they are planning to do in May, and how you can be a part of it, read teachers **Classroom Clips** on the following pages!

May 2015

[Infants & Young Toddlers Classroom Clips~ Bonnie MacGregor, Specialist 3](#)

[Infant 1:](#)

Again last month some of our friends waved “Bye” and moved to the next classroom, while other new friends and families were welcomed in to our group too. We noticed the children were very interested in creating sounds with different materials, so we incorporated some pans and other materials that they can combine and use in different ways to experiment with making sounds.

Our plan for the next month is to open our doors and offer more outside times. Playgrounds and grass areas are perfect to enjoy some sunshine and explore sensory and movement possibilities. **Please bring sunscreen and hats for the sunny days!** We also are excited about our Spring Open House. We invite you to come and have a little tour around our classroom, visit with each other and with us. We will post some useful information that will help you to see how we are planning our activities with the infants.

[Teachers: Lisa Ann, Liliana, Ghouisia](#)

[Infant 2:](#)

In the month of April, we took the babies outside for longer stroller rides since we had lots of sunny days and enjoyed experiencing our surrounding environment. We talked about the things that we saw and the sounds that we heard. For our classroom we placed some pictures of Dogs and Cats on the wall in the baby nest area with the puppets of dogs and cats in the basket for children to see and explore with. We also provided some touch and feel books about dogs and cats to support our babies in different aspects of developments such as cognitive, fine and large motor skills, language and feeling about them self and others. We read books and talked to them when they were touching and feeling the pictures in the book and exploring with the puppets.

For the month of May we will provide different textured materials for the babies to explore with. We noticed our babies are really interested in textures and we would like to provide more opportunities for them to learn. We will be saying the words as the babies feel the different texture. **What textures does your baby search out and respond to at home?**

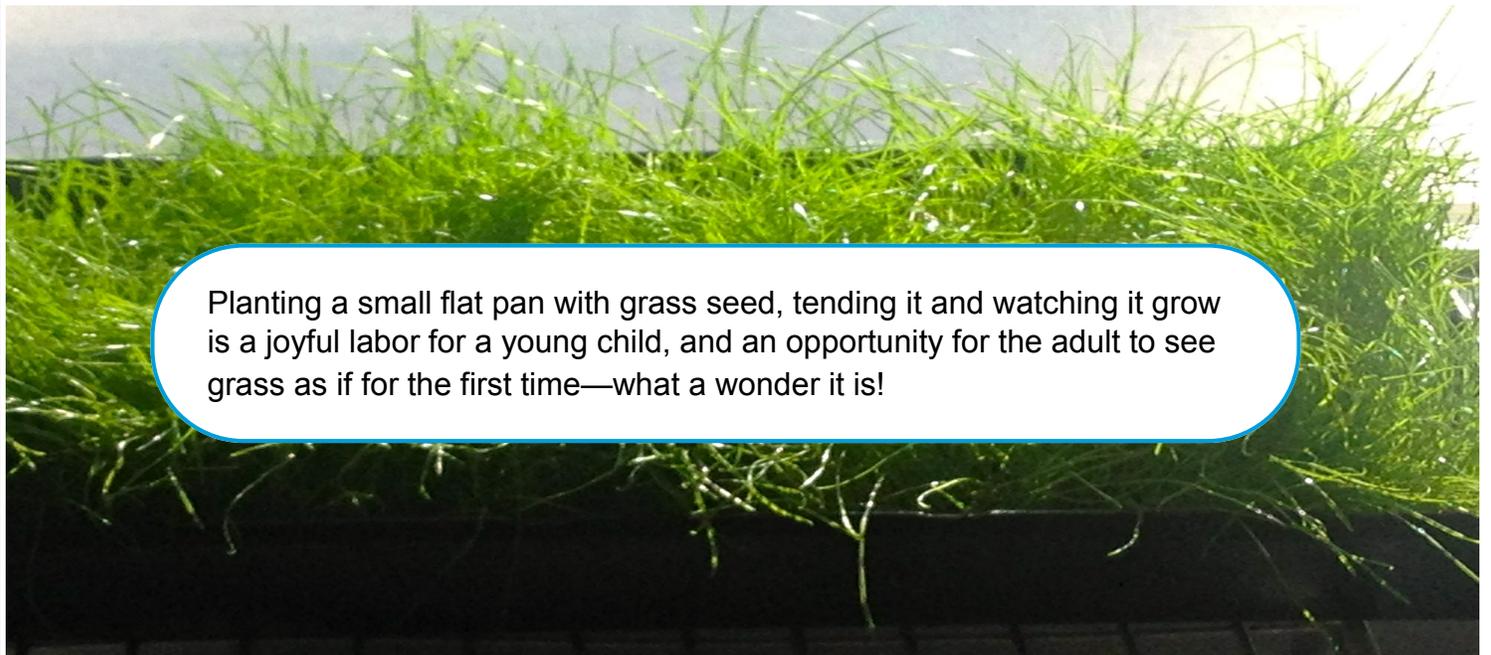
[Teachers: Mahboobeh, Parisa, Ghouisia](#)

[Young Toddlers – Toddler 1:](#)

The children had a great time for the past month. We explored our outside environment and the children helped their teachers setup the bird feeder and observed different birds visiting outside our window.. In the coming month we will focus more on physical skills to help the children demonstrate their body balance and traveling skills.

We also have been learning about peaceful problem solving skills. The children have been learning to use their words and sign language to solve problems. Our new words are “stop”, “gentle touch”, and “hands to yourselves”. **We also have had the opportunity to create spring flowers that we painted using coffee filters to create our spring bulletin board. Come see at the Spring Open House!**

[Teachers: Yen Chiu Brian, Ghouisia](#)



Planting a small flat pan with grass seed, tending it and watching it grow is a joyful labor for a young child, and an opportunity for the adult to see grass as if for the first time—what a wonder it is!

Toddlers Classroom Clips ~ Vanessa Von Papp, Specialist 3

Toddler 2:

Our children are especially interested in plants and animals in their immediate environment. They are happiest simply digging in the dirt and filling up flower pots. Some children are more fascinated by what's crawling on the plants than the plants themselves. They learned the worms are soil helpers so children started to gather the worms and wanted to put them in with the strawberry plants! We read a story about Lady Bugs and how they eat the aphids off the leaves so the plants will grow. We also talked about caring for the bugs they observe crawling outside.

They are also very interested to observe variety of seeds. They were very gentle while planting in the pots and they already have observed them grow each day. All these science activities support children to learn to care for living things and make positive connections with nature.

Please stop at our vegetable and flower gardens in our classroom and playground and enjoy talking about our plants with your child. They might tell you our next plan!

(We are so anxious to see our vegetables grow so we can make a Salad!-We will have lettuce, spinach, green beans and herbs.)

We will expand on this gardening experience to conduct in-depth investigations with children. We will go on a "Bug Hunt" and use living things, objects and materials from the natural environment. We will encourage children to communicate their discoveries in multiple ways and expand their vocabulary as they talk about their discoveries.

It will be very fun and meaningful for you and your child to go on a "Discovery Walk"- and let us know about your exciting experiences!



Teachers: Chisaki, Naghmeh



Toddler 3:

In the month of April the children were most excited about two things—making play dough, and planting seeds. We talked about the ingredients that go into making the play dough, took turns measuring and mixing, and talked about what color we wanted. Afterwards we kneaded the warm play dough—a comforting sensory activity that also builds fine motor strength and skills. The children were pleased and proud with what they made. It is a slower process to plant and tend and wait for seeds to grow, but equally engaging in the process!

For the month of May we want to do a little cooking activity, maybe cook some beans from our garden, (come check out how they are growing already!) and make smoothies'. **Let us know if you and your child have a favorite recipe you make at home—or if you want to try one of ours!**

Teachers: Rita, Annie, Naghmeh



Toddler 5:

Exploring worms around our playground has been especially interesting to the children this month. They have watched, touched and some even picked the worms up with such confidence. We brought in books about worms and explained how worms are good for our soil, and that they help the plants to grow.

The children have planted various seeds in the classroom. Some children planted some fast growing green beans in the window in plastic zip lock bags. We will transplant them into a pot and watch them continue to grow as we carefully water, weed and enjoy them. We also planted grass seeds into plastic clear cups. The children put the soil in their own cup, they added the grass seeds and then they watered them. You can stop by and take a look at them growing. We decided to add each child's picture to their own cup which will make it easier for them to identify. We have planted herbs also in our classroom. We will have fun cooking with our herbs on our cooking projects in May and throughout the growing season.

We are looking forward to seeing you all at our Spring Open House where you will have the opportunity to experience how your children learn here at the Early Learning Center.

Come play with us! Teachers: Karen, Diane, Wendy

Toddler 6:

This month we delved into planting various seeds and plants such as strawberries, green beans, and the following herbs: sage, dill and thyme. The children were so excited to take care of the plants that we had to come up with a plan so that everybody could water them and get a turn each day. A list of names were placed next to the plants so the children could see when their turn would be next. While we were planting and taking care of our plants we learned many new words such as germinating, sprout, stalk, and bud. **The children are enjoy planting immensely and I would encourage all the families to get their child involved in planting this year.** Through this activity children can expand their knowledge about the characteristics of living things by learning and experiencing how it grows, changes and reproduces. Next month we will be making different dishes to try with the herbs that we grew and hopefully soon try some green beans. Encouraging children to experience hands on activities is just one of the ways to get them interested in science!!

Teachers: Marlize, Donna, Wendy



May 2015

[Preschool Classroom Clips ~ Vanessa Von Papp, Specialist 3 and Deb Walrath, Preschool Program Manager](#)

[Preschool 3:](#)

P3 has been using science skills; planning, estimating, predicting and then documenting our findings. Hence, the sunflowers we started from seed. The children planted the seeds in the classroom first and then every few days we would write and draw our findings in our seed book. You can find your child's seed book in the spring divider of their observation notebook in the classroom. Right now the plants are growing in the garden and the children take great care watering and weeding around them. We had such a great time on the last field trip to the library - a great doorway into early literacy. **At home there are lots of other ways to encourage science like planning and early literacy too— for example when you go to the store and are making a shopping list try having your child make a list too, then at the store have them find the item and check it off their list!** **Teachers: [Page, Megan, Margarita](#)**



[Preschool 4:](#)

In April, the children greatly enjoyed pretending to go camping in the classroom. They created characters, a story line—and lots of dialogue. A great early literacy experience to complement our trip to the BC Library. This month we are most excited to tell authentic problem solving stories using props! The children will act out imagined scenarios, as well as sharing their daily experiences. **At home you might share with your child an example of how you solved a problem in your day, or ask them to describe a problem that may have come up for them.** Sharing feelings and calming strategies are especially helpful for children to learn to self regulate. **Teachers: [Mala, Lindsay, Margarita](#)**



[Pre-K 1:](#)

This month we continued our weekly journeys up to campus. On the way we visited the Bellevue College library and celebrated national library week by hearing wonderful and colorful stories told by librarians. The entire preschool wing was included in the celebration of literature. For the month of May we look forward to exploring our community. We plan to venture to Robinswood Park to explore the forest, looking and listening for animals that live there. Families are always welcome on our adventures and we look forward to seeing you at our upcoming end of the year events too! **Teachers: [Linda, Elyse, Khazal](#)**

[Pre-K 2:](#)

In April children expressed interest and excitement about bubbles, we even observed a few bubbles that blew over our playground all the way from the toddler play yard! To build on this interest we are starting a bubble investigation centered on the question “What makes bubbles work?” We will be cultivating language to describe bubbles, experimenting with bubble recipes, making our own bubble wands and testing out making huge bubbles with children inside using a large hula hoop! **If you are playing with bubbles at home, either for cleaning, bathing or playing, ask open ended questions such as “what do you see happening with the bubbles?” to encourage children to notice the properties of bubbles.** If you have any special bubble recipes or projects please share!

Teachers: [Robin, Sarah, Khazal](#)



Spring Open House for Infant and Toddler Classrooms

Spring shows us how small beginnings are even more beautiful close up.

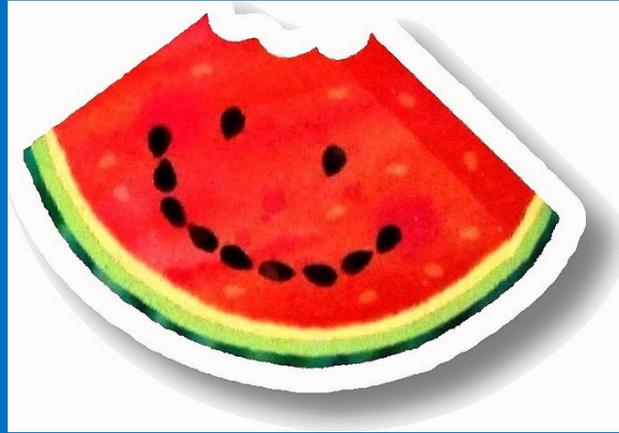


Wednesday, May 13, 2015
6:30-7:30pm

Come celebrate Spring with your child by spending some time with your child's teachers, classmates, their families at a simple low key gathering in the infant and toddler classrooms.

Save the Date!

**ELC Annual
Family Potluck Picnic**



**Evening of
Wednesday, June 3, 2015
Robinwood Park**

Can we ask you a few questions?
Spring Survey coming up

We would like to get some more specific feedback from families in a few specific areas as we plan for our programming, budget and operations next year. Areas we plan to ask about:

- Family volunteer opportunities
- Program additions and tuition options
- Types of Family Events offered
- Transitions between classrooms and to kindergarten
- Integrating photo and video into parent communication

Do you have other ideas you would be interested in seeing polled? Let us know!

