



Offering Exceptional
Educational Childcare for
Infants and Young Children



JANUARY 2017

Upcoming dates

- **Jan. 3:** *All programs reopen*
- **Jan. 5:** *Priority registration begins*
- **Jan. 11:** *Program Overview for 2017-2018 at 7:30 p.m.*
- **Jan. 16:** **CLOSED**
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- **Jan. 17:** *Touring begins*
- **Jan. 20:** *Priority registration ends*
- **Feb. 15:** *Kindergarten Parent Roundtable at 8:00 p.m.*
- **Feb. 20:** **CLOSED**
Presidents Day
- **Feb 21:** **CLOSED**
Staff development



Director's Note:

Happy New Year! As we begin 2017, we are looking ahead to registering students for the 2017-18 school year. We offer a period of priority registration for our current families which begins on **January 5th** and applications for your child will be available in their folders. You may have questions about what your child's next year at MMO will look like. You are encouraged to speak to your current teacher or come to the office with any questions you have. Our Program Overview on **January 11th @ 7:30 pm** is a great opportunity for returning families and new families to learn about the philosophy and direction of MMO Programs and how each program sequentially follows the next, building on the childrens' mastered skills and strengthening social bonds with friends made. Classroom teachers and assistants will be on-hand to meet and share their curriculum while you tour the classrooms.

On **February 15th** at 8:00 pm the MMO Parent Association is hosting a Kindergarten Roundtable. This informative session will provide personal accounts and information from parents of children currently attending the Montclair elementary schools. The event will take place in the MMO Guild Room and is open to anyone interested.

We may see ice and snow this month. As a reminder, our snow policy is to follow the closing decisions made by the Montclair Public School District. If MPS have a delayed opening, all MMO Programs begin at 9:00 a.m. Updates on MMO school closings or delays will be on the office answering machine, the MMO website and Facebook page by 6:30 a.m.

Corrine Harney, M. Ed.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN



Fireflies – Miss Tara



The Pre-k teachers want to welcome everyone back to school and wish you all a very Happy New Year! January will be a very busy month. Our main theme will be winter and all of the fun things that go with it. We will talk about the seasonal changes in the weather, snow and snowmen. We will spend some time this month reading different versions of The Gingerbread Man and comparing them. The children will finally get to meet the class “mascot” **Gingerbread Fred!** He loves to visit your houses and spend some time with your families!

Our math and science area will be full of water and ice experiments. We will also begin looking at magnets.

The pre-k children will finally begin their alphabet study. Throughout the rest of the year we will take one or two letters per week and learn all about them. The children will begin to recognize upper and lower case letters and their sounds. We will create lists of words that begin with each letter, practice handwriting and correct letter formation, and do some fun creative projects that coincide with the letters we are discussing. This month the children will focus on the first three letters: Aa, Bb and Cc.

Don't forget! On the night of **January 11th**, MMO will be hosting a Program Overview. We encourage you all to come and check out the Pre-k classroom and meet the teachers.

Butterflies – Miss Lisa



I hope the time with your family over winter break was filled with lots of joyous new memories. We would love to hear about your family's winter break experiences. Any pictures or stories you have to share are welcome. Bringing these memories into class, where the students can see and share them, builds a great home-school connection.

We will be celebrating the New Year by talking about what the children want to learn in 2017, specifically what words they would like to learn how to write. We will print each word on a card and draw a picture of it next to the word. These Word cards will be placed in a Word box at the writing center. In addition to writing new words, we will be practicing writing individual letters in the alphabet.

As we begin the New Year we will continue to explore elements of winter and the different experiences that snow brings. We will be learning about what type of clothing we wear in the winter as we read The Jacket I Wear in the Snow by Shirley Neitel. We will discover how Peter, the main character in the story The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats, plays in the snow. We will focus on re-creating Peter's activities in a snowy day center in our classroom.

In honor of Martin Luther King Day we will read the poem “The Crayon Box That Talked” by Shane DeRolf. It is about the different colors getting along and liking each other. Each child will draw his or her portrait on a die-cut crayon pattern. All of the crayons will be placed into a giant box of crayons. Shane DeRolf's deceptively simple poem celebrates the creation of harmony through diversity.

In the afternoons we will be switching classes with Miss Tara's class and we will be learning about animals that live in the Arctic and Antarctica including polar bears and penguins. In the Butterflies class, we will conduct a science experiment to see if we can protect our hands from freezing snow by using Crisco and zip lock bags to mimic blubber, which is the thin layer of fat that arctic animals have right under their skin.

We love having adults come in to read stories or do activities with our class. So please do not hesitate to contact me if you are available to come in.



SPOTLIGHT ON AFTERCARE

Art Inspired by Nature with Miss Susan

Each week Miss Susan focuses on nature in the world around us. Hands on projects incorporate nature while also using natural materials to achieve the finished product. Students are encouraged to explore self-expression by using presented ideas and materials as a means to bring their ideas to life. These engaging and fun activities combine a relaxed atmosphere with lessons about the importance of the natural world.

Miss Susan is an assistant teacher in the Dragonflies Program and is responsible for some of the beautiful murals you see around MMO Programs.

If interested in having your child participate, please secure a spot by contacting the office.



Aftercare Enrichment:

In the month of January we will focus on winter activities, what we eat and drink to keep warm in the winter and what we wear in winter. We will talk about all the different activities you can do in the snow, like building a snowman, catching snowflakes on your tongue etc. We will create our own igloos with toothpicks and mini marshmallows.

We have our fabulous instructors to add to the Aftercare Enrichment Fun: Ms. Maya with music and movement, Ms. Tess teaching music to our younger classes, Ms. Nicole teaching discipline and respect through Yogarate, Ms. Susan teaching Art through nature, Ms. Mimi teaching the fundamentals or art, rocking out with the Lil' Rockers Band, Mr. Jim teaching French, and STEM focused Island adventures with Miss Shrona. So many exciting things to do in Aftercare! Please secure a spot by contacting the office.

- Danielle Hoover, Aftercare Enrichment Coordinator

3 YEAR-OLD PROGRAMS

Dragonflies - Miss Megan



The month of December went by so quickly! We talked about snowflakes, Hanukkah, and Christmas. We learned that snowflakes have six sides and that every snowflake is different. The children enjoyed making snowflakes with their bodies. They practiced moving their arms and legs to make different shapes and patterns. For Hanukkah, the children enjoyed playing the dreidel game and

learning about the story of Hanukkah. We also made yummy potato latkes! For Christmas, we made pretty Christmas lights by rubbing colored chalk onto construction paper. The children also enjoyed making their own ornaments and making snowman cookies. Our STEM activity last month was building Christmas trees out of popsicle sticks and playdough. We used our critical thinking and problem solving skills to make our trees stand up! Our holiday party was a big success! The children had so much fun decorating their snowmen cookies!



In January we will be focusing on some fun themes like snowmen, penguins, and polar bears, and other arctic animals! We will find out how polar bears stay warm and how penguins stay dry! We will also learn why some arctic animals are white. Our STEM focus for the month of January will be building dens for different arctic animals using marshmallows and toothpicks!

Bumblebees - Miss Christina

We had so much fun during December learning about all the different holidays families celebrate. We discussed family traditions and came up with a list of some of the traditions we have in school, like show and tell and circle time and traditions with our families, like reading a story before bed and special breakfasts. We had a holiday themed show and tell and the children enjoyed looking at all the different items we use to celebrate Hanukkah or Christmas. For Hanukkah, we learned how to play with dreidels and made our own menorahs. For Christmas, we practiced our fine motor skills by wrapping "presents", and sang carols with jingle bells. We ended the month by having our Polar Express party, which was a huge success. Thank you to all who attended, it was a lot of fun!

This month, we will learn all about winter, snow, ice, snowmen, and penguins. We will do some awesome science experiments with these themes and even have a "snowball" fight!





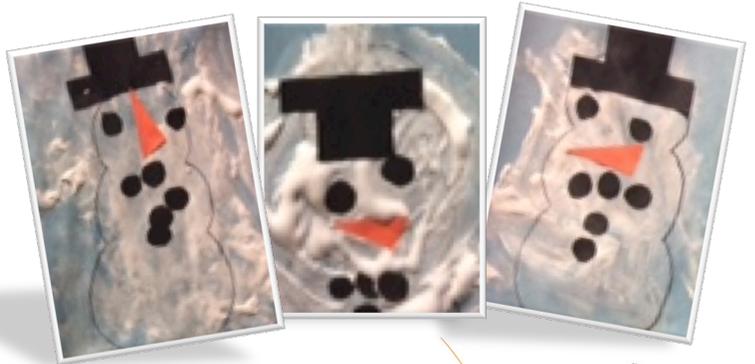
Parents Corner:

Happy New Year! The Parents Association will be holding its 2nd annual kindergarten Roundtable next month. More details will be available soon. Please also keep an eye out for an email from the PA with additional news and updates.

As always, if you have any questions or suggestions, please reach out via email, mmoparentassociation@gmail.com.

Nicole Dougherty
Parent Association President

INFANTS & TODDLERS



Grasshoppers Miss Wendy



Well we've been "on the go!" in December so in January we are going to learn about the season that has us snuggling up in one spot...winter! Our STEM activities will have us learning about why pine cones open and close, observing melting ice, and creating math problems using our mitten art projects!

There are so many beautiful childrens books about this topic. I am really looking forward to sharing them with the children. They include: The Snowy Day, Stella Queen of the Snow, Let it Snow, and The Red Sled.

We will make our own bear caves out of paper bags, create a snow effect on paper snow globes with q-tips, and use real sticks to mimic a winter tree.

Can't wait to explore this season with The Grasshopper gang!

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who helped donate goods for the MMO sponsored drive to help the Human Needs Food Pantry of Montclair in December!



We would also like to thank all the parents who helped supply the food and drinks for our holiday staff luncheon. It was a great success and enjoyed by all!



Your young child and sleep (zzzzzzzz)

“Sleep is a critical aspect of a child’s early development. It is also essential to family well-being.” --Jodi A Mindell, PhD, *Sleep Center at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia*

“Getting enough sleep is important for a young child for many reasons, from restoring energy to building brain connections—not to mention giving (parents) a needed break. But science is showing that sleep also fuels physical growth.” – www.babycenter.com, “*The connection between sleep and growth (ages 5 to 8)*”

“There is not one set way for every child to sleep.” – *Sleep Center, UCLA*

“Sleep is no less important than food, drink or safety in the lives of children.” –*Michael J. Breus, Ph.D., webmd.com*

“Concerns about sleep and sleep problems are among the most common issues brought to the attention of pediatricians and health care providers.” –*Mindell, J.A. & Owens, J.A., A clinical guide to pediatric sleep: Diagnosis and management of sleep problems*



Why do we spend so much time worrying about, discussing, and pondering our children’s sleep? Possibly because our intuition tells us how important it is, even if we haven’t read the latest book or blog on the benefits of sleep or the impact of sleep on growth and development. Possibly because it’s something we adults also still need, and without it we don’t function well. Probably, some of both.

Our children need sufficient, quality sleep in order to develop optimally. Research now routinely links adequate sleep in young children with growth and learning. Certainly the number of families and children facing challenges with sleep, and the broadly varied types of sleep challenges, are too numerous to discuss in one newsletter article. So I would like to make three points:

❖ Over and over again, every sleep resource stresses the importance of a *consistent* and peaceful routine. I particularly like RIE parent educator Janet Lansbury’s “Three P’s:”



- “A **peaceful** sleep environment with minimal stimulation from toys, screens, light and exterior noise...and a relaxed, unrushed parent who is available to provide intimate, undivided attention. (Jan’s note: an **unrushed** parent! *What must that be like? Let’s all—including me—strive to be this*)”
- “Gentle, **participatory** activities like dressing, pulling down a shade, choosing a book.”
- “All under the umbrella of **predictability**, so that our children can anticipate the ritual... Predictability breeds security, which leads to calm, which is the gateway to relaxation and sleep.”
- ❖ Sleep problems are **common**, and not an indicator of poor parenting
- ❖ I have a wealth of resources at MMO. Whether your child is in one of our Infant/Toddler classrooms or is older, please never hesitate to contact me if you are searching for sleep information.

Sleep experts recommend a total of 12 to 14 hours of sleep per day in infants three to eighteen months, 9 to 12 of these hours at night (depending on the age of the infant), and 11 to 14 hours of sleep per day in toddlers who are eighteen to thirty-six months, 10 to 12 of these hours at night.

Sleep is not only vital to our children’s development, it is also vital to us so that we can be safe, clear-thinking parents. Best wishes for a peaceful, sleep-filled New Year!

Jan Burgess Infant/Toddler Coordinator

INFANTS & TODDLERS



Ladybugs Miss Malessa & Miss Joelle

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!! As we bring in the New Year we will be identifying "big and little" objects. We will compare different objects, surfaces, animals and their sizes. Some of our projects will include a seed collage; a picture book comparing different sized objects, animals, and big and little handprints. By the end of the month we will be able to identify that some things are big and some things are small. Look for our many projects all around the classroom and in the hallway outside of our classroom.

Caterpillars Miss Claire & Miss Margaret

Happy New Year Caterpillars!
During the month of December, we gathered around to spread some holiday cheer. We introduced the sense of sound by creating an assortment of homemade instruments that we filled with a variety of different things, such as: rice, lentils, and seeds. Our little Caterpillars enjoyed the idea of being able to grasp their shakers and choosing whether to shake them fast or slow.

With the influx of frigid weather we will delve into the season of winter. While exploring the concept of temperature change, each child will be afforded the opportunity to touch and taste cold and warm teathers to their liking.



Fun at the Montclair Public Library

Our Butterfly class flew over to our neighbor, the Montclair Public Library for a reading with Ms. Enola! The children enjoyed their story time!



F.Y.I.

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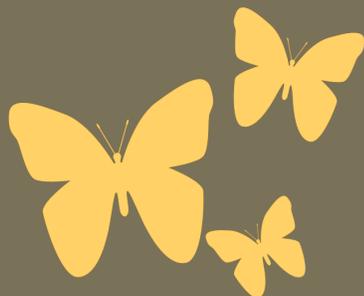
WHERE IS MY CHILD'S CLASSROOM?

- Caterpillars are in Classroom A off of the main entrance (above).
- Ladybugs are downstairs from the MMO Offices to the right in Classroom D1.
- Grasshoppers are downstairs from the MMO Offices to the right and down the hall in Classroom D2.
- Bumblebees are in Classroom B off of the main entrance
- Dragonflies are downstairs from the MMO Offices to the left, off of the gym in Classroom C.
- Butterflies and Fireflies can be accessed by either the Pre-K entrance near the playground (below) or down the hallway outside Classroom D2. The Butterflies class is in Classroom E and Fireflies is in Classroom F.

MMO Preschool Programs

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Tadpoles (to stay in touch
with your child's teacher)

