



From the Desk of the Director . . .

Dear Parents & Staff,

Welcome back from the Holiday Break and to the start of a new year! I hope the holidays were joyous and restful.

We are still looking to enroll children for this program year and will start recruiting for the 2024-2025 program year soon! So, if you know of any children that might be interested in attending Head Start, please let us know! We still have openings left for this program year.

Head Start programs across the nation are under-enrolled and we are one of them. Programs are being contacted from the Office of Head Start and being put on Under-Enrollment Plans, which basically means we have one year to reach our full enrollment of 83 children, or we risk losing funding. Most programs have completed a Change in Scope application which asks for a reduction in enrollment. We are currently in the beginning stages of this process. There are several tough decisions ahead of us, so we will keep you informed as things are figured out.

During the week of November 27-December 1st, we also had an unannounced Focus Area 2 (FA2) federal review. We knew we were up for having a FA2 review, but generally you receive

a letter stating they will be coming within the next 45 days. We were waiting for this letter, but actually received the surprise of the reviewers just showing up on Monday, November 27th at 8:15 am to announce they were here to do the "unannounced" FA2! So, after the initial shock wore off, I welcomed them to our program and we hit the ground running. A huge thank you to all of the staff, parents, Policy Council and Board members who took the time to meet with the reviewers. I know everyone is busy, so I appreciate you taking the time to meet with them on such short notice. I think we did fine, but we will not receive the official letter for a few months. I will share the results as soon as I receive them.

Just a reminder with the winter season upon us... when there is bad weather, please listen to the following radio stations to see if there is school: Q106, 100.5, 92.3 and the following TV Channels: SAPA Channels 8 & 10, and WCAX/WOA Channel 3. We follow the same recommendations as the school district of where the Head Start center is located. If there is a delay, Head Start classrooms will be delayed as well. Child care will remain open. Parents will be called if we close early due to the weather. Please drive safely!

Sincerely,

Lori Canfield

Head Start Director



November In-Kind Winner:

PSP takes the honor of the most In-Kind! CCP is a close second!

The following children had **100%** attendance in November:

<u>Chester Community Preschool:</u> <u>CCP #1</u>: Gavin A., Sofia G., Payton L. and Xavier M.

Pine Street Preschool: Daisy Room: Raiden G. Willow Room: Liam S.



The Children's Place: Brinley C.

Northwoods: Izalea B.

Important Dates to Remember:

<u>January 1, 2024</u>~ New Year's Day. Head Start CLOSED. Child Care CLOSED

January 9, 2024~ Cook's Meeting

January 15, 2024 ~ Civil Rights Day. Head Start CLOSED. Child Care CLOSED.

January 17, 2024 ~ Policy Council/Shared Governance; 9:30AM

<u>January 18, 2024</u>~ In-Service Training Day. Head Start CLOSED. Child Care CLOSED

<u>January 26, 2024</u> ~ Early Release, Ed Meeting



Chester Community Preschool

<u>CCP1</u>

Ms. Jodíe, Ms. Karíe and Ms. Meagan

Miss Jodie, Miss Karie, and Miss Meagan have put together a unit all about Bears & Winter! We are learning about the different types of bears and where & how they live!

We learned the letter M, I and P. We made our Big letters into M-Mitten, I-Ice and P-Penguin and thought of different words that start with each of them.

We then played in the forest and Bear Den (in our Dramatic Play Center).

We learned that there are many different types of bears, and that they are all different!

We also filled our Jewel jar and were able to have PJ day and a dance party.

We made a few different nutrition projects. We made different bear faces with peanut butter, or yogurt and fruit. And we made 'Bear Dens' with different snack items!

December was a great month with specials! Miss Carrie from the Whiting Library came to our school and read us some books about Winter and sang a few songs with us too.

Vermont Institute for Natural Sciences (VINS) came into our classroom and taught us about some local bears and how they live.

Our families came and had lunch with us before we went on our Winter break! We always enjoy having our families come in for a visit. They always like to come into class and see our wonderful art work!

WE had so much fun this December. Even with the colder weather, we had so much fun both indoors and out!

<u>CCP2</u>

Ms. Randí and Ms. Andí

Happy Holidays! This month we have learned the letters Q, for quilt and C for cookie, which was fitting since our theme has been Gingerbread Man!

We have read lots of fun books this month including different versions of "The Gingerbread Man".

Our projects were all gingerbread related and fun for all. We made the Gingerbread Baby House, we did gingerbread stamping, and we made Gingerbread Fred! The kids will take him home over this weekend to include him in fun activities and adventures with our kiddos and their families.

Our nutrition project this week was a hit, the kids made gingerbread man shaped pizza for lunch!

We have filled our heart jar and will celebrate by having pajama day with hot cocoa. Next week we will be having Family Lunch to kick off Holiday break. It's been a great month! See you in January!!!

<u>Chester Community Preschool Family</u> <u>Partner</u>

Hello Families!

Brrr...it's cold out there!! With heating season in full swing please remember, if you need some help with getting fuel, you can contact SEVCA Family Services to apply for Crisis Fuel. For more information, please contact them at 802.460.1553.

Home Visits are complete; I appreciate you all made time in your busy schedules to meet with me. I want to take a moment to thank families that were able to attend our Winter Craft Parent Meeting! If you have ideas for our next Parent Meeting, please send them to me so we can add them to our list and decide together.

Please keep an eye on your child's backpack, Facebook, and Seesaw for more details about Family Engagement activities and other events. Please contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Katie Murphy Family Partner

Here is a fun activity to do with your child(ren).



Pine Street Preschool

<u>Daísy Room</u>

Ms. Jen, Ms. Alyssa and Ms. Felícía

Hello everyone, we can't believe December is already over! We hope you all had a great break!

This month we learned all about Holidays around the World! The kids loved it! We learned about Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Christmas! We did so many fun activities while learning about these different Holidays.



Some of the activities that were a hit to the kiddos were making their own menorah, candy cane science experiment, marble painted dreidels, and a Kwanzaa puzzle!

This month we also transformed our dramatic play area into a bakery. The kids loved decorating the cupcakes, paying with pretend money and making cookies. While the kids got to have a lot of fun pretending to make goodies, we also got to enjoy some Latkes this month while we learned about Hanukkah, the kids loved them!

We had another fun visit from VINS this month as well, learning all about loose parts! As always, the kids enjoyed this so much!

As we welcome the new year, in the month of January we will be learning all about Winter animals and hibernation. VINS will visit us again this month, which we always look forward to! We can't wait to learn about penguins, polar bears and so many more! Happy new year!



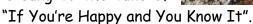
<u>Wíllow Room</u> Ms. Ruby, Ms. Nícholle and Ms. Sadíe

Hello friends!

In the month of December, our theme was about Winter. We all enjoyed reading winter books, stories, and singing winter songs. We learned about how animals live in winter. We also learned that some animals hibernate, migrate, and adapt during winter season.

We learned steps for putting on and taking off snow gear and the importance of keeping ourselves warm, especially when we go outside.

We loved singing the winter song entitled "Snow Clothes", which is sung to the tune of



We had so much fun doing different activities such as making snowflakes, winter tree fingerpainting, making snowman name, and measuring polar animals. We also learned a lot of ways to stay safe during winter.

Everyone loved our dramatic play area. We turned it into a winter café with an amazing igloo.



The kids filled their heart jar and celebrated it by having a pajama party. It's been snowing so everyone had a great time playing in the snow and building snowmen. Everyone had a blast!

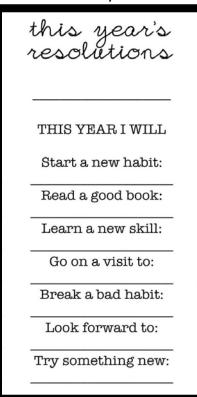
Our class voted and in the month of January we will be learning about dinosaurs!

Wishing you a beautiful holiday season!

<u>Píne Street Preschool</u> <u>Famíly Partner</u> Wow can you believe it's 2024!



A lot of people start the New Year off making a New Year's Resolution. Here is a helpful template for this new year:



Thank you to all the families that were able to complete their Home Visits with me. It has been amazing getting to know each one of you better.

We will be doing another Parent Workshop called Positive Solutions so keep your eye out for a Facebook post or information in your child's cubby.

Please keep an eye on your child's school folders for more details about Family Engagement activities and other events. Please contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Lindsay DeCell Family Partner Pine Street Preschool 802.460.1285 Ldecell@sevca.org

Northwood's Preschool

Ms. Míchohn

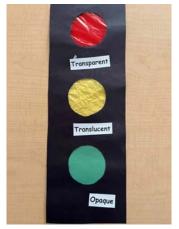
Ms. Michohn has been covering for staff at all our other centers as we wait to fill open positions at Northwoods. We're still looking for a Lead Teacher, Assistant Teacher and Cook there. Please, if you know anyone who would be a good fit for our Head Start family, send them our way!

Children's Place Preschool

Ms. Susan, Ms. Deníse and Ms. Mímí

In the month of December, we followed Denise's fantastic month of, the "Season of Light". This well-planned month, focused on what light is, what kinds of light, how light travels and how light can make color. One of our favorite activities was Flashlight Shadow Shapes. This was a unique activity showing what a flashlight might show us (using our own

designs). This tied right into our traffic lights showing us the meaning of translucent, transparent and opaque. We used a flashlight to highlight each meaning. It was great!! This provided a clear understanding of each word.



We made light bulb patterns, torches, lanterns, rainbow names, sunset collages, prism art and a water refraction experiment. We went for a scavenger hunt in search for different kinds of light. From gas pump lights to Rudolph's nose, we found them all.

We also had opportunities to make snow globes, northern lights salt painting, rainbow art and snowman math. We had to put off our growing experiment due to a week of illness but will start it right after the holiday. This experiment will use a grow light versus natural winter light. We will plant lettuce and see the difference between long summer light versus winter light which is shorter sunlight. Our hope is that we can also eat the lettuce.

Miss Denise has also made a feelings thermometer! This was a great visual to demonstrate stages of big feelings. From Calm to Extreme Danger, we are able to show others how we feel, teachers included.

Our sensory table filled the room with a scent of coffee!! Coffee beans were mixed in with oatmeal (uncooked) and glitter. There were gingerbread buckets. shovels, cookies. measure spoons and other various containers. The water table was filled with tubes, water beads, containers and measuring tools. This is always a favorite.

Miss Denise shared her little gingerbread houses, with various gingerbread people, for the block area. This was a busy center.

For the following month we will explore different environments such as dessert, artic, mountains and wetlands. This will fit in nicely with snow and artic animals for the sensory We will compare these different table. environments and the animals that might live there. This will be a continuation of our unit "Earth" from a past month.

Thank you all for understanding the week we closed our school. There are many illnesses about and we got them. The kids were very happy to be back in the classroom.

We are patiently awaiting SNOW. Till then, we will do our snow dance!

From the Desk of the Family Partner for The Children's Place Preschool and

Northwoods Head Start

Jessica Parmenter

Hello Families! Can you believe New Year



the already?

it's

We have wrapped up all of our home visits and had a super fun craft day making ornaments and sipping hot chocolate. I hope they all looked amazing in your homes or made lovely gifts over winter break! We may have wrapped up our home visits, but if you think of anything

you might need assistance with contact your family partner.

Just a reminder that we are closed January 1st for New Year's Day and January 15th for Martin Luther King Day. We will also be closed on January 18th for staff in-service.

It's getting colder, so if you need fuel assistance or weatherization services stop in and we can fill out an application.

We are still looking for another parent to be on policy council, so let your family partner know if you're interested!

www.dcf.vermont.gov/benefits/fuel-assistance Let me know if you have any questions!

Jessica Parmenter **Family Partner** Children's Place Preschool Northwoods Preschool 802-674-8008 jparmenter@sevca.org

News from the

Practiced-based Coach/Child Development Services Specialist

Susan Brown

I have had fun visits to the Chester As I observe and Community Preschool. support teachers, I get the honor of playing with children. I have enjoyed sitting on the floor, sharing an activity, making books with children and observing how each classroom flows. In these visits, I have seen children grown in developmental ways and in social emotional ways. This is a direct result of teachers providing a safe and engaging classroom.

In the next month, I will be providing different games, songs and activities to share with students and teachers. As a teacher, I know how valuable it is to have more activities in our "tool box". This is also part of goals. established by teachers, to enhance their teaching style. Once specific goals are met, together we move on to new pertinent goals relevant to needs of the classroom. It's an honor to be a guest in each classroom.

It has been a fun filled month and I have enjoyed playing with children and supporting teachers at the Chester Community Preschool. I hope that the holiday break is memorable and filled with joy.

News from the Health and Nutrition Manager

Heather Frye

802Smiles Hygienist Program (formerly the Tooth Tutor Program)



The Tooth Tutor program has had a name change and is now the 802Smiles Hygienist program.

This year our program had to say good bye to our previous Tooth Tutor, Ms. Eileen. After several

years working with us and the Head Start children and families, she finally decided she needed to take some time for herself.

We are happy to announce we have hired a new 802Smiles Hygienist to work with our program, her name is Siobhan Nadler, she joins our team as a Register Dental Hygienist from North Star. She is preparing herself to meet our staff and children and will be reaching out to families soon. If you would like to speak with Siobhan, please let either myself or your child's teacher know and we can set up a meeting between you and Ms. Siobhan.

Help us WELCOME Mr. Nathan

We would like to welcome Mr. Nathan as our new Food Service Provider for Pine Street Preschool. Mr. Nathan joins our Head Start family bringing with him many years of cooking experience. Please take a minute to say hi if you happen to see him while at the center.

Buttermilk Pancakes 💝

Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole wheat flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup buttermilk*
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- Additional oil for greasing griddle
- Butter and maple syrup for serving

*Some buttermilk is very thick. You may have to add a few tablespoons of regular milk if your batter is really thick. To make your own buttermilk combine 1 tablespoon of white vinegar or lemon juice with 1 cup of milk.

Instructions

- 1. With a whisk combine the dry ingredients in a large bowl.
- Add the buttermilk, egg and oil to the dry ingredients and whisk together until smooth. *
- Use a paper towel to rub a little oil all over a griddle or large frying pan. Heat the griddle or large frying pan over medium heat.
- For each pancake pour about 2 tablespoons of batter onto the heated griddle or frying pan. *
- 5. Flip when the pancakes begin to bubble on the top and the bottom is golden brown. Don't rush the flipping or you'll just end up with a big mess. Cook the second side for about 1 minute.

*To make blueberry pancakes, sprinkle a few blueberries on each pancake immediately after you have poured the batter on the griddle. Continue as above.

*Add 1 peeled, shredded apple and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cinnamon to finished batter if you like. Cook as directed above. If you would like to revisit this recipe on our website, please follow the link below. https://thefamilydinnerproject.org/dinnertonight/january-24-2020/

News from the Family/Community/Mental Health Services Manager

Barbara Vandenburgh

Struggling with your monthly internet expenses, or can't afford to get online at all? A federal subsidy is available to income-eligible households at <u>getinternet.gov/apply</u>. SEVCA can help also people apply. Contact your local Family Services office at 1-800-464-9951.



Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) will provide free tax preparation for lower-income taxpayers for the 2023 tax filing season through the Volunteer

Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. Contact SEVCA at (802) 722-4575, ext. 1603, for more information.



Practicing gratitude has incredible effects, from improving our mental health to boosting our relationships with others. We all have struggles in

our lives that sometimes over power our ability to recognize all the good that we have. Taking time each day to recognize areas in your life that you can be thankful for has many benefits!

Explore ways you can be more appreciative! https://www.mindful.org/an-introduction-tomindful-gratitude/

News from the Education/Disabilities Services Manager

Jodi Farashahi

Happy winter!! Please make sure that your child has an extra set of clothes, and their winter gear (snow-pants, coat, hat, mittens, snow boots) when the temperature does allow for them to get outside and enjoy the crisp air!

Teachers are now taking observations for the winter assessment period and planning activities to support their Individual Learning Plans.

Hoping everyone had a wonderful holiday!

Birthday News for January



Chester Community Preschool <u>CCP1</u>- None for January <u>CCP2</u>- Isaiah M. 1/27

<u>Pine Street Preschool</u> <u>Daisy</u>- None for January Willow- Ivy L. 1/14

The Children's Place None this month.

Northwood's Preschool

Summer A. 1/19, Oliver B. 1/11 and Oakley W. 1/8

Staff

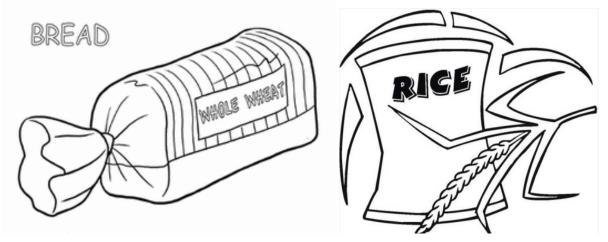
Karie S. 1/2 (CCP1's Teacher Associate) Meagan H. 1/11 (Windsor's Teacher Assistant)



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
CLOSED	2 <u>Breakfast</u> Cold Cereal Cheddar Cheese Chunks Applesauce 1% unflavored milk <u>Lunch</u> Chicken Salad Sandwich on WGR Bread Snap Peas Wonderful Watermelon 1% unflavored milk <u>Snack</u> Kale Chips WGR Crackers	3 <u>Breakfast</u> Scrambled Eggs Blueberries 1% unflavored milk <u>Lunch</u> Sloppy Joes on WGR Roll Bananas 1% unflavored milk <u>Snack</u> WGR Goldfish Pepper Slices	4 <u>Breakfast</u> Oatmeal Mixed Fruit 1% unflavored milk <u>Lunch</u> Macaroni and Cheese Ham Chunks Cauliflower Cantaloupe 1% unflavored milk <u>Snack</u> Bagel with Peanut Butter 1% unflavored milk	5 <u>Breakfast</u> WGR English Muffins Pears 1% unflavored milk <u>Lunch</u> Egg Salad WGR Wheat Thins Carrots Strawberries 1% unflavored milk <u>Snack</u> Celery Sticks Oranges
reakfast ogurt Parfaits (cereal, fruit, ogurt) % unflavored milk unch ay Cheese" Grilled Ham & heese on WGR <i>copical Bean Salad</i> % unflavored milk hack ananas in a Sleeping Bag anana wrapped in WGR rtilla)	9 Breakfast WGR Bagel Honey Dew 1% unflavored milk Lunch Vegetable Chili Cheddar Cheese Chunks WGR Roll Grapes 1% unflavored milk Strawberries 1% unflavored milk	10 Breakfast WGR Toast Burst of Blueberries 1% unflavored milk Lunch Cheese Quesadilla (cheddar cheese, black beans, corn, WGR tortilla) with Salsa Corn Oranges 1% unflavored milk Snack Apples, Yogurt	11 Breakfast Cold Cereal Peaches 1% unflavored milk Lunch Chicken or Turkey Tacos on WG yellow corn taco shells All Mixed-Up Fruit Medley 1% unflavored milk Snack Yogurt Dip with Cucumber Sticks 1% unflavored milk	12 Breakfast Humpty Dumpty Eggs (Scrambled eggs with veggies) Bananas 1% unflavored milk Lunch Meatball Subs/WGR Roll Shredded Cheese Garden Party (Tossed Salad) Pears 1% unflavored milk Snack Fruit Medley, WGR Crackers
CLOSED	16 Breakfast Cold Cereal Cottage Cheese Peaches 1% unflavored milk Lunch Ham & Cheese on WGR Bread Broccoli Oranges 1% unflavored milk <u>Snack</u> Mini Graham Cracker Berry Nut Butter (strawberries & peanut butter & graham crackers)	17 Breakfast WGR Pancakes Applesauce 1% unflavored milk Lunch Pasta Salad (WGR pasta) Cheddar Cheese Turkey Rolls Pears 1% unflavored milk Snack Funny Face Rice Cakes (fresh fruit, or veggies on a rice cake) 1% unflavored milk	18 CLOSED	19 Breakfast WGR Bagel with Cream Cheese Cantaloupe 1% unflavored milk Lunchables (deli meat, cheese, WGR Triscuit crackers) Snap Peas Strawberries 1% unflavored milk Snack WGR Cinnamon Nachos Fruit Salsa 1% unflavored milk
2 reakfast old Cereal lueberries % unflavored milk <u>unch</u> una on WGR arrot Sticks pple Slices % unflavored milk <u>mack</u> /GR Goldfish % unflavored milk	23 <u>Breakfast</u> Spiced Oatmeal Mighty Mangos 1% unflavored milk <u>Lunch</u> Pizza Burger on WGR Bread Go for It Green Beans Peaches 1% unflavored milk <u>Snack</u> Banana Hard Boiled Egg	24 Breakfast WGR Bagel with peanut butter Strawberries 1% unflavored milk Lunch WGR Spaghetti and Meat Sauce Broccoli Mixed Fruit 1% unflavored milk Snack Roasted Chickpeas Cucumber Slices	25 <u>Breakfast</u> Crunchy French Toast (WGR bread) Applesauce 1% unflavored milk <u>Lunch</u> <i>Tuscan Grilled Cheese</i> Cottage Cheese Mixed Vegetables Pears 1% unflavored milk <u>Snack</u> Cantaloupe 1% unflavored milk	26 Breakfast WGR English Muffins with Peanut Butter Mixed Berries 1% unflavored milk Lunch Homemade Chicken Nuggets WGR Roll Garden Party (tossed salad) Watermelon 1% unflavored milk Snack Fresh Veggies & Creamy Dip Honey Dew EARLY RELEASE
reakfast old Cereal ow Fat Yogurt Iandarin Oranges % unflavored milk unch am It Up WGR Pita elery Sticks trawberries % unflavored milk nack ottage Cheese pple Slices	Breakfast WGR Toast Burst of Blueberries 1% unflavored milk Lunch Beef Taco Pie (beef, veggies, WGR tortilla) Cantaloupe 1% unflavored milk Snack Snap Peas Wheat Thins	Breakfast Banana Bread Squares Pears 1% unflavored milk Lunch Chic' Penne Cheddar Cheese Chunks Brussel Sprouts Watermelon 1% unflavored milk Snack Veggiewiches (cucumber slices with ham and cheese in between)		Menu Subject to Change WGR=Whole Grain Rich

between)
1% unflavored milkThis institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Grains



- Make at least half of all grains eaten whole grains.
- 100% whole-grain breads, cereals, rice, and pasta provides nutrients and health benefits.
- Let children select and help prepare a whole grain dish.

Black Bean Quesadillas

Ingredients

- 12 whole wheat tortillas
- 2 cans black beans (15 oz)
- 1 cup of medium-hot salsa
- 1 cup part-skim mozzarella cheese, shredded

Directions

- 1. Preheat the oven to 400° F
- 2. Shred the cheese if not already shredded and drain the beans.
- 3. Put half of the salsa and half of the beans in the food processor and process until creamy. Add the remainder of the whole black beans to the mixture and stir to your liking.
- 4. Place tortillas on a baking sheet and spread on the bean mixture, then add 2 tablespoons of the shredded cheese.
- 5. Fold in half and bake for 15 minutes (or until cheese has melted).
- 6. Cut into wedges and serve with remainder of salsa.

WIC APPROVED ACTIVITY

Today your child learned about grains and colored this picture for you to post on your refrigerator. To get credit for this WIC Approved Activity, call your WIC Office at **289-0600/295-8820** and let us know the

recipe on this page.