



## April 2018

**Monday, April 2**  
**April 16 - 20**  
**Wednesday, April 25**

**Professional Day - no school**  
**Spring vacation week**  
**Board meeting 7:00 p.m.**

**\*Tuesday, May 1**  
**\*Wednesday, May 2**  
**\*Thursday, May 3**

**3 and 4 Day Class Pictures**  
**5 Day Class Pictures**  
**2 Day and Beginners Class Pictures**

**\*Rain dates will be determined if necessary**



### Notes from the Head of School

It seems like I tempted fate last month when I wrote about resilience, the ability to bounce back from adversity or sources of stress. March came in like a lion and the Watts family, along with several others, had several days and nights without power. My youngest child, Maya, celebrated her fourth birthday in the dark - having a birthday breakfast by headlamp and opening her presents in the shadows of our living room. After returning home from her birthday dinner to find that we still didn't have power restored, we packed up our clothes and dog and headed to my sister-in-law's house for the night. She and her husband graciously welcomed two adults, three kids, and a puppy into their already busy house. The next day Maya had a small family party, once again in the dark; last year's party had to be postponed due to my dad's passing and I wasn't going to postpone this girl's party a second year in a row. When power was restored late that night, it had already been decided we would stay at my mom's since our house had dipped into the 40 degree range. Upon returning to our house the next day, Maya went into every room of the house flipping on and off the lights to make sure we still had power. This continued for several days, and when she overheard us talking about the next Nor'easter, she burst into tears sobbing that she wanted to keep her power in her house. That Tuesday morning our lights flickered three times at various times before finally going out for good around noon; Maya was a basket case each time

even though her brothers were trying to redirect her by building blanket forts and playing Legos. Dinner was served by the light of the battery-operated lanterns I had bought after the previous storm, never thinking that they would be used again during the winter of 2018 . . . lightening doesn't strike twice, right? We braved the night in our house, abandoning it when the temps dropped really low and we got news that my mom had her power restored. Another bag packed, another mass Watts descent onto my mom and her kitty. On the ride from Marshfield to Kingston, I was kicking myself because I forgot my hair straightener and could only imagine the sight of me the next day at school without my typical hair routine. We all crammed into the heat of her house with me walking in saying, "Honey, we're home(less)!" That night was yet another where all of our sleep routines were completely off - I sleep with a fan and most of the time with the background noise of the TV (this to drown out the sounds of a snoring husband and dog). I couldn't fall asleep without my white noise and the addition of a 4 year old in the bed, and my mind was racing. I knew eventually we would be going home, that we truly weren't homeless. I was lucky we had family to help us out - a hot meal, a place to sleep; I knew I would use my straightener again. I was thinking over and over again how even though we had some mild annoyances over the past two weeks . . . what about those children and families who don't know where their next hot meal will come from, or don't have a place to sleep or family to help out. What about the children who also need to leave their homes quickly like we did, yet don't know if they will ever be back or what will happen to their belongings left behind - stuffed animal loveys, family pictures, and other important mementos. Both times we stayed at my mom's house, the boys had school the next day and were dropped off that morning not knowing if we'd return to our house that evening. I'm sure it was difficult to concentrate those school days without a good night's sleep in their own beds with the uncertainty of where they would sleep that night. Again though, they knew they had a warm home to go to with a comfortable bed, after a good dinner and a hot shower. Let's think about those children who go to school with none of those things - a comfy bed, a healthy breakfast - and wonder how they can even begin to concentrate on their work.

The next day at Berrybrook I was joking with the teachers about the House Bounce our family had been doing during the month and how fluffy my hair probably looked, and that I hoped I didn't scare any children with my different (I think I called it a Lion's Mane) look. As I was coming out of Room 2 Mrs. LaForest, who was also without power at her house, handed me her straightener she had used that morning in the Multipurpose Room. A simple gesture, but one more way I knew things were doing to be okay, from the help of family and friends.

~ Mrs. Watts



Ready, Set, ... Smile!!  
Berrybrook class photos are coming!



Tuesday, May 1st  
will be picture day for both 3 Day classes and both 4 Day classes

Wednesday, May 2nd  
will be picture day for the 5 Day class

Thursday, May 3rd  
will be picture day for 2 Day and Beginners  
Check your email in the coming weeks for details about Picture Day!

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Thanks to everyone who came to our "Tick Talk Night".  
Our presenter, Blake Dinius, had some very good tips and important information about  
dealing with this issue.  
Please see Mrs. Watts for handouts from the event.



# **Beginners Notes**

## Importance of Play

**When we look or watch children play, we think “oh, they are having fun” or “look how cute they are playing together” but we don’t stop to think how important it is for children “to play”, actually know “how” to play, or how playing is taking a roll in the development of the child.**

Play allows children to use their creativity while developing their imagination and dexterity along with physical, cognitive, and emotional strengths. Play is so important to healthy brain development. It is through play that children at a very early age learn to engage and interact in the world around them.

### How does a child learn through play?

Toys are fun, but toys are also tools that help children learn about themselves and the environment around them. Play is critical to the healthy growth and development of children. As children play they learn to solve problems, to get along with others and to develop the fine and gross motor skills needed to grow and learn.

Play helps to build your child’s creativity and imagination as well as other skills. Whether it is simply rolling a ball back and forth with another child or playing dress up in our dramatic play area - they are developing important social skills such as learning to take turns, cooperating, and getting along with others.

### There are six types of play:

1. Unoccupied Play - This refers to activity when a child actually isn't playing at all. They may be engaged in seemingly random movements with no objective. Despite appearances, this definitely is play and sets the stage for the future play exploration.
2. Solitary (Independent) Play - This refers to playing alone. This type of play is important because it teaches a child how to keep himself/herself entertained, teaching himself/herself to be self-sufficient. This is the most common type of play seen early on in the Beginners class. At ages 2 and 3, they are still pretty self-centered and are working on communication skills.
3. Onlooker Play - This is when a child simply observes other children playing. It is common for younger children who are working on their developing vocabulary. Don't worry if your child is doing this, it could just be that the child feels shy, needs to learn the rules, or maybe simply wants to take a step back for a while.

4. Parallel Play - This can be illustrated by thinking of two 3 year olds having fun, playing “side by side” in their own little world. This does not mean they don't like each other, they are just engaging in parallel play. Despite the lack of communication between them, they actually learn quite a bit from one another, like taking turns and other social niceties. They also mimic the other one's behavior, this type of play is viewed as an important bridge to the later stages of play.
5. Associative Play - In this mode of play, the children are involved with what others are doing, but still are playing side by side individually. Think of children building blocks. As they build their own individual buildings they are talking to one another and engaging each other. Ex.(how can we make this city bigger?) or (what should we build now?) Through associative play, children can begin to make friendships.
6. Cooperative Play - This is where it all comes together and the Beginners truly start playing together. The second half of the year is where we really start to see this happen. Cooperative play uses all of the social skills your child has been working on and puts them into action. Whether they are building with blocks or playing outside as a group, this type of play sets the stage for the future interactions as your child matures into adults.

Play gives children choice; having enough toys or activities to choose from will allow children to express themselves. Play also encourages adults to communicate with their children in their lives. Adults support play by giving children opportunities to play, and by knowing when to intervene and when not to intervene.

At Berrybrook we love to play and have fun! We all learn how to play well individually and with others. This will set our children up to be contented, sociable and well-rounded adults.

**“You Don't Stop Playing Because You Grow Old, You Grow Old Because You Stop Playing”**

*~ Mrs. Connell*

*Mrs. Connell teaches in the Beginners and 3 Day room 3 classes*

# ***First Year Notes***



## Healthy Eating

The month of April in the 3 and 2 Day classes bring about discussions of the changing of seasons - we might start to see buds on trees and bushes and the grass (hopefully) will be turning from winter brown to beautiful spring green. The classes also spend a lot of time discussing the importance of healthy eating. The classroom will be thoughtfully planned and set up by the teachers to incorporate various activities and projects that will be used to help promote conversations with the children. The housekeeping area is transformed into a grocery store with all the appropriate details - cash registers complete with money and charge cards, recyclable bags, and of course all kinds of food.

One of the projects that we will do to reinforce our discussions will be a grocery cart. The children will pick a paper shopping cart to use. Once they put their name on the paper, they will sit at the project table and “shop”. On the table there will be baskets with cut pictures of food. The children will select which foods they would like to use and glue the pictures to their cart. This process usually leads to many discussions among the children and the project teacher about healthy food versus a treat food, and what they like to eat at home with their family.

The teachers will also lead discussions at circle time about how healthy foods are good for our bodies and learning the difference between a treat and a healthy food. The children will learn a few new songs such as “Oats and Beans and Barley” and “Apples and Bananas” by Raffi. Also, a favorite by Bev Bos, “ Finger Family”, will be introduced to the children. At story time, some of the books that are enjoyed by the children and teachers alike are *Avocado Baby* by John Burningham, *I shop With My Daddy* by Grace Maccarone, *Gregory, the Terrible Eater* by Mitchell Sharmat, and *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Suess.

~ *Mrs. Neal*

*Mrs. Neal teaches in the 3 Day Room and the 2 Day classes*



## **Second Year Notes**

One of the most enjoyable second year projects at Berrybrook is creating musical instruments out of everyday objects. Throughout the year, children create a full band of musical instruments. They begin with shakers and drums, and as the year goes on, they create new ones to add to their collection. Students learn to take pride in their work by paying attention to details and taking their time. The finished product is a useful musical tool that they can use for self expression. This year, I was able to create an instrument that is new to me as well as the students. We created rhythm sticks which were made by creatively using chopsticks in a new and unintended way. This helped teach the children about recycling materials.

To begin, the students were given an even number of chopsticks. We used eight or ten, as more chopsticks used together yielded a louder and more satisfying sound. This part of the process involved math, as children counted the sticks into one pile at this stage. The sticks were then separated into two equal piles; another lesson in addition and early division.

The next step gave the children the opportunity to express themselves artistically. Liquid watercolor paint was distributed, along with brushes so children could carefully paint each stick. The students were encouraged to think about covering each stick completely with paint, checking periodically to see that there were no wood spots left. After the sticks were left to dry overnight, they were then ready to be divided into two even groups of two, then secured with elastics. Finally, colorful yarn was wrapped around the ends of each bunch.

The instruments at that point were ready to be played; celebrated with a group song and a parade around the school. The children learned to care for their creation and might continue to keep the instruments for a long time to come. Often, alumni siblings of Berrybrook students recall that they still have their musical creations years after creating them.

*~ Miss McNulty*

Miss McNulty teaches in the 4 and 5 Day classes

### **FROM THE LUNCH BUNCH TEACHERS**

Thank you to parents for carefully packing lunches that are safe for everyone. We appreciate your cooperation, understanding and your attention to checking ingredient labels.

Thank You!



## ***Parents Association Notes***

Spring is here! Let's cross our fingers that the some warm weather will allow us to pack lunches and enjoy extended time on the playground!

### **Enrichment**

April is always a busy month for enrichment. Miss Kim will continue the student's yoga exploration. Plus school pictures will take place and the staff from Soule Homestead will make their annual visit after April vacation. During Soule Homestead's visit, first year students will learn about farm animals and participate in an exciting craft. The second year students will have a special visit from Annawon Weeden, a member of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe.

### **Family Fun Fridays**

Family Fun Fridays are still going strong thanks to our enthusiastic enrichment coordinators, Kristina Barry and Kate Bean. Our next Family Fun Friday will take place on Friday, April 6<sup>th</sup> at My Gym Kingston. The event is at full capacity at this point, however if you would like, your name can be added to a wait list to join the event.

My Gym Kingston is located at 182 Summer Street (in the Big Y shopping complex). My Gym offers structured, age-appropriate, weekly classes that incorporate music, dance, relays, games, special rides, gymnastics, sports and more. Children have loads of fun as they gain strength, balance, coordination, agility and flexibility while developing social skills, confidence and self-esteem.

### **Spring Fling**

Each year the BPA sponsors a casual end of year celebration for all the families. Please save-the-date for this special event on Wednesday, May 16th from 4-5:30 p.m. with a rain-date of Wednesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Be on the lookout for additional details regarding this fun afternoon!

Thank you!

Diana Stewart and Jenna O'Donnell Co-Presidents



## ***From The Board of Directors***

### ***Happy Spring***

It's hard to believe with all the recent snow, but as I sit here writing this, it is officially the first day of spring.

This week, I went into the attic and brought down my Easter decorations. As I sat at the kitchen table, carefully unwrapping each Berrybrook blown egg, I was met with mixed emotions. Initially, I was a bit sad because this was going to be the first time in 6 years that I would not have a beautiful new egg to add to my collection. However, I must admit, I was also a bit relieved. Because .... for the first time in six years .... I did not have to blow out eggs. No delicately poking holes in dozens of raw eggs only to successfully empty the yolky contents of maybe 6 eggs without cracking them!

This relief was short lived, though. Only moments after I finished setting up our Egg Tree, my six year old son got off the bus. He ran in the door and immediately started looking at all the eggs. Then he looked at me and asked "Mama, since we aren't making any eggs at Berrybrook this year, can we make our own at home?"

Unable to disappoint my little guy, I promised to start the messy process once again. This weekend I will purchase dozens of eggs and see how many I can blow out without breaking them. This Berrybrook tradition is slowly becoming a McFarland tradition. And every year as we paint our eggs and hang them on our tree, we will be reminded of this and every tradition and friends we made during our years at Berrybrook.

Warm wishes for a Happy Spring!

~Jessica McFarland

Board Member





***The Berrybrook Summer Nature Program is offered during June and July on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 – 1:00. Children must be 4 by September 1st , (or Berrybrook Beginners!) to register. We also welcome siblings up to 7 years of age.***

***Check with the office for specific week availability.***