



February 2019

February 18 - 22
Wednesday, February 27

Vacation week
Board meeting 7:00 pm



Notes from the Head of School

In November I started something I had never thought I'd see myself doing . . . I started acupuncture to help relieve the pain I have from migraine headaches. I've struggled with headaches for years, and one week in October I had reached my breaking point and knew I needed to do something. A good friend of mine had success with acupuncture for her frozen shoulder and highly suggested I look into it. She had told me for years the positive impact it had on her, and for years I would smile and say "I'm so glad that works for you" thinking the whole time there was no way in the world I would let someone stick needles in me. Fast forward to this past October when a week straight I probably would have traded in my first-born for relief and I reached out to someone. I did some research and found an acupuncturist in Marshfield, and booked my consultation. When the day came for my appointment, I thought I might feel nervous and want to cancel at the last minute. But I didn't; I arrived to the appointment with a calm I wasn't expecting. We had an hour of chatting about my medical history, what brought me in seeking relief with acupuncture, and more. She asked about my caffeine intake ("too much!"), my water intake ("too little!") and my exercise habits ("even less!"), and then she asked about my sleep hygiene. My first thought was, "Well, I change into pajamas, brush my teeth, and floss when I remember to, then hop into bed". Nope, not what she was looking for . . . these were questions like screen habits, what time I go to sleep and for how long, and more. And then I realized my problems, and they were not easy to swallow and take responsibility for. You see - I'm fairly good about the screen habits with my children, but as for

me I have horrible sleep habits (or sleep hygiene which sounds so much fancier!). Every night I'd go to sleep with the TV on, my phone tucked under my pillow. When I get up to let the dog out or to use the bathroom I felt sucked into either checking my email or social media, sometimes for hours. Several times I would wake up the next morning, only to see a confirmation email from Amazon for my middle of the night purchase that I had only a vague recollection of. Sleep shopping, is that a real thing? According to my checking account ~ yes! And of course I'd get drawn into a Friends episode on TV that I couldn't miss, added with the snoring husband and bed-hogging Bulldog. Then the alarm would go off at the crack of dawn, and I'd wonder why I was so agonizingly tired.

I went home with homework - set the sleep timer on the TV and make sure I don't check the phone when I get up; I told her the suggested task of getting the dog out of the bed was a non-negotiable! Sounds easy enough right? Finding the correct remote to set the sleep timer was a challenge but the real struggle was making sure I didn't check my email just one quick time when I was up. Telling myself that email could wait until the morning was HARD! Which got me to thinking, as an adult I struggle with keeping the screens from my nighttime routine which has resulted in sleep deprivation - how many children are navigating this struggle as well? When I reported how many hours of sleep I get per night, I was shocked to realize how little the actual number is. I may start my bedtime routine at what I think it a reasonable hour but by the time I watch a little TV to wind down, try to clear my mind from the busy day, and settle the snoring pooch I don't get as much sleep as I think I am.

Looks like I am not alone. The chart below is from a school in Florida who must have concerns about their students' sleep patterns; the chart shows a child's age, the recommended hours of sleep, and the number of hours in reality that children are getting.

WebMP Health and Parenting Guide offers sleep guidelines that parents may find useful and even surprising:		
Child's Age	Recommended Hours of Sleep	In Reality
4-12 Months Old	11 - 15 hours per day	most infants get only about 12 hours sleep
1-3 Years Old	12 - 14 hours per day	toddlers typically get only about 10 hours
3-6 Years Old	10 - 12 hours per day	these children usually get less than 10 hours of sleep
7-12 Years Old	10 - 11 hours per day	the average for this age group is only about 9 hours
12-18 Years Old	9 - 10 hours per day	most are averaging 7.5 hours

What's the downfall of a couple of hours difference in sleep? I for one know how cranky I am when I don't get enough sleep, and how quick I am to go from 0-60 in a very short amount of time. As an adult I can (hopefully!) regulate my moods a little more easily than children, so can you imagine how they are functioning in their lives with less than ideal hours of sleep? Studies show that lack of sleep in children can cause irritability, increased stress, forgetfulness, difficulties with learning, and low motivation; over time it can contribute to anxiety and depression. Children who get a consistent good night's rest are more creative, have longer concentration spans, have better problem-solving skills, are better equipped to make positive decisions, and are able to learn and retain more new things, which helps to create and maintain good relationships with others.

Back to my nightly fight with my screens of course the emails I would read would not allow my brain to settle down and get a good night's rest. The biggest thing, according to my new acupuncturist friend, was the light emissions coming from the various screens. Even if I was able to override and settle my thoughts, the light from the screens can disrupt the body's natural occurring circadian rhythm, in turn increasing alertness and suppressing melatonin, which is vital to regulating our sleep-wake cycle. No wonder I was a zombie each morning!

Now I have three bedtimes - a time set for the TV to turn off, a time for my phone to go into Do Not Disturb mode, and also the time to start to settle down. If my alarm goes off at 5:15 and I should have 8 hours of sleep to be nice to people, I know I need to be ready to fall asleep around 9 which means I should be watching a little Bravo by 8 for about an hour. The same goes for my children - their alarm goes off every morning at 6, so they should all be falling asleep by 8ish to feel rested and ready to tackle the day (and not their siblings). I urge you to give it a try with your family. Tuck away the screens at night, and join me feeling refreshed and recharged!

~ Mrs. Watts



Valentine's Day Celebration

All of our classes will be celebrating Valentine's Day by delivering cards and enjoying a special Berrybrook snack.



We ask that the children bring a valentine for each classmate. Please remember, because we have children with food allergies, valentines should not include candy.

ALL CANDY SHOULD REMAIN AT HOME



.....**FYI**.....

Berrybrook artwork is being featured at the Duxbury Free Library during the month of February. The display is comprised of several classes. So if your family happens to visit the library, be sure to check it out!





Beginners Notes

Into February we go...

We often think of hearts, valentines, and kindness during the month of February. It's a perfect time to reflect on the developing friendships of our Beginners. This is evident when we hear sweet little voices announcing, "I can help you," or "Anyone want to play trains with me?"

In anticipation of Valentine's Day we will create hearts and Valentine bags, and talk about the ways we show kindness to our friends. On Thursday, February 14, Beginners may bring Valentines (without candy or other items attached) to share with classmates that they will place into each Valentine bag. Please leave the outside envelopes blank to make delivery easier. We will also have a special Valentine snack that day.

This month also reminds us to continue sharing our feelings with peers by using our words: "Thank you for sharing the play dough with me," or "I didn't like it when you took that toy out of my hands. You can use it when I'm done." With practice, we are making such progress!

Our first yoga session with Miss Kim was a big success, with Beginners enthusiastically participating in yoga moves and music. We are all looking forward to our next session.

Our Beginners are so proud that they are able to dress in their winter clothing with more independence. Please remember to send a winter jacket, snow pants, boots, hat, and mittens even if we don't have snow. Weather permitting, we try to get outside each day, and hope to visit the big playground soon.

Happy Valentine's Day!

~ Mrs . Lane

Mrs. Lane teaches in the Beginners and 3 Day Room 3 classes

2 and 3 Day Notes

Sending Home Some Love



As the temperatures drop, it is warming to know that February is here and we will be filling our hearts with love....and sending some home. Our 2 and 3 Day children will be learning all about the Post Office and Valentine's Day this month.

There are many steps involved in our traditional project of "Sending Home a Valentine" to families. The first step is making the Valentine, which is a marble painting of a heart. The children choose a cut - out heart shape and place it in the bottom of a round tin. This is a project that we create while standing so the children have room to move. On the table there is metallic paint in little bowls with a few marbles in each. The children use a spoon to scoop the painted marbles and place them into the tin on top of their heart. Once they place the spoon down, they are able pick up the tin with a hand on each side and begin tilting the tin side to side so the marbles can roll up and down and back and forth on their heart. As the marbles move all around the children are watching with amazement as their heart shows all the rolling tracks of colors that they have chosen. This is how they create their beautiful "one of a kind" Valentine for their families.

As their Valentines dry, the children are learning about how mail makes its way to their home. We transform the housekeeping area into a Post Office (which is always a favorite), we read books about the Post Office/Mail and talk about what a stamp is for. The last step before we head to the Post Office is counting out the exact change we need to buy a stamp. After we talk about money and how much they will need to buy a stamp, we help each child count the exact change needed (\$0.55).

Once the Valentines have had some time to dry, the children write their names or "their mark" on their hearts. The children fold their hearts in half and place them into an envelope that has been addressed to their family.

On the day that we send our Valentines home, we (the teachers) meet the children and their parent(s) at the Duxbury Post Office. The children will receive their counted bag of money and Valentine then proudly walk up to the counter with their parent(s) to buy their stamp. They then place their stamp on the envelope and walk over to the mail slot where a teacher is waiting for them. As they slide their envelope into the mail slot and pose for a picture they are smiling ear to ear as they complete their part of sending home the Valentine especially made for their family.

Wishing you all a very Happy Valentine's Day!

~ *Mrs. Knight*

Mrs. Knight teaches in the 3 Day Room 1 class



2 and 3 Day Classes

Duxbury Post Office Field Trip 56 Depot Street

Remember to save the date, and meet your teachers there at 9 a.m.

3 Day Room 3: Monday, February 11

3 Day Room 1: Tuesday, February 12

2 Day Room 1: Friday, February 8

MID YEAR CHECK IN

It is hard to believe that we have passed the halfway point in our school year! If there are any concerns or questions that you have about your child, please let a teacher know. Conferences will be beginning soon, but the teachers are happy to meet in the next few weeks if you would like a chance to sit and speak with them.



4 and 5 Day Notes

Sensory Art Experiences

Now that February is approaching, the children have completed numerous art projects. They have learned how to properly use a variety of art mediums and supplies. Winter is a great time for introducing exciting new activities, because there is less time spent outdoors, and favorite activities have become routine.

Recently, I have been able to share some new sensory art experiences with the children. Finger painting seems so basic, but there is so much more to it. For many of the children putting their fingers in the paint seemed so unusual, that some asked for a paint brush the first time we did this activity, and that's ok. Other children were thrilled at the idea of touching the slimy, shiny globs of paint. There are children who used just their fingertips and others who used both palms to smear the paint all over the paper. They enjoyed the cool, wet feeling on their skin and they liked the sounds of the paint squishing through their fingers.

The beauty of an activity like finger painting is that it is purely process based. There is no real value put on the product, it's all about the experience had during the process. How does it feel? How does it smell? How does it sound? They explore with the different swirls and designs that can be done, and then with one wipe of a palm all designs are gone and they can begin again.

Sensory art activities are so much more than art! These experiences are a valuable tool for promoting language as well. There is the communication that happens naturally about what everyone at the table is doing. There is also a lot of vocabulary that springs forth, because they are finding words to describe what they feel and see. And let's not forget SCIENCE! With finger painting, the children are usually mixing colors. Color mixing is a true science experiment!

Speaking of science, we also recently did a puffy snow art activity which was based in science. Mix equal parts white glue and shaving cream together, and you get: SNOW! The children were amazed! And again, some were more engaged and wanted to keep creating with this "magic snow", while others were hesitant to even touch it. There was an explosion of language during this activity.

-“It looks like melted marshmallow.”

-“I think it looks like frosting.”

-“It feels cold and soft, but it's sticky too.”

-“How does glue and shaving cream turn into this? This is so different.”

“What will it look like when it dries? I think it will stay puffy, maybe because the glue will stick it that way.”

The children were experiencing individually the sensory effects of this activity, but they were also coming together as a group to compare their observations, to ask questions, and to make predictions. This is preschool science! The observations continued the following day when they saw how their creations has dried. A new discovery was made! The “snow” dried differently on the different types of paper we had used. During group time, I held one of the “snow” art projects up done on black paper. I asked the children

to describe what they saw, telling them there is no right or wrong answer. The answers I got were as wonderful and unique as each of the children.

-“The inside of bones.”

-“The moon.”

-“A snowy night.”

A few weeks after our first finger painting activity, we fingerpainted again. A child who had asked for a paint brush the first time, asked again. There is a fine line when it comes to encouraging a child to do something they are hesitant to do. I decided since this was our second go around and this child is comfortable with me, I would give it a shot. I suggested instead of a brush, to use just one finger tip in the paint. He did! He ended up using all three colors of paint, not nearly the globs of paint his friends at the table were working with, but he was finger painting! And he had found a way to do it within his own comfort zone. He was experiencing something new and learning from it. And this is why I love teaching preschool, beautiful moments like these.

~ *Ms. Kelley*

Ms. Kelley teaches in the 5 Day and 4 Day Room 1 classes



Snow Cancellation Reminder Colder weather is on its way.....

It is our policy to cancel classes whenever Duxbury Public Schools are closed due to weather emergencies. Families should watch Channel 7, WHDH for a school cancellation at Berrybrook. Every attempt at notification will be made through email messages, text messages, phone calls via OneCallNow and/or social media. In the event Duxbury Public Schools require a one hour delay, Berrybrook will have the usual 9 am arrival time. In the event Duxbury Public Schools require a two hour delay, the AM session, as well as Lunch Bunch, will be cancelled. Beyond a formal cancellation, we urge parents house their best judgement about driving young children to school in inclement weather.

As the weather changes, be sure to dress children appropriately for outdoor play including the Nook. Now is a good time to locate all hats, mittens, gloves, and warm jackets that will be necessary as we head into winter. Once the snow flies, children should bring snow pants and snow boots with them every day. Children are welcome to keep slippers, sneakers, or crocs at school to make sure they are comfortable in the classroom.

Parents Association Notes

Winter is in full swing and we are all surviving the typical New England winter weather pattern. We have broken from some of the frigid weather and enjoyed some milder temperatures which have provided the students the opportunity to play outdoors and explore the Berrybrook Nook.

Enrichment

Yoga is officially underway for the entire school. It is amazing to see the smiles on the first year students when they see Miss Kim in the big room and learn that she is there to teach them. The Beginners and the 2 and 3 Day students are just beginning their yoga journey, but the 4 and 5 Day students are now proficient at many yoga poses. The older students will continue to learn how yoga is beneficial to their bodies. Make sure to ask your child about their yoga experience. Some upcoming enrichment activities include our annual visit from the dental hygenist and Soule Homestead.

Family Fun Fridays

Thank you to all the families who attended our Family Fun Friday event at Tumblefun. It was a packed house and the children enjoyed jumping and tumbling with friends.

The signup for our next event, Kidzone in Norwell on February 8th, will be completed via sign up genius. Enjoy the play space and pizza with friends.

As always, thank you to those who have already paid their BPA dues! If you have yet to do so, it's not too late! We ask for a \$30 contribution per family, which goes directly toward student enrichment in and out of the classroom. Forms are available at the BPA table for contributions. A big thank you to our Berrybrook families for your continued support and participation! Please let us know if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. You can email us at berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com.

Thanks,
Jenna O'Donnell and Diana Stewart Co-Presidents

The Berrybrook Staff would like to thank the Parents Association for arranging snacks for our monthly after-school meetings. Each month we have a 2 hour meeting to discuss curriculum and other matters. These meetings are scheduled from 4:15-6:15 and we appreciate having a snack to fortify us. We are thankful for all of the support and encouragement we receive from parents. It is very thoughtful of parents to take time from their busy schedules to prepare refreshments for us.

Thank You Very Much!!

From The Board of Directors

Grown-up Time

Time with our little ones presents a wild contradiction to parents. Minutes can feel like hours as we encourage them through a difficult time or try to keep our tempers, and at the same time a month can pass so quickly that we feel we've missed something. How do we make the most of this precious time for our children, which is equally precious to our own lives?

Lately I've been thinking about how to apply some grown-up ideas to our whole family. I want the time we spend together to be harmonious, productive, and to teach my children skills they can carry forward. I recognize that vacation week can be a transition for little ones as well, who might miss the company of their peers and teachers. What can I teach while they're home?

Spark Joy with Tidying Up

Last night I practiced some of the steps Mari Kondo prescribes in *Tidying Up* (if you haven't seen it yet, available on Netflix) with my daughter. We emptied her drawers, and I asked her to pick up each piece of clothing. If she loved it, she should put it in the keeper pile. If she didn't, she should say, "Thank you," and place it in the give-away pile. We spent about twenty minutes from start to finish, and as she made decisions, I folded her clothes and placed them in the drawers or in boxes in the drawers so that each piece of clothing could stand neatly and be seen. This morning I encouraged her to show her dad her lovely drawers - we all felt joy as she picked out her outfit without an ounce of frustration. This weekend we'll tackle her closet!

Wisdom for Relationships

A friend of mine is planning a visit to see his adult daughter, and he shared some anxiety about not feeling welcome in her home. I understood that he didn't want the tension to spill over into his interaction with his almost 3-year old granddaughter. It occurred to me that he was making a lot of assumptions about the trip, and those assumptions were fueling his anxiety.

This brought to mind *The Four Agreements* by Don Miguel Ruiz, a little book of wisdom that inspired me several years ago before I had children. Re-reading it now as a parent, I can see how practicing this wisdom is good for all relationships. Agreement 1 is *Be impeccable with your word*. This means keeping your word, and using words, which are so powerful, with kindness. Agreement 2 is *Don't take anything personally*. Agreement 3 is *Don't make assumptions*. Agreement 4 is *Always do your best*. So simple, right? These agreements are compacts we make with ourselves and our sense of a Higher Power, and they can have profound effects. The most important effect might be modeling wise behavior for our children.

Russian School of Mathematics

I listened to a radio piece about RSM recently, and I was inspired by the idea of introducing an advanced concept to kids with the expectation that they can work it out. RSM teaches kids how to use the principles they already know to reason out an approach to solving a new problem. This resonated with me as an important life skill - after all, real life doesn't come with a manual or textbook on how to solve problems! Of

course my fourth grader, my first grader, and your preschooler will have different skills they can apply to problems... and that's the fun part. It's amazing what kinds of creative solutions kids work out if given the opportunity. Surely plenty of problems in need of solving will arise over break - now I am newly inspired to bring my kids into the problem-solving process.

Enjoy your February break and all the moments with your youngsters!

Michelle Hatfield

Board of Directors



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 a Berrybrook Beginner!) to register. We also welcome children up to 7 years of age.

All current families will receive complete information about the program and registration process during the week of February 25, 2019.