

Dear families,

It has been a busy start to the school year. Your children have adjusted well to the rules and routines of the classroom and what it means to be away from their families and joining a new community of classroom friends and teachers. When the children enter the classroom we work with them to gain independence with hanging up their things, washing their hands and sitting down for a meal. Soon we will be adding “signing in’ to this routine.

At our meeting we are learning how to stay on the blue line (which is their chosen spot at meeting). Here we sing songs, talk in a group, and raise our hands and wait to be called on before sharing. A particularly important and challenging skill is to be a listener and wait for a turn. Your children have shown such great self-control while working on these skills, skills which help a classroom of learners succeed together. Ask your child about the game “Who Stole the Bear” where they have to use their strong guessing skills, or “Which Number is Missing” where they use their memory skills to make an educated guess while learning to identify numerals.

On Tuesdays we started acting out the story that was told in our woods spot, “The Three Little Bears.” We have reviewed the lessons for our Loose Part Play area which include putting materials back when you are done using them, how to dig without getting sand or dirt on others, how to invite friends to play with you, and the boundaries of this area. Children have been thoroughly enjoying the water, mud and sand play in this area. We also have been enjoying some challenging gross motor activities which include walking the long log which acts as a balance beam, walking the tight rope, running, pine cone toss, tree swing, wheel barrel pushing, stump jumping and the list goes on.

In the woods we have spoken about ‘fairy flags,’ cloths tied to the trees, which act as a reminder of the boundaries in our outdoor classroom. The woodland fairies watch over us and keep us safe in our woods spot. Together we sit on our stumps while singing songs and listening to stories before getting a lesson on what work we can do in the woods that week. Most recently I told the story of “Hansel and Gretel” which taught us the importance of staying close to the adults in the woods. We learned how to safely climb trees, rake and use a mortal and pestle, all work choices for the woods.

On our hike we first made it to the lazy river. On the way children made many interesting observations, they found webs, mushrooms, and all different kinds of plants. We even came across a mystery item on the path which some guessed was candy. Through further investigation and observation we found the plant that the little berries came from, the Jack and the Pulpit plant! We also began using our hike sketchpads this week. The children choose one item that they find on the hike and then careful observe the item before drawing it in their pad. Many children this week chose milkweed to draw, as it was abundant on our hike.

At meeting we have been learning about how to do many of the works set up in the classroom. We also have been talking about different feelings we have, one of which is anger. We read the book “When Sophie Gets Angry” by Molly Bang and discussed how it feels when we are angry. We discussed things we can do in school when we get angry such as draw a picture, stomp our feet, squish a ball. This is a conversation you can have with your child at home as well.

We are excited about the weather change that is happening as autumn approaches. Please dress your child in layers so they can be comfortable as the weather shifts throughout the day.

**Ask Your Child About…….**

* What they can do at home when they feel angry, and make a plan together for when this happens.
* Think with your child about ways you can support their independence at home such as hanging up their own things, or remembering their jacket in the morning.
* Talk with your child about the weather in the morning and include them in the conversation about what clothes will best prepare them for the temperature and weather conditions for that day, then have them dress accordingly.
* Ask your child to retell you the story of the “Three Little Bears.”

**Important dates and announcements~**

* Inservice days for Preschool (NO PRESCHOOL) on Friday, Oct 5th and Thursday, Oct 25th
* Field trip to Little Wood Farm in Plainfield on Tuesday, Oct 16th,

We will be going to learn about harvesting, farm life and partake in a pumpkin hunt in the cornfield! Please let me know if you would like to chaperone this trip.

* Picture retake day Tuesday, Oct 23rd
* Please dress your child in rain boots every day at preschool so we can enjoy mud and water play!
* We are looking for a parent volunteer to make ‘story bags’ for children to take home and make with their families. This would involve making copies, cutting and bagging materials once a month. Please let us know if this is a way you can volunteer and support our program!

*Warmly,*

*Elaina, Dianne, Becca and Denise*