

The Prouty Voice

MARCH 2008
Volume 2, Issue 7



Contents

Note from Chloe	1
Upcoming Events	1
Younger Toddler News	2-3
Older Toddler News	4-5
Preschool News	6-7
Afternoon Program News	8
FIT News	9
Committee News	9
Office News	10
Center Wish List	11
Information Corner	12
This Month's Calendar	13

**The Winston L. Prouty
Center for Child
Development**
20 Winston Prouty Way
Brattleboro, VT 05301

Phone:
(802) 257-2101

Fax:
(802) 258-2413

Website:
www.winstonprouty.org

*A Place Where Every
Child is Special.*

Note from Chloe Learey, Executive Director

The Importance of a Social-Emotional Curriculum

Part of helping children learn how to be good citizens in the world is helping them recognize their own emotions and gain the ability to identify the feelings and motivations of others. This is the "social-emotional" domain of the work we do at Prouty, and it can be challenging in a way that other domains are not. For parents and teachers, this process can be intense, whether positive or negative. Both conflict and joy can bring pain if one child's tool for dealing with emotion, for instance, is to engage physically with peers. How do we read the situation as adults, and how do we help problem-solve and teach? This is an arena that we will be discussing more at Prouty in order to establish a consistent philosophy and practice and a developmentally appropriate approach.

In order to start this process and dialogue in our organization, we have borrowed a curriculum from Windham Child Care Association called *Second Step*. The Committee for Children website (www.cfchildren.org/programs/ssp/prek/) describes *Second Step* as a "research-based violence prevention program [which] provides engaging lessons and activities that teach essential social skills, such as problem solving, emotion management, impulse control, and empathy." Some of our teachers have used this program and found it helpful; they provided a workshop during in-service to introduce it to the staff. While we may not choose to follow this particular social-emotional curriculum in the long run, it gives us a solid basis for opening the discussion, trying some tools, and then developing our own sense of how Prouty would like to proceed in this domain. One of the most critical aspects of this work to me is making sure that there is continuity between the classrooms so that the learning that begins in one classroom is picked up in another. Having a community dialogue will help foster that continuity.

Chloe

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Monday, March 3, 4:30 PM Taste of the Town Committee Meeting
- ◆ Monday, March 17, 4:30 PM Taste of the Town Committee Meeting
- ◆ Monday, March 17, 5:30 PM Board Meeting
- ◆ Friday, March 28 In-Service CENTER CLOSED
- ◆ Monday, March 31, 4:30 PM Taste of the Town Committee Meeting
- ◆ Friday, May 16, 6-8 PM **The Taste of the Town**

EL1-Younger Toddlers 257-2101

e11@winstonprouty.org

Susan Heimer Ext. 20
 Kathy Wright
 Abby Clarke
 Alfred Hughes, Jr.
 Nicole Evans

News from the Younger Toddler Room



Glorious Dirt

In February the novelty of snow began to fade and we found dirt (for potting projects) engaged the children much more. After we started exploring it for our seed planting project, the potting soil in the big sensory table got used daily. We planted grass seed and started watering it with spray bottles. All of the children have mastered pumping the sprayers, but aiming is another matter, so it is a messy daily project, and appropriate as we move into mud season!

Puppets

We began using puppets. The preschoolers loaned us the puppet theater and we enjoyed hand puppets, stick puppets and sock puppets which we made ourselves. At this age when a grown-up is good at animating a puppet, the children are not entirely certain whether it is alive or not! We are incorporating the puppets into our social-emotional curriculum to provide another avenue for discussing our feelings and our friend's reactions to certain behaviors. The

puppets encourage conversation.

February Curriculum

The color pink was explored with valentine collages, pink play dough, color blending red and white finger-paint, and adding red food coloring to shaving cream.



Pink play dough

We used flannel hearts and textured hearts. We counted stuffed hearts. We followed up on the valentine theme with the song "Skidamarink-a-dink" and the turn-taking game "A Tisket a Tasket." (A child in the center of the "Ring-Around the Rosy" type circle hands the basket over to another child when we all sing "wrote a letter to my love and on the way I lost it...")



Valentine's Day art project



Pink shaving cream!

Recipes that involve bowls of lots of different ingredients are our class baking favorites. The recipe on the lid of an oatmeal box turned out to have lots of different things to stir and it was a major taste treat for the majority of the group.

The halls and conference room became our second classrooms on cold wet days as we divided the group for small group activities. The ride-on cars got a lot of use. Abby and Alfred set up some really great gross motor games and obstacle courses. A favorite was a jumping set-up into the ball pit. On sunny milder days we bundled up and took walks or went out back to the playground. The ice made it even harder than usual to maneuver, but our little guys got around, all the way over to the sandbox, where some of them mixed snow and sand into a marvelous mixture.



Gross motor indoor play

Fantastic Foods ahead!

Coming up this month is a focus on nutrition. At this age we start to talk about growing foods and we explore new and different fruits and vegetables by peeling, chopping, mashing, tasting and smelling “fantastic foods.” We learn words to name and describe them all.

If you have some family favorites you would like to share with the Younger Toddlers we would be glad for donations, whether pineapple, peas, or something more exotic. It would be nice to have something different for everybody to try every day of Nutrition Month. On certain days we will also have heartier foods in the sensory table and house corner for full toddler examination. We will also do a taste/smell game.

Sometimes children will try foods they wouldn't ordinarily try if they see others enjoying them. Last year we converted some non-raw veggie lovers to broccoli, red peppers, and cucumber. A thing to remember with your picky eater is that a food has to be introduced over and over before it may seem acceptable (experts say it may take 10-13 tries to develop a taste for something that seems initially distasteful).

March activities will also feature the color green and the oval/egg shape.

EL2-Older Toddlers 257-2101

el2@winstonprouty.org

Melissa Wood Ext. 17
 Sherri Keefe
 Norma Manning
 Sandy Wyckoff

News from the Older Toddler Room

February was such a short month! It was full of lots and lots of snow! Some of the things that we worked on for February were indoor gross motor activities, math concepts, and an exploration of Social Emotional curriculum.



Making Valentine's Day paintings

Indoor Gross Motor Activities

In February the environment didn't always cooperate for outdoor time so we had to be very creative in ways to help the students get their energy out. We made obstacle courses with the students. These obstacle courses targeted many skills. One of the skills was problem solving. The students were very active in helping to design the courses. They would often try different configurations but most of them liked the "running part" of the course. Another skill that the obstacle courses help to develop is the children's sense of balance. The balance beam was one of the favorite things for them to work with. They would make it thick and short or long and twisty. They really liked the challenge of crossing the beams with "no help"!



Playing Musical Chairs

Math

Developing mathematical concepts in young learners is really important because it helps to build their problem solving skills. We continued to use the calendar as a medium to explore math. We explored the days of the week and talked about today, tomorrow, and yesterday. We talked about if today is Monday then what will tomorrow be?

We also continued our exploration of counting. We would count all the days of the month. Most of the students can count to 10! They need some support after 10. We continued our exploration of ABAB patterns. It is so fun to hear the students act out the pattern and then see the pride on their faces when they realize what comes next.

Social-Emotional Curriculum

One of the most important elements of a toddler curriculum is the exploration of social-emotional issues. The students at this age are learning many things about how to interact in their world. They are learning how to resolve conflict and we offer strategies for them to be as independent as they can be in solving conflict. Some of the specific strategies that we encourage them to use are assertiveness, independence, using their words, asking for adult intervention when needed, and calming strategies.

Fortunately, this age group gives us lots of material to learn from! We are trying to empower the students to be their own advocate when something occurs that they don't like. We give them words so hopefully they are able to problem solve with words and not their bodies, although sometimes bodies are used. We do our best to keep everyone safe, but most importantly this is a learning opportunity for all. We use our circle time to discuss ways to solve conflict and also as a practice opportunity for using our words. Another element of problem solving is being able to self-regulate. We help the students to find ways to calm down like breathing techniques, counting, and walking away. Our social-emotional curriculum is an ongoing process and is something that we work on every day!



Strolling with baby dolls



A young artist at work

March Preview

For March we will begin to explore feelings more in depth. Children at this age are so passionate and have such strong feelings so it is important for us to give them language and examples to help them identify their feelings.

We will also begin our exploration of spring!!! We will do some planting and explore how things grow. Please check the Wish List on page 11 if you would like to donate some things to support our March learning.

EL3-Preschool 257-2101

pre@winstonprouty.org

Ana Williams Ext. 22
Robert Havens

Lynne Call Ext. 18
Lisa Gartner
Jesus Acosta-Hughes

News from the Preschool

Thank You

A special “Thank You” to Daisy’s mom, Elizabeth, for helping to make Valentine cards and decorations! It was wonderful to have her at our circle to share the fun with the preschool class. “Thank You” to the MacDonalds for a bag of potting soil.



“Sharing the Love” on Valentine’s Day

Curriculum News

At the end of last month, the children were beginning to explore dogs. This carried into the new month. The dramatic play area became a home for dogs. This play quickly turned into veterinarian play. Children took turns playing the vets. There were several children who just wanted to be the dogs! There were a great deal of sick dogs. Some of the children built dog pounds (out of blocks) for the children who chose to be the dogs. It was wonderful to see the children work together and use each others talents. We explored vaccinations and flea collars. Several of the children have dogs so they were able to add their expertise to the play! The “dog doctor” play then emerged into playing “doctor.” The dramatic play area then became a doctor’s office. There were magazines for the

waiting room, medical kits for the doctors, and books about our bodies. Children were coming in for broken arms, legs and the occasional head injury. During story time, we read books about going to the doctor’s office. The children were quite interested about the examination part of the visit and then the “sticker/ lollipop” part!



Listening with the stethoscope

During this time, we invited Ani to our circle time and she shared about her baby. The children were very interested. The girls asked questions relating to when Ani was going to have her baby. One child asked if she was going to be able to hold the baby the next day. Several of the boys thought it was “disgusting” that her belly was big. We discussed how everyone had been a tiny baby in their mothers. Then Ani shared her ultrasound pictures of Lilly with the class. We hung them up in the doctor’s office and placed babies in the area. Then the news of Ani having her baby was exciting. We can’t wait for pictures!



Ani visits the classroom

We also had several conversations about the tooth fairy because one of our friends lost a tooth. This was quite

an interesting conversation; several of the children wondered why we had to lose our teeth.

Mid-month, some of the children became very interested in dinosaurs. This emerged into building dinosaur habitats, drawing dinosaurs and building the skeletal structure with paper-maché and popsicle sticks, and finally naming their personal dinosaurs! During circle time, we brainstormed different reasons for the extinction of dinosaurs. Some of the children hypothesized scientific theories, while others regurgitated dinosaur movies they had watched. It was a very interesting conversation; one in which everyone participated! We also watched a dinosaur egg hatch! This was very exciting for everyone. We placed a special egg in a bowl of water (green, just for the effect) and watched its progress until the baby dinosaur came out. This process took about three days. The children got so interested that we found dinosaur eggs (huge snowballs) outside and the children helped crack them open to see what kind of the dinosaurs were inside!



Making paper-maché dinosaurs

Science Area

The Science Area has become the Dinosaur Mountain. We have a very nice display of dinosaurs and their prehistoric environment. Since dinosaurs are both part of the history and science world, it seemed only natural that we'd make the science area reflect this curriculum project. The fish tank has moved to the window sill and Moshi (our surviving goldfish) is quite happy there! The children also can see Moshi much better.

Vacation and Beach Party

In the playroom, the question was posed, "What should we do with the kitchen corner?" The children then discussed what they could put in the area, others discussed how they wanted to go on vacation. The vacation idea snowballed into getting a suitcase and having the children pack clothes for their vacation!

Eventually, everyone was going to the beach, somewhere warm. This idea of the beach emerged into a Beach Party! The children helped make palm trees for both classrooms. They made leis for the party, created a huge sun mural and went fishing on a boat. Since children spend time in both classrooms, the themes began to merge, and Beach Party was born! We had our beach party on a cold snowy day! The children wore bathing suits and pretended to sun and surf. We made a fruit salad with mangoes, bananas, pineapple, coconuts, papaya, and kiwi. The children helped crack the coconut open and tried the milk. Everyone tried it, but only one child really enjoyed the flavor. Everyone loved the mangoes and the pineapple. Overall, it was a nice ending to our month!



Beach Party!

Question of the Day

Here are some answers to our questions...

What makes us sick?

"Germs can make us sick...good germs and bad germs"

"Germs can get in your nose"

"Much older people can get sick"

Who is the Tooth Fairy?

"Tooth fairies are tiny and quiet. They take teeth and put them in their pockets. They have pockets and baskets."

"A boy. He takes your tooth and gives you a dollar."

"There is a girl and a boy and they can fly."

What do we eat at the beach?

"Gummies"

"Chicken nuggets"

"Coconuts"

What do we find at the beach?

"Garbage"

"Sharks and octopus"

"Fishing boats"

Afternoon Program

Kate Holdsworth
Alfred Hughes, Jr.
Jesus Acosta-Hughes

News from the Afternoon Program

Konichiwa (“Good Day” in Japanese) from the Afternoon Program!

The Afternoon Program globe trotters have said “Zai jian” (“Goodbye”) to their tour of China and have packed their bags for Japan.

We have begun to record our travels on a map that is posted in the classroom (It’s marked “Where in the World is Sanchez and the Afternoon Crew?”). The children are enjoying looking at the length of red string that represents our flight path and the sticker dots that denote our current destination.



Another form of documentation for our travels that is currently displayed in the classroom for you and your child to look at and discuss is a reflective chart that is completed at the end of each trip. Children enjoy recalling their favorite activities, stories, and learned vocabulary during afternoon tea. We create a color coded chart with a square for each child, corresponding with their favorite activity. The overwhelming favorite from our China excursion, incidentally, was making rat masks in celebration of Chinese New Year.

Traveling to Japan has been a seamless transition for

our tour group—as one of the children remarked: “They use chopsticks there, too!” This cultural immersion has allowed everyone with the opportunity to compare and celebrate the similarities in tradition and embrace and further understand the differences in world cultures. One of the new things that we have been introducing in conjunction with our exploration of Japanese culture is the world tradition of oral storytelling. The children are still talking about the story of Momotaro (“The Baby Born from a Peach”) and his adventure to the Island of Ogres that was recited to them over the course of several days—building auditory memory skills. We also created large scale illustrations for the story that the group had an opportunity to add to/color and puppets to interact with. The story of Momotaro really seems to have impressed some of the children—as they have now made it their own in acting out new adventures as part of dramatic play: “Mommy, you be the ogre eating all the trees...”

Other items on the docket for this trip include: Samurai masks, painting obi sashes, kimono fittings, shadow puppets, playdough sushi, origami, and, more chopstick practice!

We hope that you and your child are enjoying this program as much as we are and that you spend time revisiting their journey of cultural experiences and activities by looking through their paper suitcase portfolios filled with souvenirs and art projects.

Please feel free to join us for afternoon tea (at 4:15 pm daily) and share in the fun!



Sayonara!

Family Infant Toddler 258-2414

FIT@winstonprouty.org

Joanne Shaw
Martha Healey-Nelson
Mary Coogan
Cathy Siggins
Katherine Hallock



News from FIT

We are excited to welcome Kathy Hallock back from her maternity leave! Her help is especially welcome, as we are busier than ever with referrals, evaluations, documentation and report writing, community outreach, collaborative meetings, and of course, developmental therapy visits with young children and their families in homes and early education programs all over Windham County.

We are looking for a volunteer to spend two hours helping us to assemble information packets; please contact Joanne Shaw if you might be interested in helping with this!

We are also seeking donations of gently used or new infant toys for families in our program to keep for their children's learning opportunities at home. Thanks!

News from the Winston Prouty Parent Advisory Committee

WPPAC Committee Members

Renee Woliver Libby Beecher Justine Lyford Jen Anderson
Kiera King Deb Heller Susan Heimer Chloe Learey

Several families attended the **PJs and Popcorn Movie Night** on Thursday, February 21. A big "thank you" to Kiera King for all her hard work to make the movie night a success. The next event will be a clothing swap with a bake sale. We will keep you posted as to when the event will happen.

Administration 257-7852

Chloe Learey
Executive Director Ext. 11
chloe@winstonprouty.org

Patricia Field
Business Director Ext. 25
pat@winstonprouty.org

Ann Linge
Office Manager Ext. 10
ann@winstonprouty.org

Ariani (Ani) Szykier
Documentation Coordinator Ext. 21
ariani@winstonprouty.org

News from the Office

We are now preparing for fall enrollment. Re-enrollment packets will be mailed the first week of March and will be due back to Pat by **March 24**. We appreciate your quick response.

You may qualify for Low Income Child and Dependent Care Tax Benefits from both the federal government and the State of Vermont. This could mean a significant tax credit on your return. More information is available in the Front Office.

Our lively volunteer Dora celebrated her 85th birthday on February 20. She was inadvertently left off of last month's calendar. We wish you continued health and happiness, Dora!



Dora

INCLEMENT WEATHER REMINDER:
Don't forget to tune into WTSA 96.7 FM, 1450 AM, online at www.wtsa.net OR WKVT 92.7 FM, 1490 AM, OR online at www.wkvt.com for Center closings or delays.

WELCOME, LILLY!

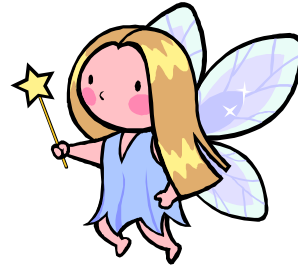
The newest addition to the Winston Prouty family is Lilly Szykier, who was born on Monday, February 18 at 9:11 am, measuring in at 5 pounds and 17 inches.



What a cutie!!



We are pleased to announce that the Center has received 4 Stars from the **STep Ahead Recognition System!** This system is a Vermont initiative that recognizes and rewards child care providers for program quality.



Center Wish List

Your donations may be counted towards Parent Participation hours.

Younger Toddlers

- ☞ Toy vehicles of all sizes
- ☞ Quality board books
- ☞ Jazz, Classical, and World Music CDs
- ☞ Dress-up clothes

Older Toddlers

- ☞ Seeds, like grass and clover
- ☞ Potting soil
- ☞ Potting containers

Preschool

- ☞ Seeds (veggie, fruit, flower)
- ☞ Planting supplies (child-sized hand tools, starter trays)
- ☞ Potting soil
- ☞ Couscous (for sensory table)

Information Corner



March is National Nutrition Month!

National Nutrition Month® is an annual nutrition education and information campaign created by the American Dietetic Association. The campaign is designed to focus attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. NNM also promotes ADA and its members to the public and the media as the most valuable and credible source of timely, scientifically-based food and nutrition information (<http://www.eatright.org>).

Prouty and Nutrition

We strongly believe in promoting good nutritional habits at Prouty, and follow guidelines from NAEYC and licensing in providing healthy snacks in our program.

Lunch time provides a great opportunity to talk about the various foods children bring in from home, and there is often good sharing and learning that happens. We do not want to spend lunch time policing children's eating, however; we believe that if parents have packed food in a

child's lunch, it is okay for the child to eat the food that is available to them. If you have particular concerns about how your child is eating at school, please take time to communicate with your child's classroom teacher and collaborate about how we can best support good nutritional habits that are consistent with your approach at home. The rise of childhood obesity has made headlines in the past couple of years, and we want to do all we can to help avert this epidemic.



Early Childhood Day at the Legislature

Friday, March 14, 2008
Capitol Plaza Hotel and Vermont State House

Join parents, early childhood practitioners and policymakers in advancing 2008 early childhood legislative priorities through a day of legislative updates, advocacy speakers, legislative lunch and work sessions.

10:30-11:30 Keynote Address by Mary Ignatius, Statewide Organizer from Parent Voices

1:15-3:00 *The Powerful Voice of Parents:* Brainstorming projects that empower mothers and fathers to take action on early care and education



March Birthdays, Holidays, and Center Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Brooke turns 4!
2	3 Olivia L. turns 4! 4:30 pm Taste Mtg	4	5	6	7	8
9  Change your clocks one hour ahead!	10 Sarah turns 4!	11	12	13	14 Early Childhood Day	15
16	17 Happy St. Patrick's Day! 4:30 pm Taste Mtg 5:30 pm Board Mtg	18	19	20 Happy Birthday Alfred!  1 st Day of Spring	21	22
23 	24 Re-enrollment packets due back to Pat	25	26	27	28 In-Service Center Closed	29 Sid turns 5!
30	31 Carlos turns 3! 4:30 pm Taste Mtg					