

# March / April 2016

## Newsletter

Alpha Child  
Care Ltd.



### Word From The Office

The spring season is just around the corner and mother nature has been very nice to us as we have only experienced a few cold days during the winter months.

On **Thursday March 10th**, our Preschool children over the age of 3 will be going on a field trip to the Kortwright Centre. Please look for notificatoins in the cubby area for further instructions and permission forms to be filled out. We are always in need of volunteers and appreciate you taking the day off work and helping Alpha maintain a 1 to 4 ratio, so the children are travelling in small groups and keeping safe. Without your help, field trips would not be possible so thank you again for those who will be volunteering.

March Break is just a few weeks away and our spots are filling up quickly. If you have not registered yet please speak to Jennifer Nikolauo, RECE, Assistant Supervisor and your Camp Leader for more information or

please see me in the office for further details. Alpha ensures our camp week is filled with lots of fun and exciting activities for the children to enjoy themselves during their week out of school.

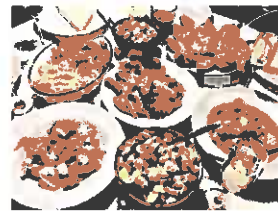
**March 21st - March 24** is Parent Appreciation Week. Be on the look out for special gifts and little tokens of appreciation that the staff and children will be providing to you. Friday we will also have a continental breakfast in our staff room, so don't forget to stop in and grab a quick bite before you head off to work.

**Thursday March 24th**, Alpha will be having their Annual Easter Luncheon in the large School Age room. All the children and staff will be eating together and Faye will be busy preparing a fabulous ham lunch for all of us to enjoy with scallop potatoes and a vegetarian dish for those with food

restrictions.

Alpha will be closed on **Friday March 25th** for Good Friday and will returning to regular operating hours on **Monday March 28th** (Easter Monday). This day is also a PA Day for both school boards and stay tuned for the announcement of the upcoming day trip. Please also, inform Patricia if your child will not be attending or Alpha will automatically assume you will be attending and charge the appropriate fees.

There will also be another PA Day on **Monday April 11th**. This was an added day to the school year therefore it is not listed on the School Board School Year Calendar. Again the trip will be announced shortly as to what the children will be doing.



**Thursday April 21st** Alpha will be hosting their annual Pot Luck Dinner at 6:15pm in the School

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### Dates to Remember:

**Thurs Mar 10th** - Preschool Trip to Kortwright Centre

**Mar 14 - 18** - March Break Camp for School Agers

**Mar 21 - 24** - Parent Appreciation Week

**Thurs Mar 24th** - Easter Luncheon at 11:30am

**Fri Mar 25th** - Good Friday Alpha Closed

**Mon Mar 28th** - Easter Monday

PA Day for both Public and Catholic School Boards (TBA)

**Tues Mar 28th** - Picture Day 9am sharp

**Fri Mar 31** - Hop-A-Thon fundraiser

**Mon Apr 11** - PA Day for both Public and Catholic School Boards

**Thurs Apr 21** - Alpha's Annual Pot Luck Dinner at 6:15pm

## Junior Toddlers

Hello to all of our Alpha Families! Welcome to the month of March/April. We would like to take this time to welcome Nathanael, Zayne, Mason, Ayden, and Khizar to our Toddler classroom along with their parents. It is great to have you all join our Alpha family.

During these past two months the weather has been up and down and we know that it is the time of year that the children get sick often, so we ask to please always have all your children's winter clothes at the childcare because we do go outside if the weather permits. The temperature for our Toddlers to stay indoors during the winter is -10 degrees or colder.

The past month we have been encouraging our Toddlers to do more things independently. For example trying to eat all by themselves, take off and put on their indoor shoes, wash and dry their hands and to also try to walk up and down the

stairs with little assistance. We ask the Toddler parents to please be consistent by helping your child practice at home.

As you know the month of March is well known for St. Patrick's Day or also known as St. Paddy's Day! Every year on March 17<sup>th</sup>, the Irish and the Irish- at- heart across the globe celebrate Saint Patrick's Day. What began as a religious feast day for the patron saint of Ireland has become an international festival celebrating Irish culture with parades, dancing, special foods, and a whole lot of green. St. Patrick's Day is a public holiday in the republic of Ireland, and the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador. It is widely celebrated by the Irish around the world as well, especially in Great Britain, the United States, Argentina, Australia, and New Zealand.



"For each petal on the shamrock this brings a wish your way. Good health, good luck, and happiness for today and everyday".

Thank you once again to all the Alpha Families and do not forget to wear green on this date, March 17<sup>th</sup>! Good- bye for now, until next time.

*The Toddler Classroom, teachers Chrissy and Nancy*



## Senior Toddlers

Welcome to the months of March and April! We hope everyone had an excellent month of February and enjoyed delicious treats and delivering cards on Valentine's Day, as well as spending time with their families on Family Day.

In the months of March and April, we will be focusing on our on going self-help skills, which includes potty training. This self-help skill can be very challenging for some children, and requires effort from everyone to master.



Here are some tips to recognize when your child is ready:

- If your child can follow simple instructions.
- If your child can walk to and from the bathroom.

- If your child seems uncomfortable with a soiled diaper.
- If your child asks to use the toilet.
- If your child stays dry at least 2 hours at a time during the day, or is dry after naps.
- Bowel movements become regular and predictable.

- Facial expressions and postures reveal that he/she is about to urinate or have a bowel movement.

As a friendly reminder to parents, please do not forget to send lots of extra clothes including socks and an extra pair of shoes when your child is potty training – as accidents happen, and practice makes perfect!

In April, the children will be excited and waiting patiently for Easter, and for the Easter Bunny to deliver lots

of goodies! Participating in fun Easter games and activities will also be exciting events that the children look forward to! Here are some great DIY crafts and at-home activities that parents can help out with:

### Eggheads with Cress Hair

This activity is one that children will love to do every year! Starting this activity 4-5 days before Easter will allow you to have them ready for the Easter weekend – which you can then snip off to enjoy with an egg sandwich!

### **Materials:**

Empty egg shells (try to break off the top to empty them), felt pens, stick-on googly eyes, cotton wool, cress seeds, an empty egg carton.

### **Instructions:**

1. Wash out the egg shells and sit

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## Senior Toddlers cont'd

(Continued from page 2)

- them in the egg carton to keep them steady (on a cotton wool cushion to raise them up a bit if you need to).
2. Draw on some crazy faces, and stick on the googly eyes. You could create self-portraits or funny faces.
  3. Place some cotton wool inside the shells and dampen them with some water.
  4. Sprinkle cress seeds all over the cotton wool – remember: good coverage will give you a full head of hair.
  5. Place them near a windowsill and wait for the hair to sprout – it should only take a couple of days.
  6. Add a little bit of water if the cotton wool begins to dry out.

This activity can also be done using grass seeds – which will allow you to give your egg heads a haircut and restyle it once it grows back!

### Jelly Bean Engineering

Encouraging creativity in and outside the classroom is important for the growth and development of all children. This activity allows children to become engineers by using a simple (but delicious) material that will allow them to create structures of all shapes and heights!

#### Materials:

Jelly Beans, toothpicks.

#### Instructions:

1. Assist your child in creating shapes and structures by using one jelly bean to attach 2 or 3

toothpicks together.

2. Join the toothpicks and jelly beans together to create 3-dimensional shapes, towers, and buildings!

### Wobbly Easter Egg Ramp Races

This simple, yet fun activity allows children to race plastic eggs down ramps constructed out of cardboard. Making different sized ramps with varying lengths and widths will allow your child to explore the speeds at which the eggs roll down. They may even decide to combine ramps to make long paths throughout a living space!

#### Materials:

Wobbly plastic eggs, cardboard, scissors.

#### Instructions:

1. Using scissors, begin to cut recycled cardboard into various sizes, be sure to keep the length much longer than the width, keeping in mind the cardboard will be resting on a couch or chair.
2. Folding up each side will allow the egg to remain on the ramp without sliding off. You can let your children decorate the ramps using crayons or markers, adding a start or finish line onto the ramp.
3. Lean the cardboard up against a piece of furniture, and have your children let the eggs slide from the very top of the ramp. Remember to use thick cardboard, as long pieces may bend in the middle – if this happens, ask your children how to fix this issue. You may be

surprised at the problem solving techniques they come up with!

4. Use a variety of materials found around the house to race against the eggs, such as mini cars, buttons, small plastic lids, etc.

### Active Egg Hunt

With older kids, a classic egg hunt might be active enough if you challenge them with finishing times, quantities collected, or even make it a race. Obviously, only you know if your kids are ready to handle a little friendly competition, and if they are, it's a great way to intensify the egg hunt.



### Bunny Hop

Have a dance party. Whether you're at a big family gathering or it's just you and your kids, there's nothing like some good old-fashioned dancing. Turn on some favourite tunes and everyone can show off their best moves.

### Leap Frog/Bunny

Leapfrog is always a fun family game. Pretending to be bunnies instead of frogs makes it perfect for Easter.

No matter what you do for Easter, be sure to spend some quality time with your family and friends! Have a Happy Easter!

*Kulvinder and the Senior Toddlers*

## Word From The Office cont'd

(Continued from page 1)

Age Classroom. Please look out for class lists as to what you will be bringing and how many will be attending. Each classroom will be responsible to provide the following dish;

- **Jr. Toddlers:** Salads and Appetizers
- **Sr. Toddlers and School Ageds:** Desserts
- **Preschool/Kindergarten:** Entrees.

You are more than welcome to bring any dish that you

would like, this is just to ensure we have an even mixture of food choices. We hope to see you all there as this is another event to meet families and get to know your child's educator and most of all to enjoy a fun and relaxing evening with the Alpha family.

Until next time, my door is always open  
**Patricia Andrade RECE**  
Supervisor

## Preschool/Kindergarten

Welcome to the month of March and April. Winter is almost gone and we are ready for spring.

Preschoolers are now serving themselves during snack and lunch times and they are becoming more confident doing this everyday. Serving themselves support the development of their social skills, they are learning communication skills and turn taking. They are passing bowls of food, receiving bowls of food from others and they are communicating with others. When we allow them to serve themselves they also develop fine motor skills while serving with tongs, practicing skills of balancing serving containers while they pass food to others. We allow them to determine how much food to put on their plates and provide them guidance about appropriate amounts. This is the best practice for their development during meal time.

Here are some activities to do with your child during March Break. Check out these easy recycled crafts you can make with your kids using stuff you already have around the house.



### Making crafts from recycled materials

"Art-making is mostly about problem-solving, so using found materials becomes more challenging and therefore more creative. In some cases, when you buy art materials, the uses are spelled out, cookie-cutter." Ideally, she says, using a combination of both bought and found objects is best.

### **Stocking up for simple kids' crafts**

So what supplies should you have on hand and which should you purchase? According to Stanley, a

well-stocked art box includes white glue, glue sticks, scissors, pencils, erasers, coloured pencils, markers, a basic paint set (at least the primary colours in acrylic or tempera), paintbrushes, an X-acto knife, glue gun and construction paper. You could also add bristol board, black Sharpies or felt-tip pens (thick and fine), as well as scrapbooking paper.

Items to collect around the house are endless, but a good start includes recyclables, such as paper towel and toilet paper rolls, newspapers, magazines, boxes, packing materials, egg and milk cartons, and plastic containers. Some useful kitchen goodies are food colouring, salt, flour, foil, wax paper and plastic wrap. Add to those fabric, buttons, wire, tissue and wrapping paper, old cards, and gift boxes and bags.

### **Simple kids' crafts you can do at home**

**1. Shadow-box:** One of Stanley's favourite projects to make with items found around the house is an "all-about-me shadow box." "It's super fun and easy, and kids love it," she says. Paint the outside of a solid gift box (lid not required), then cover the inside with wallpaper, wrapping paper, photos, knickknacks, mementos, little toys – anything that says a lot about a person – and affix them in place with hot glue (mom's job). Hang it on the wall or sit it upon a desk or dresser.

**2. Outdoor paint:** Fill an empty honey or mustard container with water and food colouring, then "paint" the snow in your backyard.

**3. Rocket power:** Tape two toilet paper rolls on either side of a plastic soda bottle and wrap the entire thing in foil. Add embellishments like orange tissue paper to the bottom of the toilet paper rolls, or add the bottom of a yogurt container

for a window and a couple of buttons for the astronauts' faces.

**4. Totem pole:** Collect boxes of similar widths. Using papier-mache (newspaper, flour and water), design a face on the top of each box. When dry, paint the boxes in bright colours, then stack one on top of the other to create a totem pole.

**5. Holiday cards:** Cut similarly themed (red and green for Christmas, pastels for Easter, orange and black for Halloween) pieces of tissue paper, wrapping paper, fabric, old cards, magazines or gift bags into various small shapes. Glue them haphazardly or mosaic-style onto card stock for one-of-a-kind mailings.

**6. All wrapped up:** Lay out long sheets of packing paper – or scrap paper for smaller gifts – then paint a sheet of bubble wrap (bubble side up) in various colours and lay it over the paper, press and lift. Make other designs with corks, cookie cutters, tin cans and plastic bottle caps.

**7. What's in a name?:** Cut the letters of a child's name out of stiff cardboard, then wrap them in complementary fabric, wallpaper or wrapping paper. Secure each letter to a wide length of ribbon with tape then string the banner across a bedroom wall.

**8. Bright light:** Glue pieces of torn or cut tissue paper onto a clean glass jar with a wide opening and layer them as you go. When the jar is covered to your liking, use Mod Podge over the entire outer surface. (Mod Podge is an all-in-one glue, sealer and varnish available at craft stores.) Place a candle inside for a colourful glow.

*Marie, Gagan, Bhupinder and Preschoolers*

## School Agers

Spring is arriving School Agers! We are all very excited to say good bye to the cold and hello to the warm spring sun.



Our School Agers have been practicing their independent work skills through our quiet reading and homework time in the School Age room. They are making considerable efforts to respect their fellow students during this time and have been rewarded by the return of Electronic Fridays. We have added Electronic Fridays to the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of each month. Students are invited to bring their own electronic device to ALPHA that day to use at their leisure. Please be sure these devices and games are age appropriate and without the encouragement of violence as we discourage this at ALPHA. On these special days a movie or gaming system will also be provided for the class to use as not all children have access to these mobile devices.

We have re-established the practice of group circle time weekly on

We're on the web  
[www.alphachildcare.ca](http://www.alphachildcare.ca)

Thursdays. Group circle is a vital opportunity for each individual to practice listening to others and be heard by others. Conversing with peers and adults can help increase self-confidence as well as encourages listening to others, empathizing and take another's point of view. Each child is given their opportunity to be heard. We base these group circles around areas of interest for the children as well as events and issues that must be discussed throughout the year. Children may also make requests or suggestions if there are items they would like to discuss in these group settings.

A couple of events we will be discussing this spring are EARTH HOUR and EARTH DAY. Earth Hour is an annual global campaign. This event is held on the last Saturday of March each year. Annually on this date people are asked if possible to switch off lights at homes and businesses for an hour from 8:30pm – 9:30pm local time. We will

honour this event with a "Lights Out" day of OUR OWN

EARTH DAY PROMOTES ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AND CALLS FOR THE PROTECTION OF OUR PLANET



in March (flashlights will be available).

EARTH DAY is a name given to 2 similar global observations. Some celebrate Earth Day around the time of the *March Equinox* (when the sun shines directly on the equator and the length of the night and day are nearly equal), others observe the occasion on April 22 each year. This event was founded by Senator Gaylord Nelson and was first organized in 1970 to promote ecology, respect for life, and awareness of the growing problems surrounding water, air and soil pollutions. On April 22<sup>nd</sup> around the world you can join in celebrations such as tree planting, picking up roadside trash, conducting various programs for recycling and conservation, using recyclable containers for snacks and lunches or signing petitions to governments asking for stronger or immediate action to stop global warming and to reverse environmental destruction.

*Jennifer and School Agers*

## Word From The Manager

In 2014 the Ministry of Education came out with a new Child Care and Early Years Act 2014. This has replaced the Day Nursery Act which all child care centres must follow. A lot of changes have been made to this act and I thought that it would be beneficial to share some of these changes with you as they might affect you as a parent.

The first change that the Ministry of Education is proposing is to change the way in which child care centres renew their licenses. Right now the

Ministry of Education makes annual visits to each child care centre every year to ensure that they are in compliance with all the regulations as set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act 2014. Under the new act they are proposing that each child care centre be placed into one of three 'tiers' depending on its compliance history over the past three years, including the number and risk level of non-compliances and whether the ministry issued any enforcement actions (provisional licenses, license suspensions,

compliance orders, admin penalties). Centres with consistent high levels of compliances over the past three years will be eligible for a 2 year license and receive an abbreviated license renewal inspection every other year but will receive an interim monitoring visit during the two year period. Centres with low or moderate number of non-compliances over the past 3-years but have not been in receipt of ministry enforcement actions will receive abbreviated annual license

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## Word From The Manager cont'd

*(Continued from page 5)*

renewal inspections. Centres experiencing difficulty meeting provincial licensing standards over 3 years will receive a full license renewal inspection every year. I feel that this change needs to have some sort of guidelines attached to it in order to ensure that all centres remain in compliance throughout a two year period if they were to receive a two year license. Such changes as a supervisor change especially if the supervisor is new to the role of managing the day to day operation of a centre. This is a situation that would need the centre's then to have an annual visit by the program advisor every year for the next three years to ensure that the new supervisor has the knowledge and support that they will need to operate their centre. Another situation that could be written as a guideline that would require an annual renewal is if the centre all of sudden starts having numerous preventable serious occurrences. This would be an indicator or a red flag that something has happened in the way a centre is being run.

The second change the Ministry is proposing is changing the age groupings in each of the child age classifications to the following:

Existing Age Groupings	Proposed Age Grouping
Infants 1 -18 months	0 – 12 months
Toddler 18 months – 2.5 years	12 months to 24 months
Preschool 2.5 years to 5 years	24 months – 5 years

If these age groups are changed to what is proposed this would mean that a 12 month old could technically be in the same group as a 2 year old. Configuring in the factor of a 20% mixed age grouping this age could be as young as a ten months old in the same classroom as a 24 month old. As an experienced

Early Childhood Educator this is a very dangerous situation as some 12 month olds are not walking yet or are just in the beginning stages of walking and they will be in the same classroom as 24 month olds who are very busy children exploring their

***We really encourage you to write a letter expressing your concerns to these changes before April 1, 2016 as that is the deadline to respond to this new part of the Act.***

environment. This is an accident waiting to happen. The developmental level between these two ages is hugely different and would be very difficult for the educators in the classroom to offer quality care that would meet such a wide developmental difference. A more reasonable age range for a toddler group would be fifteen months to twenty six months as this would narrow the developmental gap between the children that could possibly be in the toddler age group. If this were to be done then a preschooler age range would also be narrowed enabling educators to better meet the developmental needs of the children, therefore being able to offer quality care. If the changes remain as indicated in a preschool classroom you could technically find a twenty four month old with a five year old depending on the semantics' of the centre. Once

again as an Early Childhood Educator this age range of possibly a three year range of needs would be very difficult to meet. It would mean more crowd control versus spending quality time helping your child develop their skills, not to mention the potential escalation in behavior within the said group of children. It also could mean that a

22 month old could be in the same room as a 5 year old. Again this presents a safety concern of the older five year old causing the twenty two month old to get hurt.

Third change that has been indicated is the maximum group size that the different age groups can have at any one time and the ratios of educators to children.

Infants will change from a 1:3 ratio maximum ten children within the group to 1:3 with a maximum of 9 children in a group. This would mean that Alpha would have one less infant spot available to parents who require infant care. As a parent with an infant this would mean that you would have an even harder time trying to find space for your infant as infant care is not offered by a lot of centres and those of us who do will have even longer wait lists. Toddlers would change from a one to five ratio maximum fifteen children to a ratio of a one to four with a maximum of twelve children. This means a decrease of three toddlers in each of Alpha's toddler programs. Preschool ratios and group sizes remain the same of a one to eight ratio with a maximum of 24 children in a group. If these changes were to take place, Alpha could possible lose ten licensed spots, this could be the potential loss of over \$150,000 in revenue over a year which in turn would be passed on to you the parent through a huge increase to our fee structure.

Changing the age of this category to twenty four months also present the possible scenario that an educator could technically be left alone with twelve 24 months old children when the ratio is reduced to 2/3 at the beginning and ends of day. Basically the Early Childhood Educator would be doing crowd control to ensure the safety of the children in their care. Again the quality of the program will suffer.

At the present time there is a 2/3 reduced ratios for two hours after

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## Word From The Manager cont'd

*(Continued from page 6)*

opening and two hour before closing and two hour over sleep time. Under the new legislative this reduced ratios will be eliminated at sleep time and will be reduced to one hour after opening and one hour before closing. Eliminating the reduced ratios over the sleep time and beginnings and ends of days would mean staff would be unable to take a lunch hour and would have to work longer hours in order to cover the beginnings and ends of days leading to a higher rate of burnout among the staff, leading to a lot of absenteeism among the staff which will make staffing inconsistent for the children.

The final change to the Child Care and Early Years Act is that the School Age program must have a thirty minute outdoor time weather permitting. I believe this is a really good change in that the children have been sitting all day long and need an outlet in order to release pent up energy and this half hour of outdoor time will meet this need in the school age children.

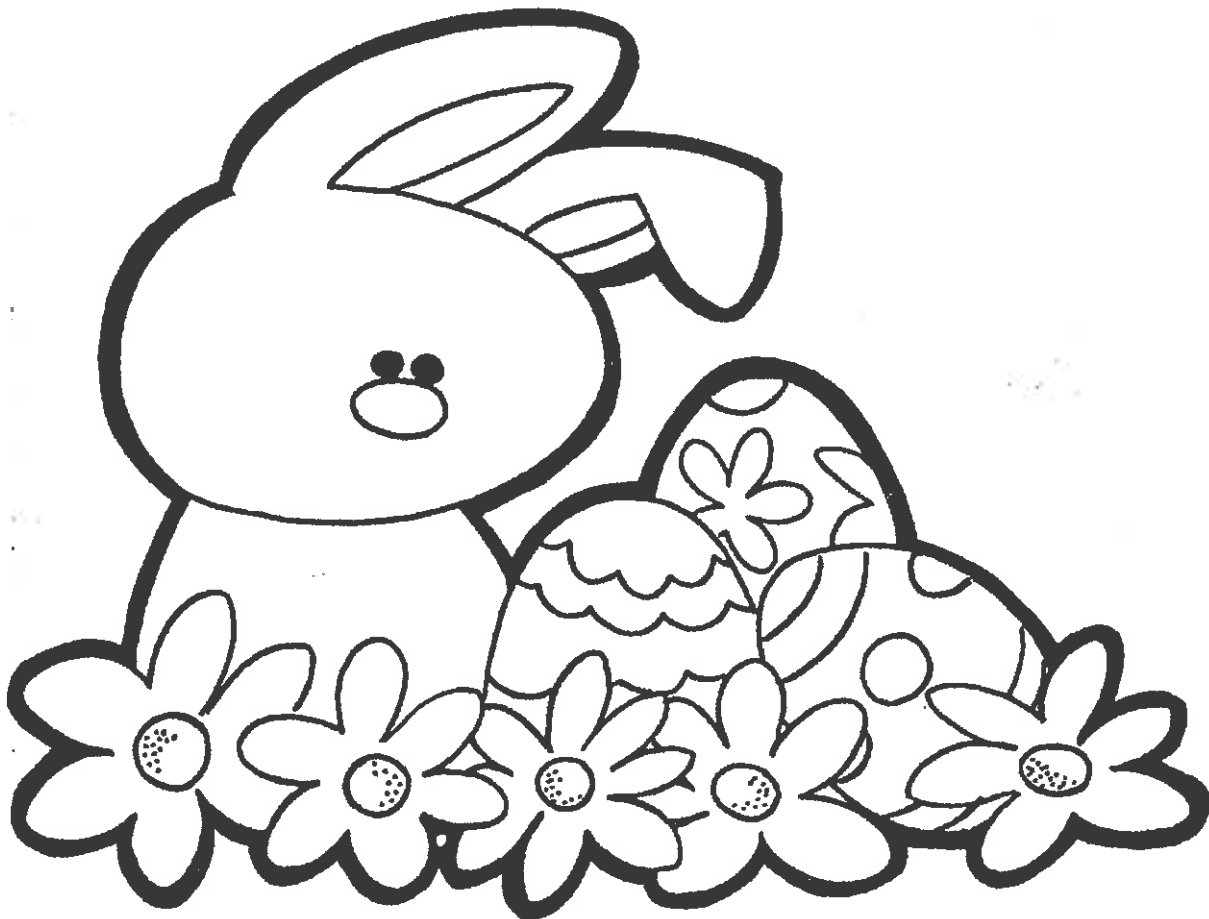
Hopefully this has been helpful in keeping you informed of what is going to be happening in the child care field. We really encourage you to write a letter expressing your concerns to these changes before April 1, 2016 as that is the deadline to respond to this new part of the Act. You can access the full document at <http://www.ontariocanada.com/registry/view.do?postingId=20628&language=en> and you can send your response to Early Years Division, Ministry of Education, 900 Bloor Street 24<sup>th</sup> Floor, Mowat Block, Toronto, Ont., M7A 1L2. Hopefully the more response the Ministry hears the more they will realize that some of these changes are not in the best interest of the children.

Until next time my door is always open









**Mary RECE, B.A.**

**Manager**

**[marys@alphachildcare.ca](mailto:marys@alphachildcare.ca)**

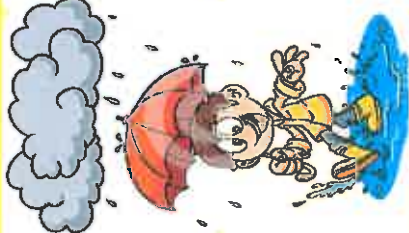
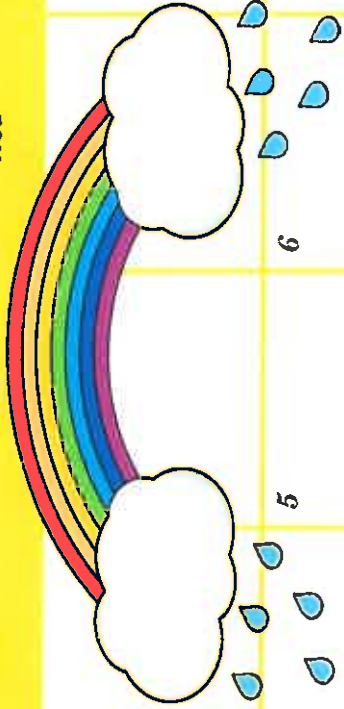





# March 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 Happy B'Day Ayden	Fees are Due Menu #4	1	2	3  Preschool Trip to Kortwright Centre	4	5 Happy B'Day Zion
6 Happy B'Day Ayden	7	8	9	10 Preschool Trip to Kortwright Centre	11	12 
13 Happy B'Day Jacob P.	14 Happy B'Day Patricia	15 Happy B'Day Ariel	16	17  St. Patrick's Day	18 Happy B'Day Aubree	19 Happy B'Day Bhupinder
20 	21 Fees are Due Menu #2	22 Happy B'Day Abby	23  Jennifer's 1st Anniversary with Alpha	24 Easter Luncheon 11:30am	25 Good Friday Alpha Closed	26 Happy B'Day Avid
27 	28 Easter Monday Fees are Due Menu #4	29 PICTURE DAY 9am	30  Anniversary with Alpha	31 Happy B'Day Aniyah		



# April 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 3	 4				 1 2	
10 Menu #1	11 Fees are Due Menu #2	12	13	14 Happy B'Day Samantha	15 16	
17	18 Menu #3	 19 20	21  22 23			
24 Happy B'Day Braeden	25 Fees are Due Menu #4	26 Happy B'Day Jacob S.	27 <small>photography</small>	28 29 Happy B'Day Gwyneth	30	