



January/February 2018

Word From The Office

Welcome family and friends into the new year of 2018. Hopefully everyone had a memorable year in 2017 and will make new memories this year.

The children did a phenomenal job performing their Christmas songs to their families. A lot of hard work and practice went into the show and the end result was a success. Thank you to all the parents who helped sing along and a special thank you to George Douglas who volunteered his time and shared his large speakers and equipment for the concert! The music in the background was very soothing and we enjoyed listening to the Christmas songs!

The weather has been pretty mild in December with only some days of frigid temperatures and we are encouraging parents to bring in appropriate clothing for your children. Hat, mittens (preferably 2 pairs), neck warmer, snow pants, boots and winter coat are to be brought in every morning and Alpha's educators will

decide on what items need to be worn, as some mornings are bitterly cold and in the afternoon not so much. Please ensure all items are labelled as items tend to be misplaced or out in other children's cubby areas in error. We will continue to teach your children how to put away their belongings in their own cubby area. We will also continue to encourage children to wear their mittens as often they are taken off as the children find it difficult to manipulate toys with bulky mittens/gloves on. Just a reminder to parents that Alpha considers outdoor play a part of our learning environment and that the children enjoy and appreciate their surroundings outdoors. The children will learn that when their mittens are off their fingers will get cold and in turn put their mittens on. The children do go outdoors and will be brought in once their cheeks look rosy and change into warm clothes once indoors.



For our Parent Advisory committee, January 18th will be our first meeting of the year and Thursday February 15th, 2018 will be our next meeting. Please notify Jennifer if you will or will not be attending and the meeting will begin at 6:30pm to 7:30pm.

Monday January 22nd will be a PA Day for both Public and Catholic School Boards and another PA Day will be held on Friday February 9th. We will keep you posted as to where and what the School Agers will be doing for the day. Please check out the wipe off board for any important messages from the School Age Educator, for any upcoming messages. Also please do not forget to inform Jennifer if your child will not be attending this day.

A two week notice must be given to Jennifer or Alpha will automatically assume your child will be attending and apply the appropriate rates.

Dates To Remember

Mon Jan 1st - New Year's Day Alpha Closed

Thurs Jan 18th - PAC Meeting (6:30pm - 7:30pm)

Mon Jan 22nd - PA Day Public and Catholic Schools (Trip TBA)

Jan 25th - Literacy Night 6pm - 7:30pm (Pizza will be provided)

Fri Feb 2nd - Children Observation Records (COR) go home to parents

Fri Feb 9th - PA Day for Public and Catholic Boards (Trip TBA)

Wed Feb 14th - Valentine's Day

Thurs Feb 18th - PAC Meeting 6:30pm - 7:30pm

Fri Feb 16th - Gong Hey Fat Choy (Happy Chinese New Year)

Mon Feb 19th - Family Day Alpha Closed

Fri Feb 23rd - Alpha's Annual Staff Awards Dinner closing at 6pm sharp

Word From The Office cont'd

areas that need to be worked on! If you have any questions please see Jennifer in the office for more information!

February 14th is Valentine's Day! It has evolved into an occasion in which lovers expressed their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering confectionery, and sending greeting cards. Not everyone is into this day, especially if you are single, but this day is a day to spend with your loved ones, and your children. If you're a lady, buy yourself a piece of jewelry or make an appointment for yourself at the spa! This is a day to celebrate you. People always say "Love others as you love yourself." It's okay to love yourself! So do it, in style. As for the single men, this is the

perfect opportunity to have fun too. Traditionally Valentine's Day is marketed towards women, but you can certainly lay claim. Go to a movie or sporting event with some

friends. You can also let the special women in your life (mothers, sisters, and friends) by treating them to a date and/or buying them flowers. Or show your friends and family how much you love them by sending cards or gifts. As a single person, you can make an enormous impact. Single or not enjoy your day and Happy Valentine's Day.

Friday February 16th, we will be celebrating the Chinese New Year and it is the year of the Dog. For those born in in the year of the monkey (1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004), 2016 is considered an auspicious year. For those celebrating this special event

please share with our educators and dress up for the event and help us participate with your culture. **Gong Hey Fat Choy!** The DOG is eleventh in the Chinese zodiac. Each year is related to an animal sign according to a 12-year cycle. Years of the Rooster include **1922, 1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006, 2018.** **Lucky Colors:** red, green and purple **Lucky Numbers:** 3, 4, 9 and numbers containing them (like 34, 49 etc). **Lucky Flowers:** rose, cymbidium orchids.

Monday February 19th is Family Day and Alpha will be closed. Extend your weekend with family and friends or just relax in your home environment.

On Friday February 24th Alpha will be hosting its annual Staff Awards Dinner and Alpha will be closing at 6pm sharp and not offer any late care for that evening. This is too ensure the educators have an opportunity to get ready and arrive on time to this special event. A few educators will be receiving some awards for reaching milestones and others will be receiving awards for leadership skills, most flexible, co-workers choice award etc. Alpha only hires the best of educators and we would like to express or appreciation through this event. Thank you for your support in ensuring the educators leave on time to prepare for an important night.

Until next time keep warm and my door is always open!

Jennifer Nikolaou RECE and
Patricia Andrade, RECE
patriciaa@alphachildcare.ca

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Thursday January 25th, Alpha will be hosting its Annual Literacy Night from 6pm - 7:30pm. Each classroom will be providing many different learning opportunities on how to incorporate literacy into your everyday lives. This event will allow families and children to get together and spend some quality time together. We will have a classroom that will have a book exchange, where the children can bring in a gently used book in exchange for a new book. There will be a craft room, a story telling room, a snack room and a sensory room. You don't want to miss out on this fun night and we hope to see you all there. A pizza night dinner will also be provided from 6pm to 6:30pm. Please look out for a sign up sheet outside your child's classroom door to ensure enough food and drinks are provided for the evening!



Friday February 2nd, your child's observation records will be sent home to you at the end of the day. Please read the letter that will be attached to the COR document. This will give you a very detailed outline of how the COR document works and this will also tell you where your child is excelling in and

Junior Toddlers

Hello parents, as you ring out the old year, and ring in the new, may everything wonderful bring happiness to you and your loved ones. Happy New Year from the Jr. Toddler room!

We would like to take this time to welcome our new Toddlers to our classroom, Riaan, and Benjamin along with their families to the Alpha Family. Welcome, we are happy to have you join us here at Alpha. As a gentle reminder to parents with the cold weather upon us please ensure your little ones have all the appropriate clothing. Warm snow pants, winter jackets, hats, neck warmers, gloves and boots. Also, please make sure your child has both indoor and outdoor shoes; running shoes for inside and winter boots for outside.

We have been very busy lately within our Toddler classroom learning and getting use to our daily routine, our names, and learning our colours, such as the primary colours; blue and yellow.

Throughout the next few months here in the Jr. Toddler program we will continue to enhance their development

We would also like to inform and give you some information to better understand the toddlers when it comes to biting within the classroom, as it is a common toddler behaviour. Often biting does occur without warning or provocation and brings about strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, parents and



caregivers involved. However, it is a normal behaviour amongst toddlers. As parents, we think of it as a primal act of aggression, but its very common for toddlers to display this behaviour. Toddler biting is caused by teething, exploration of their world, frustration, lack of language to express themselves, self defense and at times to get attention.

Even though February is a shorten month there is something to look forward to, there comes a day where we show appreciation for the loved ones in our lives. Whether it be our mommys/daddys, sibling or significant other its sure to be something special as we look forward to Valentine's day. Here is a fun and exciting craft to try with your toddler at home, have fun!

Slow Falling Hearts Sensory Bottle:

1. Peel off sticker from bottle being used. You can always use Goo Gone to remove the sticky residue.
2. Empty or drink the water in the bottle (I usually use a Voss water bottle).
3. Pour ½ cup of tap water into the bottle.
4. Count out 12-16 red acrylic hearts and drop into the bottle.
5. Fill the bottle up the rest of the way with clear liquid hand soap. You want to fill it all the way to the top so there is no air in it.
6. Place lid on bottle and shake it up. (It will be a bit murky until the contents mix



and settle.)

7. If you are giving this as a Valentine's Day gift, use a label maker or indelible marker to write, "I'm Falling for you Valentine" on the lid.

We would also like to let our parents know that if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to ask Niketta or Samantha, and to always remember our classroom doors are always open.

We would like to end off by wishing everyone of our families here at Alpha a safe and happy January and February.

Jr. Toddler Classroom and Educators; Niketta and Samantha

Senior Toddlers

Welcome everyone to 2018! I wish that this New Year bring happiness and prosperity to you and your families.

As you know 2017 was a very busy year for Senior Toddlers. They worked on many goals like learning shapes, counting to 6 and recognizing feelings. In the months of January and February along with previous goals, we will work on learning and recognizing simple letters, colors, sharing and how to express their feelings through words. I would also like to take time to welcome Oliver and his family to Alpha.

Winter never means that children can not play outside, but rather means that they can have a lot of fun outside with parents if we keep some important things in mind. Always consider the temperature with the wind chill factor for example, extreme low temperature means it is better to stay inside. Do not send the children out if the wind chill factor is -20°. At this temperature the exposed skin starts to freeze and can cause frostbite. Always put warm clothes on that include waterproof mittens, boots, jacket, snow pants etc. Keeping them hydrated in the winter is as important as it is in any other weather conditions. Check them often to see if they are warm and dry enough to stay outside. Encourage them to

move, when they move their bodies they are able to produce heat that then gets trapped in their warm clothing. Young children are more likely to get cold outside because it is hard for them to move around in heavy clothes. So engage them in some easy winter activities like playing with sleds, making snow angels, snow men and snow castles etc.



There is an important day in February that we are all familiar with, Groundhog Day. Groundhog Day became popular in Canada in 1956 when Warton Willie became a household name for February weather predictions. Groundhog Day is growing more and more popular in Canada, people believe that as a groundhog sees it's shadow on February 2 it will return to its borrow indicating that there will be six more weeks for winter. If it does not, spring is on its way. Here is a little poem about Groundhog day.

*The funny little groundhog
Digs a home in the fall,
And hides there all winter
Rolled up in a ball.
On February 2nd
He comes out of there
To look at the sky
And to sniff the air.*

We wish you all a very safe and healthy winter season from all the Alpha family.

Prabhjot and Senior Toddlers

School Ager

Hello Families! We are looking forward to a new year with our School Ager. We had lots of fun in Camp over Christmas break and we hope everyone enjoyed their holidays to the fullest.

We would like to welcome, Alessia Cacioppo as the new educator in our School Age room. It was important that we found an educator that has a board range of qualities that will compliment that many unique and beautiful personalities of our School Ager. Alessia has transferred from our Springdale location.

Though it has been cold outside, the children still require outdoor time to

burn off all that energy and exercise their gross motor skills. There are many activities they can do outside, such as winter sports; taking them to Chinguacousy Park for a skate and a ride on the tubes is a great feature that Brampton has. There is also free skating at Gage Park and to warm up, on the weekends, you can roast a marshmallow by the fire. If you're at home and you hear "I'm bored!" you can bundle the children up and send them outside in the yard to play and use their imagination, they can build snow forts, snowmen, do a winter scavenger hunt or go sledding if you



have a hill nearby. So let's embrace the winter to not let it keep us inside.

With that being said please remember that we also go outside at Alpha when the weather is not too cold, therefore it is important to pack the following for your child;

- -snow pants
- - snow boots
- - winter hat
- -mittens (2 pairs are ideal)
- -neck warmer

Also, please remember to send a pair of indoor shoes with your child to wear at Alpha!

Alessia, RECE and Alicia, Assistant Supervisor, ECE (DA)

Junior Preschoolers

Happy New Year, and many, many warm wishes to everyone! Welcome to the year of 2018. We hope all the families enjoyed a fun filled holiday season.

We worked hard in December for Christmas concert, and it surely showed! It was great to see all of the energetic as well as extremely helpful parents and grandparents. The Junior Preschoolers were very proud of themselves taking part in the Christmas concert. Thank you for all your cooperation and help.

This month I would like to talk about one of Alpha's programs, 'Second Step Social Program'. We have found it very effective in helping children develop social skills and confidence. In this program we use large picture cards and hand puppets that show people's facial expressions and body language. The Second Step Social Program facilitates children in learning how to understand and manage their feelings. They also learn how to make friends and be a friend. In addition, they develop strategies to solve problems that occur while they are working and playing with other children.

We are looking forward to Valentine's Day and Family Day. Here are some recipes that you can make with your child.

Stain Glass Sugar Cookies

Use your favorite sugar cookie recipe. Cut out the cookies with a large cookie cutter. Use a spatula to transfer the shapes to the baking sheet. Remove the centers of the cookies with a smaller cookie cutter. Place 2 Jolly Ranchers (I like using 2 different colors) in the center of each heart (or whatever shape you made) and bake according to your recipe's instructions. Let the cookies cool on the baking sheet for 5 minutes, then transfer them to wire racks to cool completely. To prevent sticking, place waxed paper between layers of cookies.



DIY Valentine's Day Marshmallow Pops

These Marshmallow Pops took under twenty minutes to make from start to finish and they turned out adorable!

Ingredients:

- Marshmallows
- white chocolate
- sprinkles (crushed graham cracker, coconut, etc.)
- popsicle sticks or paper straws
- food coloring.

1. First cut a small slit in the top of the marshmallows to allow you to insert your straw. If you skip this step you just might mash your marshmallows.
2. Insert the straws or popsicle sticks and put them in the freezer for about 5-10 minutes. They do not take long to freeze and by doing this, the marshmallow is adhered more securely to the straw.
3. Meanwhile, melt the white chocolate in the microwave on medium heat and stir every 30 seconds. White chocolate seems to burn a lot easier than regular chocolate so watch it closely! Add your food coloring if desired.
4. Next up is the fun part: decorating! Dip the frozen marshmallows in the white chocolate. You will want to tap the excess white chocolate off. The frozen marshmallow will make the chocolate harden quickly so don't wait too long before dipping them into the sprinkles.



Strawberry Whipped Sensation

Ingredients:

- 4 cups fresh strawberries, divided
- 1 can (14 oz.) sweetened condensed milk
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1 tub (8 oz.) COOL WHIP Whipped Topping, thawed, divided
- 8 OREO Cookies, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp. butter, melted

Make It

1. Line 9x5-inch loaf pan with Reynolds Wrap Aluminum Foil, with ends of foil extending over sides. Mash 2 cups berries in large bowl. Add milk, juice and 2 cups COOL WHIP; mix well. Pour into prepared pan.
2. Mix chopped cookies and butter; spoon over COOL WHIP mixture. Cover with ends of foil; gently press cookie mixture into COOL WHIP mixture. Freeze 6 hours or until firm.
3. Invert dessert onto plate when ready to serve; remove pan and foil. Frost dessert with remaining COOL WHIP. Slice remaining berries; arrange over dessert.

For more information you can search on pinterest.

Kulvinder and Junior Preschool

A Moment With The Manager

Early literacy is such an important aspect in your child's life, as this is what children know about reading and writing before they can actually read or write. Early literacy is building a solid foundation for reading and writing and as parents we want to help our children as much as we can. Here are a few facts and ideas in order to help prepare your child to love books and reading.



Scientific research tells us that the best time for nurturing a child's whole being is before the age of six. From birth throughout the preschool years, children develop knowledge of spoken language, the sounds that form words, letters, writing and books. This is the start of the skills that children need to be able to learn to read and write in school.

From the EDI (Early Developmental Instrument) it has been discovered that three out of ten children in the Region of Peel are not ready to learn. Schools and wards with the highest proportion of children, not ready to learn at school were located in neighbourhoods of high social risk. These areas had higher levels of poverty, mobility, recent immigration and lower employment and education levels compared to national averages (PDSB 2004)

Failing to give children literacy experiences until they are school age can severely limit the reading and writing levels they ultimately attain. Knowledge of alphabet letters at entry into kindergarten is a strong predictor of reading ability in Grade ten.

Children raised in literate households are likely to enter Grade one with several thousand hours of one to one pre-reading behind them. There is nearly 90% probability that a child will remain a poor reader at the end of Grade four if the child is a poor reader at the end of Grade one.

Parents and caregivers are the children's first and best teachers as they know the children the best. Children

model parents' and teachers' behaviour and if we as the adults in the child's life love books and reading so will the child. The first five years set the stage for life and it is important that children love to read or be read to. Babies are born learning, what they learn is up to us.

There are six pre reading skills that children must know in order to learn to read successfully:

- Print Motivation
- Vocabulary
- Narrative Skills
- Phonological Awareness
- Print Awareness
- Letter Knowledge

Print Motivation - This is the child's interest in and enjoyment of books "I like books". We need to encourage our children to get excited about books and reading. Children who enjoy books will want

to learn how to read. Get your children involved in the stories that you are reading to them. Have them read a page and then you read a page. Have them guess what's going to happen in the story and most of all be expressive when reading to your child. Always keep reading experiences positive and enjoyable for your child, never make reading a chore, something that you have to do. This can be a fun relaxing time with your child no matter what time of day it is. Bring back some of your childhood memories by sharing your favourite stories with your children.

Vocabulary - Knowing the names of things and of emotions, concepts and ideas helps your child expand their knowledge of the world around them. This is the "I know words" stage. The more words children hear and understand, the more ready they will be to read on their own. It is important to help them with word recognition and comprehension to ensure that they have the correct understanding of the words written in the book. It is important that you talk and or sing with or to your child even before they are born. Babies can distinguish sounds and tones even when in the womb. When reading to your child always point out new and interesting words when you find them. This will help to increase your child's knowledge on a particular topic or subject. Books offer vocabulary and conversation that television does not.

Narrative Skills - This is the ability to describe things and events and to tell stories. "I can tell a story!!!!" This is where your child will begin to develop thinking and comprehension skills. Children will begin to understand that a story has a beginning, a middle and an end.

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A Moment With The Manager cont'd

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While reading to your child you should ask a lot of open ended questions to encourage them to respond and develop their imaginations. It is vitally important that we demonstrate patience in order for your child to respond to your questions. Five to twelve seconds is the recommended length of time one should wait for an answer. To maintain your child's interest in stories ensure that you use a variety of props that you may have around the house.

Phonological Awareness - This is the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words including rhyme, syllables and initial sounds. "I hear words", this helps children to recognize language patterns and helps the children to sound out words. Singing songs, listening to music and playing with rhymes, by clapping out syllables and doing finger plays and action rhymes will increase your child's knowledge on sounding out words.

Print Awareness - Drawing attention to print within your child's environment, knowing how to handle a book and how to follow words on a page will help your child become aware of the importance of print. "I see words!" Pointing out the words in print will help the children feel

comfortable with books and reading and encourages understanding that print is useful and is a key part of communication. As you are reading to your child it is important to point to words and pictures as this helps your child to comprehend what is happening in the story. Allow your child to choose, hold and turn the pages of the book as this teaches the children to respect and love books. When any opportunity presents itself read labels and signs as you and your child come upon them. This again demonstrates the importance of words in print.

Letter Knowledge - Knowing that letters are different from each other and that each letter of the alphabet has its own name and sound, helps your child to learn to sound words out. It is very important to encourage your child to sound out the letters in the words will help them to read the words on a page. Singing the alphabet or reading alphabet books also presents opportunity for the children to sound out the letters. Encouraging your child to play with magnetic letters will also help them to incidentally learn that letters put together form words. It is also important that children be encourage to print their own name on their creative master pieces.

When selecting stories for your child involve your child in the process,

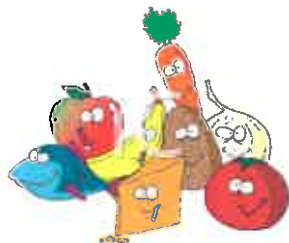
allow them to choose books that are of interest to them as they can then relate as well as learning something new. Remember to consider the age appropriateness of the book they have chosen to ensure that they are capable of understanding its content. Remember there are no rules when it comes to choosing books.

Hopefully this has been helpful in understanding the importance of literacy. To learn more about Literacy and how to read and present stories in a different manner please join us for a Literacy Parent night to be held at our Cathedral location on January 25th from 6:15 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. See you there

Until next time, my door is always open
Mary
marys@alphachildcare.ca
905-458-4884

From Sally's Kitchen

Hello everyone and hello winter! As I've been getting to know the families and children at Alpha, I've been trying to explore more food options and bring a variety of foods to expand the children's pallets, a big



hit was the persimmons, which is a nice sweet fruit!

With the cold inter weather upon us I've decided to share a resource I found from DailyBurnLife.ca, which are 7 top cold fight foods.

The best way to fight off sickness and toughen up your immune system is through the foods you eat. Here are some great examples of foods that'll help build up that immune systems and hopefully prevent some of those nasty winter illnesses;

- Garlic contains allicin which is

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responsible for antimicrobial and antibacterial properties.

- Beef is a great source of zinc that

helps build white blood cells, which help defend your body.

- Sweet potato has Vitamin A, which plays a role in maintaining your mucosal surfaces.
- Turmeric is a superfood and is high in antioxidants and acts as a natural anti-inflammatory
- 5. Dark leafy greens contain lots of vitamin C, which is well known as a cold fighting vitamin
- Wild salmon contains vitamin D. As winter sets in and daylight decreases, Vitamin D helps decrease respiratory tract infections
- Good old chicken soup is a hot liquid that works to



raise the temperature in the body and loosens up mucus secretions.

When using these ingredients in your everyday meals or by adding them all together in a nice warm vegetable or chicken soup you are providing your body with a big warm vitamin hug!

Until next time,
Sally

**We're on the web;
alphachildcare.ca**

Senior Preschoolers

Welcome to a new year everyone! We hope you all had a wonderful holiday at home with your families. We are very excited to welcome you to a new year.

The winter weather is finally here, and we are asking that all children have ALL their winter gear including snow pants, winter coat, neck warmer, hat and mittens. Additional indoor shoes as well as extra change of clothes continue to be required for all children in our program as they do occasional get wet during a program activity or have an accident while in our care.

If you are cleaning out closets in the new year, please think of us when donating your child's gently used pants as we do like to keep a spare stock here at the centre. Please label all items that come into the centre.

We also experienced some changes to

our classroom dynamic as Alicia and Kristen have both joined our Preschool team and we have lost Jennifer to the office until March when Patricia returns to our location. We realise these changes are difficult for some children and families and hope that you understand they are necessary and for the best interests of our children, families and educators.

This year in our Preschool room we will be continuing to work on our Second Step Social Program as well as our Hand Writing Without Tears.

The children have been practicing taking turns and being patient when playing with their friends. They have also been expressing how they feel with descriptive words and reasons for their feelings. We have been reminding them to use

their words to express what they want, need or feel and to offer solutions with their peers. We have also been encouraging our class to clean up their materials prior to moving on to the next activity as this has become a problem in this room. The Educators put a great deal of effort into keeping their environment organized, attractive, accessible and clean. Please help us do the same.

Looking forward to having fun with you!
The Preschool Team, Alicia, Ana, Kristen and Jennifer



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