



## Newsletter January 2021

### A Note from the Director's Desk

Happy New Year and good riddance to 2020!

I don't think any of us were prepared for the long term effects coronavirus would have on us. We have adapted and overcome each obstacle that arose and feel confident we will continue to do so with anything else that tests our foundation in the future.

Each year at ZALA we select a new motto that fits our goals for the coming year. Last year was the year of accountability. In 2021 we will focus on implementation of programming and processes.

On January 11<sup>th</sup> we will have a new teacher joining our team. Her name is Sydney Harrington. She will be working in a float position which means she works in all the classrooms providing support and help as needed. Please help us welcome her and introduce herself. In December we lost a substitute. We wish Brianna all the best in her future endeavors.

Did you know parents can now upload photos in Brightwheel to share with staff? We would love to stay connected with you and feel this is the perfect way to do just that. Provide us with feedback once you use it and let us know what you think.

Wishing you all the best this year!

Rhiannon

556-7439

### Dates to Remember

**January 1:** Closed, New Year's Day

**January 4-29:** Student Ages and Stages Questionnaires and Speech, OT, & PT evaluations for P/T Conferences in February.

**February:** Parent Teacher Conferences, dates and times to be determined

### Zoot Adventure Camp (ZAC/PIR)

**PIR Camp:** January 18- MLK Day (Boz & Blg)

**PIR Camp:** February 15-President's Day (all schools)

### Weekly Happenings

**Music** with Mrs. Rachel January 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Gymnastics** with Miss Savannah/Miss Mary Alice every Tuesday and Thursday.

**Bookmobile** visits ZALA January 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> for book pick up/drop off from 2:45-3:30 pm.

# **A Note from the Teachers**

## **First Contact**

December was such a festive and joyful end to the year. We loved looking at all the holiday themed books, doing holiday crafts, and spending time with friends. First Contact is excited for the New Year and new adventures! We look forward to playing in the snow and learning new things together. It's been so wonderful to have all of our friends back after the breaks and festivities! Happy New Year!

– Miss Marisa

## **Bridge**

December has gone by in a flash! We have been working on toilet training and enjoying increasing independence at the table and with cleanup after, under direct guidance from patient teachers.

Art projects are helping us work on fine motor skills and gain confidence in our artistic exploration, especially with free crayon and marker drawing, and more organized painting.

In Circle Time we enjoy reading and singing, and finding objects in pictures as preparation for word recognition. We also discuss feelings and how we can express them. We are learning to use our Safe Spot to help us calm down and refocus, or for needed quiet time away from the group. We practice breathing and smelling oils and asking for help or hugs.

Music and Gymnastics continue to be favorite activities, which also help us to gain skills and confidence.

We were all away from ZALA during the Christmas break and during our quarantine, but we are thankful to be well and back to our friends and routine. We will be wishing Weston well as he moves up to Warp Drive as a big 2 year old! We will miss his happy spirit but will see him just next door and around ZALA!

January should bring more fun and learning and outdoor play. We appreciate all the winter clothes that our parents are providing to keep us warm and dry!

-Ms. Kate

## **Warp Drive**

Hello Warp Drive families!

December has been super crazy and it went by so fast! What a way to end the year. We had fun decorating our own Christmas tree and building snowflakes in a couple of our interest areas. We also added a climbing structure into our Music and Movement Area. The kids love that the most I think.

Some changes are coming as we look into January. Paxton will be moving up to preschool! We are excited to watch him grow and thrive in his new classroom. Also, we will be welcoming a new friend, Weston, from the Bridge classroom! Lastly, it will be a new year! 2020 was very interesting and unexpected for many of us and we can't wait to see what all of 2021 will have to offer!

– Miss Laura

## **Holodeck**

After what feels like an eternity, 2020 has finally come to an end, and what a year it has been! I want to give a special thank you to all of you parents for your kindness, patience, gratitude, and generosity towards our teachers as we navigated through many new experiences. We are so lucky to have you all as part of our school family!

There are many things Holodeck is looking forward to in 2021!

-Having new friends join our class, including Cliff and Paxton in January.

-Going on field trips

-Our pre-kinder kids starting guided reading

-Some exciting new studies, like dinosaurs, weather, and outer space.

Happy New Year!

– Miss Megan

# **Developmental Tidbit**

## **Topic: The Power of Positive Language**

**Author: Miss Deb**

In general, science finds that when a child (or anyone for that matter) is told no, their fight, flight, freeze or faint response is activated. In this state of mind, children are more likely to emotionally respond. The result is a child who likely feels angry, avoidant, rigid or helpless. In contrast, when a child hears positive phrasing, their prefrontal cortex, the area of the brain responsible for resilience, curiosity, open-mindedness, problem-solving and even morality is engaged.

Common examples of negative language and alternative positive phrases:

- Don't run → Walk, please.
- Stop touching your sister → Hands to yourself.
- Don't throw toys → Please keep your toys on the ground.
- Stop interrupting → I can see you want to talk to me. Wait one moment, please.
- Leave him alone → Come over here and play.
- Don't hit → Only gentle touches, please.
- Stop yelling → Quiet voice, please.
- Calm down → Take a deep breath. We can work through this together.
- You don't need another toy. I'm not buying that. → If that's something you really want, why not save up for it?
- This is nothing to get upset about → I can see this is hard right now. Let's work together.

# MusikNote from Mrs. Rachel

## Music Note: Stationary Movement

As a child gains control of his/her body, the goal is to have movement be the result of thought, as opposed to being simply a reflex. A prerequisite of this is for your child to understand how the *parts of his/her body* move and that is best explored initially from a stationary position.

### Toddlers

Stationary Movement activities give your child the opportunity to explore what his/her upper body can do. These activities provide a stable position from which your child can discover his/her own space and various ways s/he can move within that space. S/he can begin to experiment with spatial concepts such as high, low, around, in and out, which will further your child's vestibular development. Since the vestibular function of the ear needs to be firmly established before the auditory function can be dealt with, doing activities which deal with spatial concepts will help your child to become a better listener.

### Preschoolers

For young children, movement and learning are inextricably linked; a child's body must be engaged for deep-seated learning to take place. Standing stationary movement allows children to work on their sense of balance, striving to remain in an upright position while jumping, hopping, and sitting down slowly. Additionally, stationary movement activities allow your child to explore spatial concepts such as high, low, in, out, and through, as well as 'my space' and 'your space'. This is important since the ear's primary purpose of providing a sense of balance and spatial awareness – its vestibular function – must be fulfilled before it can get on with its secondary purpose – its auditory function.

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