

News from Clever Kids Learning Center

From the Director

This is a time of new beginnings at Clever Kids. We settle into building relationships with new families to the center. Transitions find a teacher welcoming a new child to her classroom. Sometimes it's renewing a connection to a family that is bringing a sibling to a familiar teacher.

But, this is also a time when we realize how many "good-byes" we've gone through. And, how many heartfelt thanks we've received for caring for a child. It makes us feel special to receive such words of gratitude. Most are along these lines: thank-you for all the hard work you've done and the love you've shown, we were lucky to have you as our caregivers, our girls were always challenged and safe, we love that they got to play outdoors even in the cold, we went off to work confident he was and well- cared for, you gave me peace of mind during our child care years. A favorite was a drawing of two birds flying out of a nest. The scribbled graphics with arrows pointing to words reminded us of the many journal entries and pictures we've sent home over the years.

The departure of one of the thirty-one families heading off to kindergarten this year ended a ten-year relationship with us from the oldest to the youngest. We can only hope our new families will share many of the same feelings as those who have gone to kindergarten before them.

Dates of Closure for 2018

- Sept. 3rd – Labor Day
- Oct. 8th – Columbus Day
- Nov. 12th – Veteran's Day
- Nov. 22nd and 23rd – Thanksgiving
- Dec. 25th – Federal Observance of Christmas

Special Events

- Sept. 12th– Curriculum Day Event
8:00 – 11:30 or 2:00 – 5:30
- Friday, September 28th – Preschool East Parent Party 3:30 – 4:30



Clever Kids Learning Center managed by Bright Horizons

Building 64 Denver Federal Center, Denver, CO, 80225

303-236-9400 | www.brighthorizons.com

Monday – Friday, 6:30 A.M. – 5:30 P.M.



CLASSROOM HIGHLIGHTS

Toddler 2

This summer the Toddler Two Classroom had a variety of activities going on. We started our summer with a splash as our first splash day was on June 7th, and ended on August 8th. The toddlers learned to take turns playing with toys in the water table as well as taking turns running through the sprinkler. They learned this by listening to their teachers give simple, but clear directions. They also learn it by conversing with their teachers and peers about daily experiences and activities. One of our midsummer activities was the playground toy wash. Our job was to wash all the toys on the playground with wheels on them. There was a lot, so we made this a classroom family affair. The toddlers learned to wash toys with sponges, scrub brushes, and soapy water that were put into the water table. The toddlers learned to wash the toys by watching the teachers scrub the toys and by following clear but simple directions on how to use the sponges and scrub brushes. The toddlers also learned cause and effect as the toys went from dirty to clean and wet to dry. They learned this by conversing with their teachers and by having this hands – on activity. We started July with our Red, White, and Blue Parent Party. Parents and family members were invited to come and decorate a white t-shirt with their child. Red and blue fabric paint was provided to each child, along with star stickers and one white t-shirt. The snack for the party was watermelon slices and we had a special treat of homemade guacamole that is a specialty of Ms. Giovanna, one of the classroom teachers from Mexico. We had a great turn out of parents and family members.



CLASSROOM HIGHLIGHTS

Preschool North

September is typically the fresh start of a “new school year” and while we don’t have an official start or an end here at Clever Kids, we see the same trends we see in the public school system. That is, August always seems to be a very busy month for us with kids leaving and entering the classrooms. With new children entering classrooms, we see a temporary upheaval of playgroups and challenging behaviors as everyone starts to adjust to the new setting. Fortunately enough, things start to settle down towards the middle of September.

In the meantime, a viable and appropriate question arises, “what is being taught in the midst of this disruption?” That’s where the emergent approach comes in handy. The Bright Horizons curriculum is in fact an Emergent Curriculum. In other words, the curriculum *emerges* from the children: teachers plan learning experiences based on observations of the children’s interests, skills, and understandings – not based on a set plan of teacher-derived assumptions or themes. At this point in the year, the keywords in that last sentence were *skills* and *understandings*.

For example, right now we have children that have been with us for a year or more and others that have just started. Through observations we discovered that the new children don’t quite know how to enter established playgroups and children that have been with us for a while aren’t necessarily willing to allow others into their group. This tells us that we need to plan learning experiences around community. We want to ensure that kids know what the word community is and also how we build community.

One way to begin is by adding new, unstructured, and real items to the learning environment on a regular basis. Then we watch the children to see how they use the materials, listen to their ideas and work with them to solve problems. Another way to begin is to involve parents; which is how we chose to start our 2019 academic year!

On Friday, August 24th we invited parents to come to our classroom. We prepared a vegetable soup to share with them as a little snack, just as the monks did in the John J. Muth version of Stone Soup to reunite their community. Then, we played games together! There were a variety of games offered for children and parents to choose from. It was a super simple way to address the concept but more importantly it was fun and effective!



READY FOR SCHOOL NEWS

Cooking - A Family Affair

Gathering in kitchens nourishes our bodies, minds, and souls. Preparing meals together as a family enhances relationships, invites contribution, and helps children understand basic cooking principles. Also, children develop patience as they discover that delicious food doesn't just magically appear. Although cooking as a family affair is probably not as easy as adults whipping up a quick dinner, with a bit of forethought, more cooks stirring a pot can be fun and has tremendous benefits for everyone involved.

Cooking with children helps them learn about nutrition and hone basic reading, math, and science concepts. Reading recipes and learning kitchen vocabulary expands literacy skills, while counting, measuring, and fractions, foster mathematical thinking. Young chefs learn about chemistry and the physical properties of matter as they mix ingredients and watch them combine, separate, expand, change color, develop scents, and change form.

Research shows that children who help in the kitchen develop healthy eating habits because they tend to eat what they prepare. Below are a few suggestions for toddlers and preschoolers.

Toddlers

Choose simple cooking tasks that match your toddler's skills and attention span.

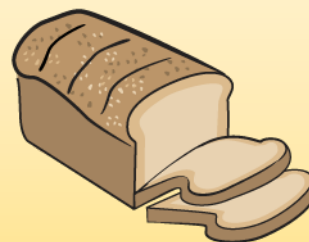
- Wash fruit and vegetables.
- Measure, pour, mix, and stir ingredients.
- Put ingredients in a crockpot or blender.
- Mash potatoes.



Preschoolers

Discuss nutrition and why our bodies and minds need the right kind of fuel to work correctly.

- Help plan meals.
- Chop, grate, peel, and cut ingredients.
- Shuck corn.
- Crack eggs.
- Count and categorize ingredients (wet and dry items).



BRIGHT HORIZONS NEWS

Learn about the year ahead at Curriculum Day



Ask about our upcoming Curriculum Day event!

September 12th 8:00 -11:30 or 2:00 – 5:30

During Curriculum Night, you will learn what we have planned for the year ahead for our center's curriculum as well as community center events. Spend time in your child's classroom, ask about the curriculum for their age group, and ask their teacher about future project plans. This event can also be a great time to connect with fellow Bright Horizons families!

Learn about our Bright Horizons educator promises. As Bright Horizons Educators, we promise to...

Nurture and care for the whole child

Craft curriculum based on expert research

Support and develop teachers

Implement an emergent and integrated approach to learning

Cultivate curiosity through projects, exploration, and play

Encourage children to be confident experimenters and problem solvers

Build an inclusive and respectful community

Create joyful places for childhood



Check out all the places you can connect with us!