



BRIGHT HORIZONS AT
USAA Child Development Center
Colorado Springs, CO

From the Director

We are gearing up for our busy December! This month we have contests and crafts and we are requesting help from all of our wonderful parents.

Gingerbread House Decorating contest:

Our classrooms will be decorating Gingerbread Houses and you and your families are welcome to join the fun by bringing your own Gingerbread House too! All Gingerbread houses will be placed in the Entryway by December 20th. Voting will be the same day and the winner will receive a Children's Book Gift Basket!

Door Decorating:

Our classrooms/teachers will each decorate their door and we want parents to help us pick a winner! The winner(s) will get a team (teacher) lunch of their choice. All doors will be decorated the week of December 3-7, the following week, you can cast your vote, and the winner will be announced Friday the 14th.

Craft Night:

We will be doing holiday crafts at pick up on December 12th from 4:30-6:00 p.m. Please join us in making some fun projects together with your child(ren).

Ugly Sweater Day:

December 21st will be Ugly Sweater Day for all children and staff!

Thank you for sharing your most precious gifts, your children, with us. Happy Holidays to all of you from all of us!!!

Important Dates

December 10-14 – Voting on Door Decorations! Pick your favorite!

December 12th – Family Craft Night
 4:30-6:00 pm in the Gym

December 20th – Gingerbread House Contest – pick your favorite!

December 21st – Ugly Christmas Sweater Day

December 25th – CDC Closed

January 1st – CDC Closed

Enjoy Your Holidays!

Reasons to Celebrate

12/1:	Katie turns 4!
12/1:	Sophia turns 4!
12/7:	Wyatt C. turns 2!
12/10:	Layla turns 4!
12/15:	Wyatt G. turns 3!
12/22:	Calvin turns 2!
12/28:	Brantley turns 2!

Infant



Our *Well Aware* curriculum ensures that an infant's health and safety are primary considerations and a focus of the classroom. Recently during lunch time, all the infant/young toddlers ate together, as one large group. Often times, when children sit together for mealtimes, there is a sense of "positive peer pressure," encouraging those around themselves to eat foods they have never eaten or generally don't eat. When the infants begin to participate in mealtimes, **they learn to** enjoy mealtime and become receptive to a variety of flavors and textures when they are ready for solid foods. **They learn it by** sitting as a group with their peers and trying diverse and safe foods provided from home.

Toddler



ArtSmart ensures that children are introduced to the visual arts, music, dance/creative movement, and drama. During open center time, the toddlers used paint brushes dipped in black paint. As the children painted, Ms. Rosie used the words "light and dark" to describe the each child's painting. When the toddlers participate in visual art activities, **they learn to** make deliberate markings or drawings. **They learn it by** using developmentally appropriate art materials such as large crayons, large paint brushes and wide paper.

Transition



Math Counts offers a framework for developing the skills and abilities of young mathematicians, ensuring that children recognize math in everyday life. After naptime, table top activities were set out for exploration. The two year olds used Lego boards to build their structures on. Ellie said, "I build a house." When the two year olds participate in geometry activities, **they learn to** understand properties of specific shapes. **They learn it by** building a structure with various shapes of blocks.



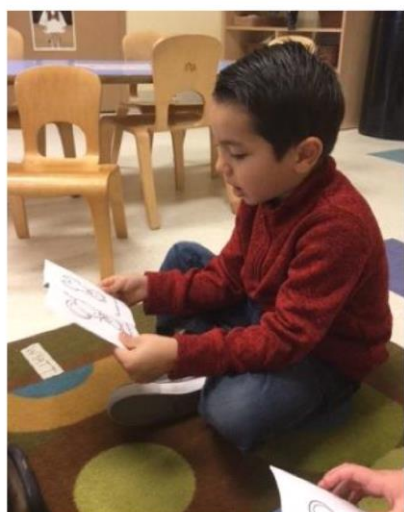
Preschool A

Math Counts ensures children don't simply memorize numbers but instead build mathematical reasoning skills so they can solve problems and use math in real and meaningful ways. Beginning in the Preschool A module, children are given "jobs" each day. Graham's job is to set the table to his friends. First, he lays out the placemats. Next, he places one plate, cup, spoon, and fork on top of each placemat. When the preschoolers begin to understand numbers, **they learn to** understand one-to-one correspondence. **They learn it by** setting each placemat with one cup, one spoon, one plate, and one fork completing a set.



Preschool B

Language Works offers a comprehensive approach that thoughtfully and intentionally addresses all aspects of language and literacy. During open center time, the preschoolers practiced cutting pages out of magazines. Mitchell cut some large pieces as well as some smaller pieces. When the preschoolers participate in pre-writing skills, **they learn to** strengthen and refine small muscles. **They learn it by** using scissors to cut paper.



Kindergarten Prep

Language Works provides a framework for meaningful classroom experiences to ensure children aren't merely memorizing letters and imitating words but instead gaining a deep understanding of language and communication. During circle time, the Kinder-Prep children followed along in a simple story as Ms. Sam read along in a big book. After the classroom read the book several times, Donovan offered to read a section he learned over time. When the Kindergarten Prep children participate in reading activities, **they learn to** understand concepts and features of print. **They learn it by** following along in small books as the teachers read aloud using big books.

Cultivate Compassion

Do you know that compassion is a learned behavior? People are not born generous, thoughtful, and polite, or for that matter rude or mean-spirited. We develop attitudes from our early life experiences, family being the significant influence. Children, who live in an environment of understanding and empathy tend to relate to others with an open heart and mind.

Although modeling is a prime motivator, below are a few suggestions to help compassion become part of your family culture:

Discuss emotions. Young children need to be able to identify, understand, and respond to their own emotions before they can relate to how someone else might be feeling. Give children a “feelings” vocabulary by labeling emotions (mad, sad, glad, angry, frustrated, scared, and happy).

Help children consider how others might be feeling. Talk about how the other person might be experiencing a situation. At times, even very caring children will say or do something that seems mean-spirited. Ask your child how she would feel if someone said or did that to her.

Recognize children’s understanding and intent. There are times adults unintentionally put our motives and biases on children. For example, a young child who comments on another’s disability or color of skin is often merely expressing curiosity, rather than prejudice or unkindness. A toddler who hits or grabs toys isn’t being “mean,” she’s just being a toddler.

Acknowledge that actions are powerful. Practice caring by supporting others. Whether it’s helping a friend, drawing a picture for a relative, or assisting with household chores, purposely practicing helpful behaviors teaches compassion.

Promote compassion through play. Play helps children make sense of their world. While trying different roles, children uninhibitedly express their feelings, explore distressing or confusing issues, experience social cues, and begin to learn to appreciate different perspectives.

Read to connect children to broader experiences. Read fiction and nonfiction books about people who come from all walks of life, cultures, and circumstances. For age-appropriate suggestions, access Bright Horizons - Growing Readers <https://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/reading-children-books>.

Make caring about others a family affair. As a family, discuss and plan small (and large) acts of kindness. Children might make appreciation cards and gifts for friends, relatives, and people who take care of us: military personnel, mail carriers, teachers, librarians, firefighters or police officers. Plan family activities to raise funds for organizations or write thank you cards to military personnel. One organization to review is Operation Gratitude (<https://www.operationgratitude.com/>).

Featured Parenting Podcast Episode

Making Work and Life Fit

Do you sometimes feel like there has to be a better way to fit working and parenting together into your limited time?

Maybe it's time to rethink your equation. Our guest Morra Aarons-Mele says we might feel like prisoners of the status quo (9-to-5, in the office), but we all have the power to fit work and life together on our own terms. The secret: ask for exactly what you need. She did it — and explains how.

Ep. 20: Making Work and Life Fit



<https://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/podcasts/making-work-life-fit>

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Monday – Friday 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

