

# Bright Horizons at USAA Child Development Center News

## From the Director

Dear USAA Families,

What is the measure of a good teacher? Is it the interactions with children and families, amazing lesson plans and engaging environments, a team player and support to their co-workers, taking directions and feedback well? Which one of these qualities is most important?

The truth is each of these elements is important to create this wonderful environment for young children! Bright Horizons outlines these elements in our job descriptions, measures with job performance appraisals and supports the growth of people using our HEART Principles. It isn't enough to only meet one of the elements. Everyone from the Cook to the Director is expected to not just be good with young children, but be a team player, grow when we make mistakes, take feedback from our leaders, help our co-workers, communicate honestly, be open to change and make a difference every day.

Society does not always look upon people who work in early childhood as professionals with goals and ambitions. Bright Horizons is unique and an exception to the rule. Bright Horizons supports employees and allows growth, a career path and flexibility to follow our dreams in working with young children.

Each employee works together to create this atmosphere of growth, trust, flexibility and innovation. Bright Horizons also loves honoring the people who make up this amazing company through the Awards of Excellence program and Years of Service Celebrations.

**This newsletter is dedicated to our wonderful faculty at the USAA CDC. This is an amazing team and I enjoy working with them each day.**

Thank you,  
Christine Hernandez

## Important Dates

July 4<sup>th</sup>-Independence Day  
(Center Closed)

July 9<sup>th</sup>-July 13<sup>th</sup> Summer Spirit Week

July 20<sup>th</sup> Snow Cone Mania  
(This will be set up on the playground as to help give the parents the option to participate)

## Summer Fun!

Parents, I found this amazing website that lists over 100 things to do around San Antonio with children, for FREE! If there are any parents interested in putting together a Family Partnership Group, please email me. I would love for the families of our center to live life together, create new ideas for our center and experience some of these fun things as a group.

<http://sanantoniomomblogs.com/100-free-things-kids-families-san-antonio-summer/>

## Bright Horizons at USAA Child Development Center

4800 USAA Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78240

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Monday-Friday 6:30 a.m-6:30 p.m



# CLASSROOM HIGHLIGHTS

## Infant Program

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Sensory play is one of the best ways for our infants to learn and explore! Through various art activities children explore so many curriculum concepts. For example, the classroom will be doing activities that will incorporate bugs and plants. The children will explore art, math, and science by finger painting, planting seeds, and counting bugs. Through Art Smart; children will engage in art and sensory activities using items such as ice and sponges to create different paintings. Sensory projects will include using red, white, and blue jello to do a taste test while exploring the texture of the jello. Children will continue to enjoy the benefits of water play on these hot summer days. The children will create sensory bottles themed around 4th of July while focusing will be focusing on sign language. Signs will be introduced for different animals.



## Toddler/Two's Program

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The toddler program will be exploring summer activities, celebrating Fourth of July, exploring mangos by doing a mango week, and talking about camping. The children will be developing language by increasing their vocabulary as they have conversations with their teachers about the various activities they are doing. The children will be creating red, white, and blue art to celebrate The Fourth of July. The children will also be exploring everything that is camping by using our Well Aware concepts to learn about nutrition and movement and body awareness. The whole two's program will be doing Science Experiments in the month of July. They will designate a week where as a class; each one will conduct a science experiment to share with the program as a whole group. We plan to involve the parents by asking them to participate by helping with the experiments. The children will be learning simple solving problems, active exploration, space and volume, and interact by asking open ended questions. The two's program will be doing Water Play Friday's as well. The children will enjoy water activities as a program by washing wagons and buggies by working together to build positive relationships.



## Preschool Program

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Summer is in full swing in our Preschool Program. They are having a blast exploring so many adventures through the summer. This month, Preschool will challenge their minds and bodies as they enjoy Fun and Fitness Adventures. Through various activities within our Well Aware curriculum, they will build on teamwork and build on large motor skills by moving and engaging in sports and games. They will explore and discover through the science of cooking how combining ingredients works to produce a final product. The summer is the best time to get dirty so please make sure the children have an extra pair of clothes!



## Kindergarten Prep Summer Program

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This month Kinder Prep will be learning diving into teamwork and working together. Through various activities they will learn to cooperate and work as a team as they get through challenging sports and games. They will be learning to follow directions used in cooking projects and will also be exploring the environment and virtually experience extreme places around our world. We know children learn best when they are engaged and our Kindergarten Prep teachers are the best around! The activities they have planned will help to expand their knowledge of the world around them while working together to be a great team!



# READY FOR SCHOOL NEWS

## Family Traditions Celebrate Life!

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Regardless of the size of your family, traditions are a meaningful way to create cohesiveness, forge fond memories, and celebrate life. Meg Cox, the author of *The Book of New Family Traditions*, defines family traditions as “any activity you purposefully repeat together as a family that includes heightened attentiveness and something extra that lifts it above the ordinary ruts.”

Many of us smile when we think about our childhood traditions. We might remember Sunday afternoon walks, game or movie nights, holiday preparations, special family hugs, or a secret family handshake. Often the activity is secondary; it's the being together and sharing a custom that lives in our hearts.

Below are a few ideas for fun family traditions that you can start this year.

### **Commemorate a special day by planting a tree.**

Be it Thanksgiving, Earth Day, or to celebrate a holiday, planting a tree together connects us to nature, and produces an everlasting keepsake. Think of the library you can create by videoing and discussing the experience.

### **Designate a game night.**

A weekly game night brings everyone together for relaxed fun. Game suggestions include Apples to Apples Junior; Don't Wake Daddy; Bingo; Dr. Seuss Cat in the Hat; and Guess Who? You might play action games, such as Charades, Twister, Hide and Seek, and Freeze Tag.

### **Compose family newsletters.**

Rather than adults writing an annual letter, all family members can participate by talking about their year. Young children might depict their news by drawing, painting, and taking photographs.

### **Connect with residents in a nursing home.**

Developing a relationship with people in a nursing home enriches the lives of the residents, makes your family feel good, and helps raise children with grateful hearts. Perhaps plan monthly visits and share stories, make cards, bake treats, or simply sit and hold someone's hand.

As you plan the tradition, eliminate distractions, and reserve the time as you would any meaningful activity. Remember that family traditions are about enjoying time together. As Michael J. Fox says, “Family is not an important thing. It's everything.”

# BRIGHT HORIZONS NEWS

## Lemons to Lemonade with Four Ingredients

Need help taming your child's tantrums? Turn those parenting lemons into lemonade!

It might not seem like it, but your child is more predictable than you think—and each stage of your child's development, along with every meltdown, is a gateway to skill-building for your little one.

Hear from early childhood experts Ellen Galinsky, the Chief Science Officer at the Bezos Family Foundation and Executive Director at Mind in the Making, and Rachel Robertson, the Education and Development Vice President at Bright Horizons, as they discuss common parenting challenges and the science behind parenting that can turn frustration into great skills for life.

You can subscribe to the Bright Horizons Family Matters Podcast through iTunes, Google Play Music, SoundCloud, Stitcher Radio, and RSS. Learn more by visiting the link below.



### Podcast: Lemons to Lemonade with Four Ingredients

[brighthouse.com/lemonstolemonade](http://brighthouse.com/lemonstolemonade)



Check out all the places you can connect with us!