

Dear Buerger Families;

Over the next few months we will have several events to help us keep the winter blues at bay. On January 25, we will be welcoming the Philadelphia Zoo for a traveling program. The toddlers will experience the Tiny Tots program and the preschoolers will learn all about fur, feather, scales and skin. It's a great program and we're really looking forward to it.

February 8 is the Jewish holiday of Tu B'Shevat, also thought of as the birthday of the trees. It might seem counter intuitive to celebrate trees while we are still cold and leafless, but the almond trees in Israel will soon be blossoming so we'll be celebrating! On February 14, we are having a special K'Nex workshop for the preschoolers. The kids will have a chance to build together and have a gift bag of K'Nex to take home with them. Sunday, February 26th will be our second annual show by the Walnut Street Theater. They will be performing *The Princess Who Lost Her Hair*. If you saw their performance last year, you know that they did a wonderful job. The theater space is so intimate and the actors are very high-quality. I am sure that you will enjoy the play so please come and watch good theater on us!

Although Dr Seuss' birthday occurs at the beginning of March, it is worth mentioning that we will be having a puppeteer helping us celebrate his birthday in true Seuss-icle fashion.

You may soon see unfamiliar visitors in our classrooms. We have been fortunate enough to be selected to join the United Way of Southern Pennsylvania's program, Success by 6. This program will support us as we work to fine tune our practices to rate even higher on the Keystone Stars rating ladder. It is a tremendous opportunity and it was great to be selected to join.

Wishing you a belated Happy New Year. May it be a year filled with health and happiness.

Megan Nachod, M.Ed., Director



January 16, 2012
Martin Luther King Day
School closed

January 25th 2012
Philadelphia Zoo Animals visit Buerger



February 1, 2012
100th day of School Celebration

February 8, 2012
Tu B'Shevat Celebration

February 20, 2012
President's Day
School Closed

February 26, 2012
K'nex Workshop for Preschoolers



A Tribute on Martin Luther King Day

By: Rabbi Jill Maderer

At Congregation Rodeph Shalom, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is not just a national holiday, it is a Jewish holiday!

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday falls in the time of year when the Jewish world reads from the beginning of the Book of Exodus in our Torah reading cycle. Both King's story and the Exodus story honor powerful moments of struggle and of freedom.

King saw the American civil rights movement through the lens of the Israelites' redemption from the slavery of Egypt, his own leadership through the lens of the role of

King said, "I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain, and I've looked over, and I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you, but I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised land."

King described civil rights activists as a burning bush: "Bull Connor (the sheriff) would say, 'Turn the firehoses on.' Bull Connor didn't know... there was a certain kind of fire that no water could put out."

Continued next page:

Winter Weather Warnings

Continued from pg. 1

At the same season when we celebrate Revered King's birthday and we read the Exodus story, we also honor the yarzeit (anniversary of death) of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel.

Heschel and King became beloved colleagues and friends as Heschel drew King into the anti-war movement and King drew Heschel more deeply into the civil rights movement.

Marching arm in arm with King in Selma, Heschel also found inspiration in the Exodus story. "At the first conference on religion and race, the main participants were Pharaoh and Moses... The exodus began, but is far from having been completed. In fact it was easier for the children of Israel to cross the Red Sea than for a Negro to cross certain university campuses."

Heschel imagined the full potential of redemption: "The tragedy of Pharaoh was the failure to realize that the exodus from slavery could have spelled redemption for both Israel and Egypt. Would that Pharaoh and the Egyptians had joined the Israelites in the desert and together stood at the foot of Sinai."

Every year, our congregation honors the life and memory of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. on the Shabbat of MLK weekend. We partner with Bright Hope Baptist Church as we welcome their choir to join us in the sanctuary to sing with ours, and we welcome Reverend Kevin Johnson to preach from our pulpit. We welcome children and families; please join us and bring friends and neighbors, Jewish or not. I hope to celebrate with you **Friday, January 13 at 6:00 pm.**

Buerger's Snow Closing Number Is: 3278

WHAT DETERMINES WHEN FEDERATION EARLY LEARNING SERVICES CLOSSES DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

THE AGENCY REMAINS OPEN WHENEVER POSSIBLE TO PROVIDE SERVICE TO OUR FAMILIES. WE RECOGNIZE THAT PARENTS NEED TO GO TO WORK AND DEPEND ON US FOR CHILD CARE. WE THEREFORE, MAKE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO OPEN, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.

Unfortunately, we are at the mercy of the meteorologists and sometimes storms do not follow the path predicted. It is disconcerting to all of us when this occurs. It is also challenging to make these determinations at 5:00 am as information about road conditions is not readily available

The following guidelines for closing or opening late were developed, taking into consideration the safety of children, families and staff. In most cases when the public schools are closed **and** the forecast anticipates hazardous road conditions, a heavy snowfall and major power outages, the agency will be closed. This information is publicized as follows:

- * Posted on the homepage of **FelsKids.org**
- * Posted on CBS (KYW), ABC and NBC websites and TV stations
- * Announced on KYW radio
- * Announced on each center's telephone answering machine (sometimes we encounter technical difficulties - not as reliable)
- * Sent to your cell phone *if you registered for this service with the TV stations*

When hazardous road conditions exist, but the forecast indicates that an increase in temperature will eliminate the hazard, we may delay opening up to 2 1/2 hours (9:00 am) for all locations except Buerger and Kol Ami, which would open by 9 am.

Another critical factor in determining whether we can open is the ability to staff the program adequately, since many of our teachers do not live in the vicinity of the center. Many depend on public transportation and, as you know, SEPTA has been cancelling bus routes with greater frequency.

In rare situations, we may need to alter a decision to open late and close for the day. This occurs when temperatures suddenly increase or decrease or when heat, electricity or water is not operable in the building. We urge you to continue checking the notification systems cited above that we have in place.

We thank you for your understanding and patience.

When will Sophie Speak?

by Shannon Rosenman, OTR/L

Dear FELS' Parents,

Parents and teachers frequently ask me if a child is speaking well for his or her age. According to the American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA), most toddlers who aren't talking 'well' aren't really delayed. They may not be talking as much as you expect, but that can still be normal.

Consider that most toddlers' speech develop as indicated:

- 7 - 15 months begin to say "Mama" and "Dada"
- 11- 22 months say 4-6 words
- 18 - 27 months say 50+ words
- 36 months - use over a hundred words/phrases so someone, who does not know them, can usually understand them.

Young children understand many more words than they can say. Hearing affects a child's speech development. Pay attention to ear problems and infections, especially when they keep occurring. An audiologist is the medical professional who can best evaluate your child's hearing.

The ability to use words and phrases to express wants and needs affects development, especially social and emotional development. Children get frustrated more frequently when they can't put their wishes and needs into words. For example, Aiden cannot ask for a turn with the fire truck, so he grabs it. Celia who is unable to say "My turn!" tries to bite Aiden's hand. Lilly wants milk, but cannot say the word clearly. Her babysitter misunderstands and gives her juice. Lilly throws the cup, crying angrily. Tantrums, biting and other troublesome behaviors often start to diminish when your child gets better at making his or her words understood.

To help your young toddler develop his or her skills ASHA suggests the following strategies:

Reinforce your baby's communication attempts by looking at him or her, speaking, and imitating his or her vocalizations.

Teach animal sounds (e.g., "A cow says moo").

Teach your baby to imitate actions, such as peekaboo, clap hands. These games teach skills needed for conversation.

Talk while you are doing things, "Mama is sweeping the floor!"
Talk about where you are going, "Judy is going to Grandma's house."
Practice counting. Count toes and fingers.

When a second language is introduced, some children may not talk much for several months. This is normal and will go away.

Many factors affect a child's ability to speak. If you are concerned about your child's speech development, talk to his/her teacher and pediatrician. If you are still troubled, call Early Intervention services in your county. They will come to your home or your child's school, evaluate his or her skills and reassure you. If needed, they can help. All services provided through Early Intervention are totally free of charge!

For more information: <http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/>

Shannon Rosenman brings 35 years of experience as a licensed Occupational Therapist to her role as the Director of Child Development for Federation Early Learning Centers. We are fortunate to have her expertise to help teachers and center directors adapt their classroom activities so each child's individual needs can be addressed.

Spread the Word!

Parents, please spread your Federation Early Learning Services pride!!!

We need your help and support. We know your time is valuable and your schedules are full, but there is a fast way that you can spread the word about our center!

Parents who are shopping for a high quality child care center trust the opinions of parents just like them. Please take a moment and go to any of the websites below to share your experiences. Help us reach out to new parents, so we can keep expanding our FELS family.

Thank you so much for your help!

www.yelp.com
www.saavysource.com
www.citysearch.com
www.greatschools.org
www.schooldigger.com



The Hidden Benefits of Cooking with Toddlers

By Morah Megan Nachod

When we cook with toddlers in the classroom, it may seem like just a sweet way to spend time together. You might not have realized that cooking accomplishes some very important goals as well. It supports many developmental skills while being rewarding for the children.



First we chop the potatoes

For example, cooking is science in action. Like when you mix up a few powders, add liquid and heat to make cookies. That's an experiment in real life. As we cook, we ask the children to make predictions. "What will happen when we add milk to the flour?" and they'll join right in. We observe how a substance changes texture, color and consistency while we cook. "Look, the cocoa made everything brown."



Then we add the spices

Cooking is also a vocabulary builder. How else would you introduce the words "liquid", "batter" or "dough" to toddlers? We also get to expand their experience with descriptive language. "The dough is really runny" or "The brownies smell delicious".

Watching a toddler to lisp through the word "delicious" is one of the rewards for spending time with little ones.

But cooking necessitates math, too. Fractions? "We need $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of butter". Quantity? "Put in 1 tablespoon". Addition? "We have 2 teaspoons but we need 4. How many more do we need?"

Cooking in the classroom also improves motor skills. Stirring, spreading, spooning out are all fine-motor tasks. Hand to eye coordination and hand and arm strength all get a workout.

It's also a social activity for the toddlers. Although we typically don't do large group activities with this age, it is a quick opportunity for toddlers to take turns and make something together.

The children build self-esteem while they cook. The two toddler themes are "Me do it" and "It's mine". Well, yes, they did make those latkes, which makes the latkes theirs. Can't argue with that!



And stir the mixture before we fry it on the griddle

So even if it's as simple as making cinnamon toast and hot chocolate, cooking with toddlers is always valuable and enriching. I'd suggest trying this at home! Things might be a big mess or lopsided but your child's sense of accomplishment will be even bigger.