



CLASSROOM CONNECTION

– Infant Edition –

January 2017

“While babies aren’t born book lovers, they are born learners. And the more you read to them, the more they learn. They learn to love the feel of the pages in their hands (or their mouth), the sound of your voice, the beauty of the illustrations, the joy of a good book.”

– Kate Jack

Dear Infant Parents:

Happy New Year! Over the next several weeks, we’re looking forward to providing a variety of new learning experiences with your child. In addition to the songs, stories, and snuggles that are an important part of every doodle day, this month’s curriculum also includes:

- **Finger Plays:** These rhymes and songs that incorporate hand and finger movements (like “Where Is Thumbkin”) promote language development, social skills, and strengthen fine motor muscles!
- **Parachute Play** is an instant social experience. Little ones are immediately drawn to the colorful, flowy fabric and enjoy the cause and effect element as they move the parachute together.
- **Scarf Play:** Scarves are awesome tools that help children develop object permanence and fine motor skills as they pick them up, wave them in the air, play peek-a-boo with them, or even hide things under them!

These learning experiences provide additional opportunities for each infant to interact with a caring adult, helping them learn a sense of trust and build secure attachments.

We’re also excited to introduce our new Doodle Bug and celebrate our company’s 25th year on January 19th, and host a center-wide Chinese New Year parade on January 27th ! These events provide us with an opportunity to celebrate with friends from other classrooms and build a greater social-awareness of the center community.

As always, thank you for allowing us to be part of your child’s growth and development!

Warmly,

Your child’s teachers



Home/School Connections: Quick Tips for Families

How Baby’s Hand Skills Develop

Excerpt from American Baby magazine

When it comes to your baby, every new accomplishment is exciting to watch. While big motor milestones, such as rolling, crawling, and walking, are the obvious ones, small motor skills, like reaching, grabbing, and pointing, are just as developmentally important. Learning and practicing these skills will improve baby’s hand-eye coordination and teach cause and effect.

What to expect

By 5 Months - Shake a rattle, flip pages of a book

By 10 Months - Hold a sippy cup, clap hands

By 12 Months - Roll a ball, Point, wave bye-bye

By 14 Months - Stack two blocks, hold a spoon and use it to feed self

By 18 Months - Turn knobs, build towers of up to four blocks

Ways to Improve Skills

Provide interesting and safe toys to touch, shake, and bang together. Place these toys just out of grasp and encourage baby to reach for them. While baby will enjoy discovering new objects in varying shapes and textures, she will also love brushing her fingers over your face as you make different expressions.

Read books to your baby every day. Even though she cannot yet understand the words, she will enjoy using her hands to turn the pages for you.

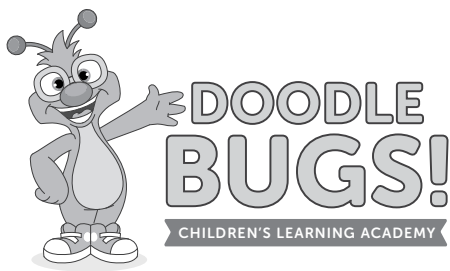
By 8 months, let baby try to feed herself. It will be a messy task, but it’s one way she will eventually master the pincer grasp and getting things to her mouth. And in this case, there is an instant reward!

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CLASSROOM CONNECTION

– 1 Year Old Edition –

January 2017

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– Kate Jack

Dear 1 Year Old Parents:

Happy New Year! Over the next several weeks, we’re looking forward to providing a variety of new learning experiences with your child. In addition to the songs, stories, and snuggles that are an important part of every doodle day, this month’s curriculum also includes:

- **Finger Plays:** These rhymes and songs that incorporate hand and finger movements (like “Where Is Thumbkin”) promote language development, social skills, and strengthen fine motor muscles!
- **Parachute Play** is an instant social experience. Little ones are immediately drawn to the colorful, flowy fabric and enjoy the cause and effect element as they move the parachute together.
- **Scarf Play:** Scarves are awesome tools that help children develop object permanence and fine motor skills as they pick them up, wave them in the air, play peek-a-boo with them, or even hide things under them!

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Your child’s teachers



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What to expect

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By 14 Months - Stack two blocks, hold a spoon and use it to feed self

By 18 Months - Turn knobs, build towers of up to four blocks

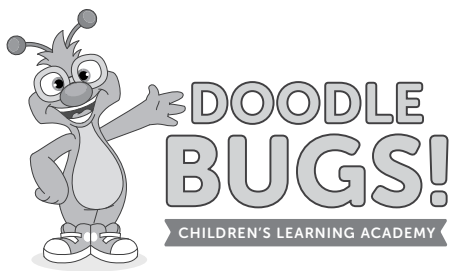
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CLASSROOM CONNECTION

– Toddler Edition –

January 2017

Dear Toddler Parents:

Happy New Year! We're looking forward to an amazing month of play-based learning; guiding children towards developmental milestones while tapping into their unique interests, too! Building self-awareness and social competency in a fun atmosphere sets the stage for life-long learning.

Here's a sample of how we'll learn through play this month.

We're wrapping up Unit 3 with a focus on **Nursery Rhymes and Fairytales** (weeks of January 2nd and 9th). This theme invites toddlers to:

- Use puppets during engaging read-alouds.
- Recreate rhymes and tales in the Dramatic Play center using costumes and props.
- Sing many familiar songs, such as "Baa Baa Black Sheep."

When we begin **Unit 4 – Amazing Animals** (week of January 16th) we will:

- Start with a focus on Pets, naturally bridging the topic to meaningful experiences at home. This exploration will include animal-related stories, songs, art and movement experiences, and plenty of hands-on skills builders in the sensory bin, block center, and easel. You'll love our animal collages!
- Learn more about animals and the places they live (both on land and in water) building early scientific concepts.

Each of these fun activities looks like play, but builds important developmental skills. Curious about specific skills associated with each task? Just ask!

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Warmly,

Your child's teachers

Home/School Connections: Quick Tips for Families

Personal-Social ASQ Activities to Help Your Toddler Grow and Learn:

Baby Bear Beds - Make a little bed for your child's doll or a stuffed animal from a shoebox. A small piece of cloth or dishtowel makes a blanket or a pillow. Your child can help her baby go to bed at night by. She can read a story, sing, and tuck him into bed just like you do!

First Feelings - Help your child name feelings when they happen. When your child is worried, you can help her understand the feeling by telling her, "You look worried. Can you tell me about it?" If you know your child is frustrated, use the words "I know you are really frustrated, but you can have a turn in a minute." When your child learns that feelings have names, she will be able to handle them more easily.

All by Myself - Enjoy a meal that encourages your little one to use a fork. Mashed potatoes will be a little easier than peas, but soon your little one will have mastered peas too! Show him how to twist noodles. Be sure to have extra napkins on hand!

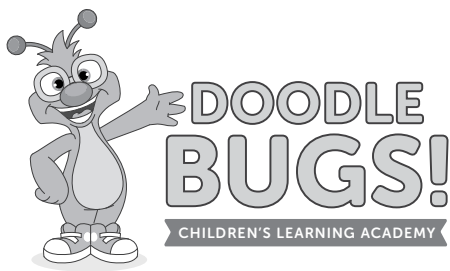


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CLASSROOM CONNECTION

– Preschool & Pre-K Edition –

January 2017

Dear Families,

Happy New Year! We're looking forward to an amazing month of play-based learning; guiding children towards developmental milestones while tapping into their unique interests, too! Building self-awareness and social competency in a fun atmosphere sets the stage for life-long learning.

During the first few weeks of the month, we're wrapping up Unit 3 with a focus on Nursery Rhymes and Fairy Tales. We'll engage in interactive read-alouds through the use of puppets, build houses out of straw, sticks, and bricks, to retell "The Three Little Pigs," recreate favorite rhymes in the Dramatic Play center using costumes and props, and build coordination and large muscle skills by working through a 'One, Two, Buckle My Shoe' obstacle course.

As we begin Unit 4 - Amazing Animals on January 16th, we'll tap into essential science content related to living things and their habitats by learning about Pets, Farm Animals, Animals in the Wild, and even Dinosaurs!

Other preschool curriculum highlights include:

Using animals to help with our math curriculum — learning about measurable attributes (like length and weight) is so much fun when we use dinosaur feet and animal figurines as units of measurement!

Other Pre-K curriculum highlights include:

- Our work with the Handwriting Without Tears program focuses on the "Big and Little Curves" including letters D, P, and B.
- Our Math curriculum focuses on arranging and counting objects in varied configurations (lines, circles, and arrays) as well as applying what we know about numbers 1-5 to larger numbers (recognition, counting, comparing, and determining quantity).

Each of these fun activities looks like play, but builds important developmental skills. Curious about specific skills associated with each task? Just ask!

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Warmly,

Your child's teachers

Home/School Connections: Quick Tips for Families

Cook Up Some Math & Science:

Following a simple recipe (or simply scooping, pouring, or mixing) allows your child to experiment with weight, volume, size and temperature. Cooking and baking are also great sensory experiences. Whether you are whipping up a 4-course meal or just making pancakes, invite your child to lend a hand!

Write All About It:

It is sometimes difficult for young children to appropriately express their feelings. This is especially true when they are faced with emotions like anger, fear, or jealousy. Provide your child with a notebook to write/draw how she is feeling; you can demonstrate by illustrating your frown or smile, with an explanation of the associated feeling. Smiles, 'luv u' messages, scary monsters and angry scribbles all help your child to express and validate her feelings.

Out of Sight, Out of Mind:

The holiday season likely resulted in toy overload. If you haven't already, box up some of the old toys (and some of the new ones, too!) and place them in the attic or closet. Rotate the boxes, bringing out a different one every month or so - suddenly, everything old is new again!

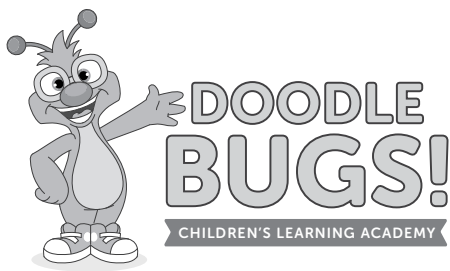


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CLASSROOM CONNECTION

– School Age Edition –

January 2017

Dear Families,

Happy New Year! We're looking forward to an amazing month of play-based learning; guiding children towards developmental milestones while tapping into their unique interests, too! Building self-awareness and social competency in a fun atmosphere sets the stage for life-long learning.

- **Book Hospital** – SA students take the lead in repairing books for friends in younger classrooms while building initiative, cooperation, and leadership skills throughout the project.
- **Culture Pizza** – A fun, child-friendly way to celebrate self-awareness, diversity, and tolerance.
- **Lego Challenges** – Can you build it? Lego quests are the perfect addition to our STEM club and encourages social interaction through friendly competition.
- **Virtual Field Trips** – Google Earth makes it possible to visit so many places!

Each of these fun activities looks like play, but builds important developmental skills. Curious about specific skills associated with each task? Just ask!

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Talk & Toss Ball

Create a toss n' talk ball with a beach ball and a sharpie. Have children help brainstorm physical challenges that can be written all over it. Then, sit or stand in a circle and take turns passing it. With each catch, the catcher will be challenged to complete the task that's closest to their right thumb!



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