



Circle Time

The mission of the Parent-Infant Center is to support parenting by enabling young children to grow and learn in a safe, stimulating, loving environment



Message from Kharma Hicks: Director of Early Learning Programs

Early Learning winter assessments have begun. At PIC, children are assessed three times a year, which is required

of all NAEYC accredited child care centers. Teachers take observational notes to help them look at a child's progress. These regular assessments are important in order to see that children are hitting developmental milestones.

Once these assessments are complete, teachers will begin to schedule conferences with parents. Look for a sign-up sheet on the refrigerator in your classroom. I encourage you to sign up for these conferences, even if you met with your child's teacher in the fall. This is a time not only to talk about your child's

developmental progress, but also to talk about how things are going in the classroom, plans for next year, and making transitions. It is also an opportunity for you to talk with teachers about any concerns you may have or changes at home. If the times offered conflict with your schedule, talk with your teachers personally so that an alternative time can be arranged

At PIC we value communication with our families. Parent involvement is key to your child's success. While quick conversations happen during drop-off and pick-up, parent-teacher conferences give individualized attention and dedicated time to each family. Take the time to talk to your teachers. It will make a difference!

Kharma

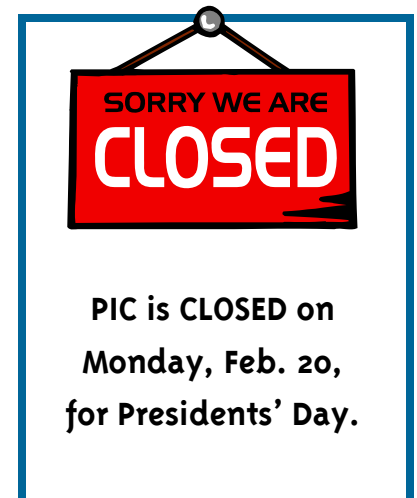
After School Accreditation Applause

We are thrilled to announce that the After School Center has earned accreditation from the Council on Accreditation (COA). This designation recognizes PIC as a program that implements high performance standards and delivers the highest quality services to its school-age children and their families.

Director of School-age Programs
Anjali Gallup-Diaz and her staff went through a rigorous process of self-

evaluation, reviewing standards, and ensuring that measurable means of maintaining these standards are in place. We are proud of this achievement, which reflects PIC's commitment to excellent, enriching programming and care for school-age children in the community.

Find the time to stop by the ASC and congratulate Anjali and her staff for a job well done!



Plant Sale Committee Meets on Feb. 7 ... read more on page 4

Wild Things are mastering eating

In the Wild Things, we strive to provide the children with a regular eating schedule, a variety of nutrition, and the utensils needed for a successful eating experience.

We work hard to meet the needs of all our little ones whose ages range between four and twenty months. Our youngest infants are provided with great nutrition from their mother's breast milk and are fed on their own individual schedules. Our older infants and toddlers are fed on a more structured, yet flexible schedule. They enjoy morning snack generally between 9:45-10:30 am, lunch between 12:00-1:00 pm, and afternoon snack between 3:30-4:30 pm.



Because we know that nutrition affects the growth, behavior and learning of children, we provide a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy and water. When combined with the food sent from home, these little guys have all they need.

During snack and meal times the children are provided with small portions and seconds only if they ask for more. The Wild Things are learning sign language and say several words like *more*, *please*, *milk*, and *all done*. Although the children are learning to verbally communicate, they will still cry at times to let us know they need something.

It gives us pure delight to see young toddlers working hard to use their utensils in the correct manner. It is our goal to help the Wild Things move toward eating and drinking more independently.

— Debbie Pope

Sunshines are learning to go potty

Parents have been asking about potty training recently. In the Sunshines, we work closely with parents to let them know if their child used the potty. We jot down progress on a potty chart so parents can see how their child is doing at school. We ask questions about the child's process at home so we can try the same things here at PIC. When Sunshines are successful, we praise them and give them a sticker, which makes them feel proud of themselves.

There is no formula for potty training. Some children are more successful at home, while some are more successful at PIC. The bottom



line is that the children have to be developmentally ready.

Children need language skills to be able to tell teachers/parents when they have to use the potty. They also need muscle control. If their diaper is dry for a long period of time, it

means that they can store urine and regulate the muscles used for elimination.

A child also needs to be ready emotionally. He/she shouldn't cry or refuse to sit on the potty when they are asked to do so. A child ready for potty training will be bothered by a wet or poopy diaper. If having a dirty diaper on doesn't bother your child, that's an indication that they are not interested in potty training, yet.

If you decide to potty train your child, make sure your child is really ready! It's important to keep communication open with the teachers and make sure you have the support you need. Before long, your child will be wearing underwear!

— Demita Hill

Fireflies: Keeping PIC children safe

I recently took a four-hour training in Pediatric First Aid at PIC given by Rainbows Teacher and certified instructor Veronica Johnson. This training is a requirement for all Early Learning teachers and must be re-taken every three years. The reason that this course is so important is that it gives you the confidence to react appropriately in an emergency situation.

The training included a video, written questions and answers, and hands-on practice, which allowed me to learn all the information I needed to know. The information that I “re-learned” is important to the well being of all the kids that I come in contact with.



We used infant and toddler size CPR manikins to go over choking and the proper responses. We also learned about allergic reactions and how to administer an Epi pen. I loved the hands on session that let me hold the practice pen and get a feel for the

medicine. There are more allergies now than ever (or at least diagnosed now) and it is imperative that all the staff know how to give the medicine to the kids.

Veronica took her time to make sure that everyone felt as though they can help the child in their care quickly and when to call for help. All classrooms receive a First Aid book to keep in the room for reference. With this training, I know that I can handle any situation with the right actions.

— Joann Schock

Leapfrogs create and innovate!



This month, the Leapfrogs added a new center to our classroom called “Creation Corner.” Children and parents were asked to bring in interesting recyclables, trash and found objects to be placed in bins outside our classroom. During free play and center time, the Leapfrogs have been encouraged to use these objects to invent and create new items.

Children have been imagining up all sorts of things ranging from utilitarian, simple machines, to 3-D art - “a caterpillar princess.” Mateo’s mother and artist Paz Fernandez came in and helped us to make a robot-marionette out of pieces of styrofoam, a toothpaste box

and a paper towel roll, among other things. The Leapfrogs are having fun playing with the robot, walking it around, feeding it and building it a house in our block area.

This has been a great way to get kids collaborating, as well as completing and adding on to projects over the course of several days. Not only is this a fun way to use their imaginations, but Leapfrogs are learning the eco-conscious practice of reusing objects instead of throwing them out. Who needs toys when you’ve got boxes, buttons and string?

— Beth Menasion

Come for Wine & Cheese & PPP!

Ever wonder what the PIC Board does, or how it supports the teachers and your children at PIC? Have you thought about joining a PIC Board committee but not sure where to start? Are you afraid of an unknown time commitment?

PIC's Board of Directors invites you for Wine & Cheese on **Thursday, Feb. 16, from 5:30 - 7:00 pm** in the Small Gym. Learn about the Board and its various committees. Have fun while earning an hour of PPP. Child care for currently enrolled children. **RSVP to Lynne Piersol at lpiersol@parentinfantcenter.org by Feb 13.**

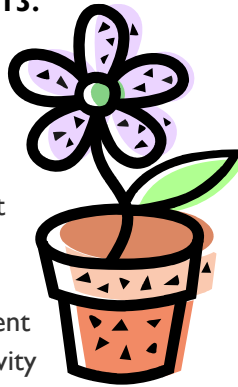


Help with the Plant Sale

Think spring by helping with PIC's annual Plant Sale, which provides the primary support for our Scholarship Fund. It's a fun, hands-on, **green** way to earn PPP hours!

We need help organizing plant selection, event promotion, a raffle, KidPots (where the creativity of PIC's children grows), the one-day sale outside the Penn Bookstore, and more.

Come to the next Committee Meeting on Tuesday, February 7 from 5:30 - 7:00 pm in the Staff Resource Room. Learn more and RSVP via email to Rachel Crossot at rcrossot@parentinfantcenter.org.



Planning Neighborhood Potlucks

Neighborhood Potlucks will be on **Sunday, March 4, 4:30-7:00 pm**. These casual gatherings are a great way to get to know other families at PIC. The Parent Involvement Committee is looking for families willing to host a potluck in their home. **Please send an email to Monava Jones at monavajones@gmail.com by February 6** to become a host. Let her know how many families you can accommodate and the ages of your children. PPP hours available for the set up and clean up time. Can't host, but want to come? Watch your mailbox and weekly e-news about more information!

PIC Nightlife Rocks the Big Gym

On January 26, the Parent Involvement Committee organized the first PIC Nightlife Party. Close to 40 parents from both Early Learning and ASC enjoyed food, drink and a great mix of music! It was a night to catch up with friends and meet new people. *Special thanks to Monica Calkins, Kristen Feemster, Leah Finnegan, Monava Jones, Megin Myers, and Yechiel Schur* who provided publicity, setup, music, and decorations.

Got Summer Plans?

We are getting ready for summer camp...are you? Current PIC families will get enrollment preference through March 30, but spots are given on a first-come, first-serve basis and space is limited. **Come to an information session on February 29** from 5:00 - 6:00 pm in the Small Gym. We will focus on camp for children who will be going to kindergarten in the fall, as well as address general camp questions. Contact Lynne Piersol at lpiersol@parentinfantcenter.org for more information.



Move Up Orientation

Questions about moving up at PIC? Want to know more about how decisions made? Join us at the **Move up Orientation on Thursday, February 23 from 5:00 - 6:00 pm in the Small Gym.**

Enrollment Changes?

Do you need to add or subtract days? If you are taking more than 4 weeks off this summer, we need to know by **March 1**. Remember that you must give 60 days' notice if you plan to leave the center. Email changes to Lynne Piersol at lpiersol@parentinfantcenter.org.