



JANUARY 2018



Message from the Director

Dear KFG Families,

I would like to wish all of our MCCA/KFG families a Happy New Year! I would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all the families who were able to donate to our Holiday Toy Drive. MCCA was able to contribute enough toys to fill up the trailer truck. Montgomery County Fire and Rescue along with Montgomery County Health and Human Services were so excited to receive and deliver the toys to families in need this holiday season.

Kathryn

What's New

WINTER PLAY

Young children do best when they have many opportunities to participate in physical activities throughout the day. A variety of play and movement activities will help children develop gross motor skills, balance, coordination and social skills. Children also gain health benefits such as proper bone development, a healthy heart, strong muscles, improved flexibility, and achievement of a healthy weight. In the winter months, participating in outdoor play may be less favorable than staying indoors where it is warm and cozy. However, it is important for young children to participate in outdoor play throughout the year, even in the winter months for many reasons.

Playing outside is good for children's bodies. Physical health is one of the best reasons to play outside. Kids who enjoy outdoor activities for at least an hour a day tend to be fitter and maintain healthier weights. Studies show that most youth do not produce enough vitamin D for optimal health. Therefore, when children play outside, they are more likely to get more vitamin D from appropriate sun exposure. Additionally, outdoor play helps to develop children's immune systems. Playing outside is also good for children's behavior. Time spent in outdoor activities, such as kickball, walking or free-play, helps to improve the behavior of children with attention and hyperactivity disorders. In fact, the chance to run, jump, and burn off some excess energy usually improves the indoor behavior of almost any young person. Children's brains can also get exercise while playing outdoors. Outdoor time, especially in green settings like parks and playgrounds, helps concentration and focus in the classroom. Creative outdoor play, such as building a fort or tree house, also helps kids develop active imaginations and problem-solving skills. Playing outside allows for child and adult connections. Any outdoor activity from vigorous games to quiet bird watching is a good way for multiple generations to spend time making memories together. Playing outside can include goal-directed activities ("Let's see if we can make some really big bubbles today!"), as well as simple exploration and discovery ("What kind of bugs are living on these flowers?"). When participating in outdoor activities during the winter months, keep safety in mind. Keep these basic tips in mind to ensure playing is a safe time: Ensure children are dressed properly. Children will need proper clothes for playing in colder temperatures. For example, children may need hats, scarves, mittens, boots, winter coats, snow pants, and a change of clothes. Use safe equipment. Some play equipment may be unsafe for children during the winter months. Additionally, the equipment may be covered with snow or ice. Therefore, plan activities that allow safe play, such as building snow people or painting the snow with food coloring. Stay active. In cold temperatures, both you and the children should constantly move and avoid standing still. Reason being, standing still in cold temperatures can lead to frostbite and hypothermia; therefore, stay in constant motion during cold temperatures. Stay hydrated. Winter activities and keeping warm takes up a lot of energy. It is important to drink plenty of water and fluids just as you would during warmer weather activities.

Mealtime Memo for Child Care from theicn.org



Important Reminders

WINTER WEATHER

As a friendly reminder, we communicate about weather related closings and delays as soon as we can via email. In the event we need to delay the opening of the center or close for the entire day, families will receive an email notification and an updated voice mail message will be left on the center's answering machine.

SICK POLICY

You can help us prevent the spread of germs and illness by observing our policy on sick children. Each child should be well enough to participate fully in all of the daily activities of the program. Our programs are not equipped or licensed to care for sick children. If your child becomes ill during the day, we will make the child as comfortable as possible and notify you to immediately pick up your child. Please do not bring your child to the center with symptoms of illness. If your child is sent home from the center, s/he will need to remain at home for at least 24 hours symptom free, or submit a written statement from the health care provider, approving the earlier return to the program. Please notify the center within 24 hours if your child develops or has been diagnosed with a communicable disease. Children who need medication, prescription or over-the-counter, will need a [medication authorization form](#) to be filled out and signed by a doctor before staff can administer it.

Upcoming Dates

Monday, January 1st: MCCA **Closed** for New Years Holiday

Monday, January 15th: MCCA **Closed** for MLK Holiday

Friday, January 26th: MCPS Closed, MCCA Open. Field trip for School Ageds.

Suggested Resources and Reading

<https://naturalearning.org/winter-play>

<https://www.fix.com/blog/keep-kids-playing-outdoors-in-winter/>

<http://www.kidactivities.net/category/Seasonal-Winter-Outside-Fun.aspx>