



The Center

The Newsletter of The Episcopal Center for Children

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It is so important for the school and the home to support student academic and social emotional development. This means that teachers and staff must collaborate with parents and guardians to support a child's growth.

We try to nurture this collaboration in a variety of ways. Social workers talk with a parent or guardian every day and offer ideas for ways to support students at home. We are always available to provide coaching and guidance to families that request it.

I would add if you feel that your relationship with us needs to be closer or more communicative, please reach out and call us. Talk with us. We always want to hear from you. We will do the best we can to support your child's development and you.



Dodd L. White
President & CEO

DoMore24 is Coming May 17-18, 2018!

If you have visited our campus, you have probably seen our rusted slides and sad swings, which date from when the Center was an orphanage many decades ago. We need a new playground, and we need your help to build it.

Through DoMore24, we are raising \$8,500 for our new playground fund. You can give after noon on May 17 and before noon on May 18 through domore24.org to be part of our campaign. This 24-hours of giving event is unique to the national capital area. We want to build a playground with Kaboom! that will replace our outdated broken swings and rusted slides and address the multiple needs of our students.

Play is so important for our students, as it helps them develop individually while nurturing social interaction and positive physical activity. A playground appropriate to their needs will be sized for ages 5-12, include elements for those coping with sensitivity challenges, and foster a love for play. Raising \$8,500 will get us half of the way to a new playground for our students.

Please support us today! Make a note on your calendar to support us May 17-18 through domore24.org. If you have questions, would like to contribute by check or not online, or would like to know more, please contact ami@steppingstoneLLC.com

Music Therapy

Our students have worked extremely hard in Music Therapy this semester. With new programming such as music video, piano, RT/Music, sensory music, songwriting, and vocal music - excitement within our program has increased immensely. Music video students completed the finishing touches on their project! Piano and vocal music students performed a joint concert at the Armed Forces Home on December 14th. Songwriting students performed original works at the Holiday Pageant on December 19th. We have so much we are doing!

Understanding IEP Documents

Part 2: The Behavior Intervention Plan

In our last newsletter, we discussed the elements included in the Individualized Education Program “IEP” document. The Behavior Intervention Plan (“BIP”) is a supporting document within the IEP. The BIP is “a plan of positive behavioral interventions in the IEP of a child whose behaviors interfere with her/his learning or that of others.” Proactive (antecedent) strategies - tools used to prevent/avoid problem behavior/dysregulation from occurring - should be implemented to define, teach and support appropriate student behaviors. The strategies are introduced to prevent the occurrence of any problem/challenging behaviors. Therefore, BIPs focus on changing the environment to increase the likelihood of appropriate behaviors.



Not every student with an IEP needs a BIP. But when the IEP team determines a student requires a BIP, the IEP team should develop the BIP using the following process:

1. Focus on the desired behavior, not the maladaptive behavior. For example, Lucy has difficulty maintaining focus and managing impulses, and these behaviors interfere with her ability to complete classroom tasks. Her BIP should focus on implementing changes to support Lucy in completing classroom tasks.
2. Identify positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) to get the desired behavior. To support Lucy in completing classroom tasks, the IEP team may consider, for example:
 - a. Visual cues to remind her to remain on task, and
 - b. Frequent breaks to leave class for a moment as an effective means of settling Lucy down and allowing her to return to the room ready to concentrate.
3. Detail the rewards for desired behaviors, as well as the consequences for undesired behaviors. When Lucy completes an assignment with less than two redirections/ prompts, she will earn three cubs cash for “Responsibility.” If Lucy does not complete her assignment, she will not earn the Cubs Cash and she will have to complete the assignment in Study Hall or for homework.

Effective BIPs help students, through consistent and constant practice, to learn to control their behaviors.

Supporting Student's Mental Health Needs

Most of us are attuned to a child's physical health symptoms and are prepared to address obvious medical needs. It's also important we be aware of our children's mental health needs.

Supporting your child's mental health needs can include, but are not limited to:

- Helping the child to feel good about him/herself,
- Supporting positive relationships with other children and adults, and
- Assisting the child with change, stress and other life situations.

Mental health needs could include conduct, adjustment issues, relationship difficulties and problematic eating. These can be symptoms of mental health problems along with symptoms of depression, grief, anxiety and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorders. Statistics show that mental, emotional or behavioral health problems affect children of all demographic groups, regardless of education, income, race or culture.

We must pay attention to children's behavior and moods. We should be familiar with what behavior is age appropriate for the child based on his/her stage of development. The key to attending to mental health issues is knowing when a child has gone past normal behavior and may need help. That's when it is important to consult with a health care professional.

It is always the season to nurture our children's mental health. Some common practices to develop and maintain good emotional and mental health for children include the following:

- Do your best to provide a safe home and community for our children.
- Provide nutritious meals, regular health check-ups, immunization and exercise.
- Learn the stages of child development.
- Encourage children to express their feelings. We must learn to respect those feelings.
- Promote mutual respect and trust.
- Listen to children.
- Encourage children's talents and accept their limitations.
- Spend time with your child regularly.
- Discipline constructively, fairly and consistently.
- Love unconditionally.
- Foster independence and self-worth.
- Show confidence in your child's ability to handle problems and handle new experiences.
- Seek help when you need it.

Resources for this article are adapted from Children's Mental Health Matters.

For additional information visit:
www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org

ECCofDC.ORG

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The Episcopal Center for Children admits children of any race, color, religious belief, nationality or ethnic origin. It does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religious beliefs, national origin or ethnicity.

ECC Voices:

Emily Cross

Our New Speech and Language Pathologist

Q How do students refer to you?

A Ms. Emily

Q Where did you grow up?

A Syracuse, New York

Q What is your favorite children's book?

A Peter Pan

Q What are your hobbies?

A Cooking, entertaining, decorating

Q How long have you been in the DC area?

A Since August of last summer

Q What's your favorite ECC dining hall meal so far?

A Oh, that's a tie between the ratatouille and curried chick peas

Q What is something you want to share with the ECC community about yourself?

A I'm trying to travel to all 50 States before I'm 40



Chef Steve's Spring Sugar Cookie Recipe

Ingredients

- 1 stick + 2 tbsp. salted butter
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- springtime sprinkles

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 325°.
2. Use an electric mixer to cream the sugar and butter, whipping the two until the butter is almost white and the mixture is light and fluffy, almost like a slightly gritty frosting, then stir in flour.
3. Form the cookies into 1" balls, placing them about 2 inches apart on a baking sheet. If using sprinkles, flatten cookies into a disc shape and top with sprinkles.
4. Bake for 11 to 15 minutes, or until the edges of the cookies are lightly golden.

Boys on the MOVE

Boys on the MOVE is a Male Mentoring Program that provides comprehensive activities to promote personal development, academic improvement, and other social and educational advancement among males at the Episcopal Center for Children. Our mission statement is to transform the culture of minority males by decreasing behavior issues, and reaching their hearts and minds through mentoring relationships and group experiences. Every Thursday mentees participate in "Dress for Success". Dress for Success is a program created to provide independence by providing support, professional attire and the development tools to help the mentees thrive at school and in life. The goal is to build self-esteem, courage, enhanced academic awareness, community engagement and look professional while doing it.

In April, An Open Book Foundation (AOBF) relocated and occupied office space at ECC. An Open Book Foundation's mission is "to promote literacy among children and teens in Washington, DC-area low-income settings by giving books to students and schools and providing access to authors and illustrators."

Right before spring break Casey Trees came to ECC to plant two trees on the upper field of the campus. Our third grade class especially enjoyed watching the process of planting the trees. Both trees are replacements for trees that had to be removed due to age or disease. One tree is dedicated to Mary Brown, a long standing ECC Auxiliary Board President and Member. The second tree was donated by Tom Manion, current ECC Board Member. Casey Trees is a "Washington D.C.-based nonprofit, established in 2002, committed to restoring, enhancing and protecting the tree canopy of the nation's capital."