

# Happy New Year!

Kirsten's Day Care  
Annandale, VA

Spring, 2014-15

## Mrs. K's Newsletter



### Happy Spring!

We are all enjoying spring here. The children are so happy to play outside, sometimes twice a day! While outside, we blow bubbles, play in the sand box, play with the bikes/push toys, dig, play hide and go seek, play with chalk and, best of all, go on nature hikes. They love exploring the back yard and discovering different plants, animals, insects and more.

### Daily schedule

I haven't done daily reports lately, but that doesn't mean we aren't still very busy. Our schedule is pretty consistent (I have a printout of it by the circle time board).

7:00-We eat, then we do story time (circle time) with the kids, which includes discussing the letter of the week, our theme (birds, most recently), and read a story (our favorite is Chicka, Chicka, Boom, Boom).

8:00-I walk Monika to school, and once in a while, some of the other kids tag along.

8:15-I do preschool time with the older kids, while Ms. Yesi and Ms. L reinforce different stories, themes, and songs with the younger kids.

8:50-I walk Noelle to preschool and, again, some of the younger kids come along.

9:15-Snacktime

9:30-We have free play, which includes everything from reading, arts & crafts, rolling the ball, listening to & playing music, and going outside.

11:15-Lunch

11:45-2:15-Naptime

2:30-Snacktime

3:00-I do story time until everyone is ready to go outside or start another activity (if the weather is bad).

## Trainings

**Dr. Rene**-I coordinated a workshop for my local child care association, Burke Child Care Connection. She presented a fantastic training on how to help children with “Tantrums, Whining, and Backtalk”. For more information on Dr. Rene, visit her website at:

<http://parentingplaygroups.com/>

**Sensory**-This training taught providers how to create, choose, and use sensory play with children of all ages. “By giving children the opportunity to investigate materials with no preconceived knowledge, you’re helping them develop and refine their cognitive, social and emotional, physical, creative and linguistic skillsets.” For more information on sensory play, visit:

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/child-development/sensory-play/developing-and-cultivating-skills-through-sensory-play/>

My assistants and I are required by the State to receive at least 16 hours of continuing education annually. We all meet or exceed this standard. I often have 40 or more hours of continuing education.

## Arts & Crafts

With age comes better fine motor skills. The infants and young toddlers get to participate just as much as the older kids. They enjoy finger painting and many have even attempted holding paint brushes. The twos and threes are drawing more shapes and becoming more precise in their work. They know most of their colors and most of them have a favorite color that they always reach for! The older threes do much more detailed work. They often label their work, with a little help.



We use a variety of media for art: crayons, markers, glue sticks, cotton balls, pipe cleaner, paint brushes, pom poms, stickers, stamps, play-doh, and, of course, our fingers!

## Curriculum

**Gardening:** We are in the middle of our gardening activities. Not only are Paul and I planting in the big garden, which the kids will help us pick and eat, but they are planting some flowers and vegetables in planters.

**Easter:** We just finished up some fantastic Easter lessons. We did a number of Easter egg hunts, which all the children were involved in. We also did several art projects using cotton balls, stickers, glue, paint, and much more.

**Birds:** We’ve wrapped up our bird lesson. We learned about different kinds of birds, bird parts, and what they eat, which the big kids either got a kick out of or were grossed out by. We have many birds nesting in our bird houses and in the trees. I just put out the hummingbird feeders, which are so exciting to watch. The neighbors have already had a hummingbird visit their feeders, so hopefully we will also soon. Many of the kids can recognize robins, cardinals, blue jays, owls, chicks, crows, and even more!

**Puppets:** We use puppets to tell stories, play make-believe, and to talk about animal names, colors, sounds, and more.

**Babies and toddlers:** The babies and toddlers have received lots of one on one time sitting, reading, and exploring a number of toys that I regularly rotate for them. We talk a lot about body parts with all the babies and toddlers.

**Al’s Pals:** The preschoolers now know almost all the Al’s Pals songs and can tell you about the many lessons that they have learned. Al has taught them how to problem-solve, calm down, make friends, and make good choices regarding our bodies (exercise, eating, etc.) Read more about [Al’s Pals here](#).

## Other Skills/Activities

Other skills that they are working on include:



**Using positional words**-over, under, behind, between, around, etc. We sometimes do this by putting a line of masking tape on the floor and asking the children to stand “behind” the line, for example.

**Washing hands**-we wash our hands with the following song: “Top and bottom, top and bottom, in between, in between, rub them both together, rub them both together, they’re all clean, squeaky clean!” (I think that is from Nick Jr.)

**Nature walks**-we talk about everything that we see outside, from the names of the different plants to the earthworms that we dig up and hold (well, only some of the kids hold them).

**Reading**-we choose books that match our themes, as well as whatever other books we choose from the library. We recently did the “Wheels on the Bus”, Easter books, bird books, and we will begin working on flower and gardening books.

**Beach days**-look for more information about our beach days. Children will bring their swimsuits and a towel and we’ll play in the water table and with the sprinkler!



## Mom's Day Out

This summer, we’ll continue to do “Mom’s (or Dad’s) Day Out”. During summer, we allow the children to guide the learning, mostly in the outdoors. We will use the [“Growing up Wild”](#) curriculum.

The hours will be 8:00-4:00 and will include breakfast, lunch, and a snack. The fees are \$75 for children under one and \$65 for children one

and older. Although there is sometimes room for drop-ins, I need to know by the end of the previous month which days you will be coming for staffing and other planning purposes. Fees are still paid at the beginning of the month, unless there is space and you “drop in”.

It will be most Tuesdays and Wednesdays, with some exceptions due to vacations. Below is my summer schedule:,

June 23-24

June 30-July 1

July 7-8

July 14-15

July 21-22

July 27-28 (Monday & Tuesday)

Closed on August 4-5

August 12-13 (Wednesday & Thursday)

August 18-19

August 25-26

## 1-2-3 Magic

We have been using [1-2-3 Magic](#) as a discipline system since I started doing day care. This year, I purchased the DVDs that go with it so I can not only improve my implementation of the program, but also my assistants’ and parents’. It is designed for children 2-12. The DVDs are available for loan, which I highly recommend for all families with children two and above. Dr. Phelan, the man behind 1-2-3, Magic, is quite entertaining and has made an easy program to follow. Please let me know if you would like to loan the DVD.



## End of year party:

Every year, I do an end of year party for all families and alumni. Please mark your calendar for Sunday, June 14 from 11:00-12:30 at My Gym. It is located at 9566 Burke Rd., Burke, VA 22015. I will serve lunch with dessert for your family! I will send out an Evite so I can keep track of reservations. I hope you can all make it!



## Birthdays

### May birthdays!

Please welcome Frank's baby brother Leo DeRocco!!! He was born on Thursday, May 7

May 11: Emmett turns 3

### June birthdays!

June 20: Clara turns 3

June 27: Sheila turns 4

### Summer birthdays!!!

July 8: Lillian turns 2

August 21: Adelyn turns 2

August 18: Olivia turns 2

## Reminders

**Closings:** [FCPS Employee Calendar](#)

Upcoming Holidays are listed below:

- May 25: Memorial Day
- June 22: Last full-time day

**Back to School:** August 31 with the new hours of 7:00am-4:30pm

**Play area:** Please only allow your children to play in the back yard where they are visible to us (not on the decks without full railings or behind the sheds by the gates). They are not allowed in the mulched areas where we have lights and plants growing. This is for safety purposes, as well as respecting our property that is not intended for children.

**Laundry room:** Please do not let children play in the laundry room. Always close the door behind you.

**Outside food:** Please do not bring in outside food. We have children with allergies. Also, other children may want that food and not what I am serving, which is disruptive. Finally, children may only eat and drink at the table so there are no spills, which the babies pick up and put in their mouths.

**Parking:** Help me stay on good terms with my neighbors. Please do not park in the driveway before 8:00am (it's a County zoning requirement).





