



NEWSLETTER

December, 2019

CALENDAR

- December 1 TUITION DUE
4 Parent Conferences no school for students except Red and Teal
6 Friday, 10:30 Open House for Yellow 2's
21 – January 3 is winter break for all classes
January 6, 2020 is the first day back to school after break

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent Conferences are an important part of preschool here at Fairlington. This is the time for parents to share insights about their children with teachers and teachers to report on what children are doing in our classrooms. We recognize the importance of parents being a child's first teacher and we look to partner with parents during your child's time here at Fairlington. For that reason, we close school for parent conferences so both teachers may be present at the conferences. Teachers have sent out sign ups. It is best for children not to attend with parents. Since there is no school, I encourage you to work out conference times with your children's friends so while you are having your conference, someone will watch your child and then you watch your friend's child during their conference. The playground will be available (or the fellowship hall in case of rain). For the Red and Teal rooms, parent conferences will be held at another time; teachers will be in touch with parents.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

Because we are a diverse community and we like to celebrate all holiday traditions, each class will do their own celebrating.

ODDS AND ENDS

- **Tree Sale:** The Christmas tree sale will be set up outside the beginning December 6 so be extra careful with your children in the parking lot! The Fairlington United Methodist

Men sell the trees. In the past, they have donated to the preschool so if you do not have a favorite place to purchase a tree, consider the trees here. They are wonderfully fresh!

- **Dress your child appropriately for the weather.** Make sure they are prepared to go outside every day. As the weather gets colder, make sure there is a warm jacket, hats and mittens for your child. Boots are helpful if it has been raining or snowing. Please mark your child's outerwear with his/her name on the label. Also, please check the lost and found outside the office for items that are missing.

SNOW AND WEATHER CLOSINGS

A reminder that Fairlington follows Alexandria City Public Schools closing schedule if there is snow or ice. If Alexandria schools are closed, Fairlington Preschool will be closed. If Alexandria schools open 1 or 2 hours late, we will open at 10:00 am and close at noon for all classes. Community Partnership classes will have bus pick up 2 hours later than the normal time. A message will be left on our voicemail if there is a delay or closing. If possible, an email will be sent. You may sign up for emergency alerts from Alexandria City Public Schools on their website. Also watch any of the major television networks or listen to WTOP radio to hear about Alexandria City Public Schools closings.

FROM THE DIRECTOR:

This month's article comes from Exchange Every Day, November 11, 2019

Too Much Screen Time Linked to Lower Brain Development

Screen time use by infants, toddlers and preschoolers has exploded over the last decade, concerning experts about the impact of television, tablets and smartphones on these critical years of rapid brain development," writes Sandee La Motte on the *cnn.com* website.

She explains, "Now a new study scanned the brains of children 3 to 5 years old and found those who used screens more than the recommended one hour a day without parental involvement had lower levels of development in the brain's white matter -- an area key to the development of language, literacy and cognitive skills."

In the book [*Literacy: A Beginnings Workshop Book*](#), Leah Curry-Rood reminds us all of the importance of cultivating children's love of reading from an early age, one way to balance the draw of screen time. She offers a number of tips for early educators and families to help aid children's healthy literacy development. Here are just a few:

- "Read stories aloud every day, any time, any place..."
- Travel with books... [This one is especially for families, as she recommends keeping a box of books in the car and letting children bring a book to look at while standing in line at grocery stores, banks etc. Early childhood educators could use this tip, also, for those (hopefully) few times when children are waiting a little bit.]
- Set up a library learning center... [This one is more for early childhood programs... she suggests actually calling it a library.]
- Encourage children to share favorite books..." [This could be with other children in an early childhood program and/or with other family members.]

Source: "[MRIs show screen time linked to lower brain development in preschoolers](#)," by Sandee La Motte, *cnn.com*, November 4, 2019

At Fairlington Preschool, we do take literacy seriously and hope that when your child comes home with the library book they have chosen, you make a point to read it with them. Reading is a part of the school day here every day; including even when we are outside!