

The Bear Facts

Celebrating 65 Years of Early Childhood Education

MARCH 2023



Dear Parents,

The March winds are blowing. We will have warm days, cool days, windy days, wet days, and everything in between. Please continue to send your child(ren) to school with weather appropriate clothing, including boots, as our play areas can get muddy. Be sure to label everything!

March Madness at BHPCNS!

Get ready to make your predictions and complete a NCAA Men's College Basketball bracket! The Parents' Group will be sharing the details as we get closer to the tournament! All proceeds raised will support the Alla Johnson Memorial Scholarship Fund providing financial assistance to families in need. For more information on the AJMS Fund please see page 6.

Summer Camp planning is well underway.

We are currently accepting camp registrations. Camp is open to all children currently enrolled in our 2s' program and ages 3 through rising 1st graders. Friends, cousins, neighbors are welcome. Campers do not need to be currently enrolled BHPCNS students (with the exception of 2-year-olds). Current students who are not potty trained may attend camp for an additional \$85 fee. Click here for the camp application or see page 7 for more details or questions.

MCPS Kindergarten Sign-Up.

If you have a child who will turn 5 before September 1, 2023, they are eligible to attend Montgomery County Public Schools, (MCPS) in September. Now is the time to register your child and check your local schools for Parent Orientation events.

Reminder - March 23rd there will be no STAY + PLAY Programming.

The staff will be participating in a 3-hour professional development training class.

Happy March Everyone!

Liz Liz Sobrino Director BHPCNS

March 1st

- Tuition Due
- Field Trip to Imagination Stage Pre-K Classes

March 6th

 Toilet Training Coffee with GROWING MINDS 9:15-10:30 am (Church Library)

March 10th

• Scholastic Book Orders Due

March 13th, 14th, & 15th

Picture Day
 13th MWF Classes & Room 105
 14th TTh Classes
 15th MTWThF Classes

March 14th

• Brackets with Bradley Bear

March 16th & 17th

 St. Patrick's Day Party 16th TTh Classes 17th MWF & MTWThF Classes

March 20th

• Builders & Makers Enrichment Program 8 Sessions 2:30-3:30 pm

March 20th - 22nd

• Bug Man visits BHPCNS

March 22nd & 23rd

• Hearing Screenings

March 23rd

- Teddy Bear Playdates Enrichment Program 8 Sessions 2:30-3:30 pm
- NO STAY & PLAY
 Staff Professional Development 1-4 pm

March 30th & 31st

Easter Party
 30th TTh Classes
 31st MWF and MTWThF Classes

March 31st

NO STAY & PLAY Spring Break Begins

WEBSITE / FACEBOOK / INSTAGRAM / GOOGLE GROUPS / YOUTUBE

STAY CONNECTED











UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH MADNESS BRACKETS with BRADLEY BEAR

March 14th

BHPCNS is going to get lucky in March by asking families and relatives of the school to participate in March Madness. Our bracket is through CBS Sports and will be named Brackets with Bradley Bear. It is easy to participate whether you are a basketball fan or not and fun to track your progress!

The AJMS Fund is an important mission to BHPCNS, as it provides financial aid to all children and families in need at BHPCNS. We currently award \$40,000 annually to families who would otherwise not be able to afford preschool.

All proceeds raised will support the Alla Johnson Memorial Scholarship Fund, (AJMSF) - there will also be a prize-winning bracket or two!



From a festive tracker on the walls, to jersey days, to tracking your brackets online in hopes of a winning prize - we can't wait to kick things off in the coming weeks!

PAJAMA BREAKFAST

April 25th & 26th from 8:30am - 8:55am

Students + ONE special guest are invited to join the Parents' Group for bagels and coffee before drop off in your fave pjs!

Tuesday, April 25th RSVP <u>HERE</u>



Wednesday, April 26th RSVP <u>HERE</u>





SUMMER SEND-OFF PARTY

May 24th

We will carry on a few of our annual traditions: family pizza ordering, music by John Henry for the kids, and more.

Mark your calendars now. More information will be provided closer to the date.



Volunteer to help HERE





BHPCNS PARENTS' GROUP CONTINUED

Thanks to everyone for your continued support. If you are able to volunteer to help with any upcoming events please sign up HERE.





Kaeli Duggan

kaeli.duggan@gmail.com

Cass Price

cass.price@gmail.com



Parents' Group Co-Chairs

BHPCNS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear Parents.

Happy Spring to all! We hope that warmer weather brings a decrease in colds and other sicknesses in the BHPCNS community. The BHPCNS Board thanks you for your past and future cooperation with the school's important illness protocols.

The Board is meeting this month on Monday, March 20, 2023 at 7:30 pm. If you have any topics you would like included on the meeting agenda, please contact the Board at board@bhpcns.org. This email address can be used throughout the year to share questions, concerns, and ideas about the school with the Board.



Easter is just around the corner. Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church invites all interested families to our Palm Sunday (April 2) and Easter Sunday (April 9) services, as well as our annual Easter egg hunt. Details about the church's Holy Week services can be found on the church's website at www.bradleyhillschurch.org. You can also email the church's Director of Christian Education, Matt Nabinger (matt@bradleyhillschurch.org), for more information or with questions.





Rosanna Morrison, BHPCNS Board Chair Vicki Petrides, BHPCNS Board Vice Chair



BHPCNS STRATEGIC PLAN

Thank you to everyone who has taken time to review BHPCNS's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan—a set of goals and objectives to help guide the school's decision making over the next 5 years. The Plan can be found on the school's website, www.bhpcns.org, and via this QR code.



The Plan's objectives are organized under the following goals:

- · Creative, Safe & Healthy Learning Environment
- · Top-Tier, Play-Based Program
- · Welcoming, Inclusive & Diverse Community
- · Comprehensive Communications Strategy

As we continue to move the Plan forward, the Board would like to hear your thoughts. The January letter included a link to a short survey to allow parents to share their comments and ideas for implementing the Plan's goals and objectives. The survey can be accessed by going to www.bhpcns.org or via this QR code.



The school is also looking for volunteers to help make the Plan's goals and objectives a reality. If you are in a position to help, please reach out to Liz Sobrino at <u>lsobrino@bhpcns.org</u> or the Board at board@bhpcns.org



BHPCNS BOARD MEETING

Monday, March 20th at 7:30 pm

If you have any topics you would like included on the agenda, please email board@bhpcns.org.



This email address can be used to share questions, comments, and ideas with the Board throughout the year.

BHPCNS ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES

DENTIST DR. MARKO VISITS BRADLEY HILLS



A BIG THANK YOU to Dr. Marko for coming to Bradley Hills and teaching all our cubs about dental hygiene.

We learned all about our teeth:

- How, why and when to brush.
- Why we go to the dentist.
- · How many teeth we have as children.
- How many teeth we have as an adult.

We scrubbed sugar bugs off teeth, practiced flossing playdough from between teeth, painted with electric toothbrushes, and made smiles out of mini marshmallosws.





PARENT COFFEE with GROWING MINDS

Monday, March 6th from 9:15-10:30am



POTTY TRAINING coffee & convergation





Are you thinking of toilet training your child?



Are you in the throes of toilet training?



Do you think, "my kid goes potty on the potty, but they continue to struggle with..."

If any of the above applies to you, come join other parents and GROWING MINDS to talk about your triumphs and difficulties related to potty training!

WHEN: MONDAY, MARCH 6TH @ 9:15AM

RSVP HERE

WHERE: BHPC LIBRARY

This event is FREE. BHPCNS families are invited and encouraged to bring any friends who are interested in attending. Child care will be provided in adjoining room. Please RSVP so we know how much coffee to brew.



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Santiago Sanchez Linnea Kim Jack Schindler Connor Dill James Thomas







Nikka Mauro Scotty Sherman Oliver Martinez Lauren Natelli

When sending in birthday treats, please send in small cupcakes, mini muffins, fruit kabobs, etc. Keep classroom food allergies in mind. We share birthday treats at snack time. There is a snack ingredient form outside the office and on our website. Please complete the allergen form or send in a list of ingredients so we can be aware of any possible allergens. If you have any questions, please reach out to your child's teacher or the office.

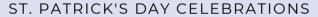
SCHOOL PICTURE DAYS

March 13th, 14th, and 15th

Stone Photography will be on site to take our school pictures.

- March 13th MWF Classes and Room 105
- March 14th TTh Classes
- March 15th MTWThF Classes

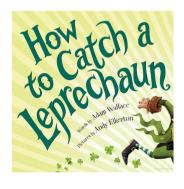
Photos will be available for purchase in a few weeks. Sibling photos for siblings attending BHPCNS may be arranged. Please contact the office for details 301-365-2909.



March 16th & 17th

March 16th - TTh Classes March 17th - MWF & MTWThF Classes

St. Patrick's Day is celebrated at BHPCNS with a "Can you catch a leprechaun?" activity. This is a fun and easy activity to do at home. Find an old shoebox, some string, pipe cleaners, maybe something golden, markers, etc. and have your child(ren) design a leprechaun trap. Then set your trap and wait to see what happens. We've never caught a leprechaun here but they always come by and mess up our classrooms and leave a surprise!





HERE is a wonderful book to inspire your leprechaun hunt.

HEARING, SPEECH & OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SCREENINGS

HEARING SCREENINGS

- March 22nd & 23rd for all 3-year-old and Pre-K Classes
- Volunteer to help <u>HERE</u>

SPEECH SCREENINGS

April 20th & 21st for all ages

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SCREENINGS – dates TBD for all ages

Teachers and parents will recommend students for speech and OT screenings. Parents will be notified in advance and a signed permission slip will be required for all speech and OT screenings. Many of the screenings are recommended rescreens from those completed this past fall.



SPRING BREAK

March 31st - April 11th

BHPCNS will close Friday, March 31st at 12:30 pm. There will be Early Morning and Lunch Bunch on Friday, the 31st but no Stay + Play. We will reopen on Tuesday, April 11th. Early Morning, Lunch Bunch, and Stay & Play will be held on April 11th

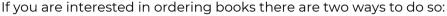


Have a wonderful Spring Break!

SCHOLASTIC BOOK ORDERS

March 10th

Last week a Scholastic Book flyer went home in your child's tote bag.



- 1. Fill out the form on last page of the flyer, bring it to the office with a check made out to Scholastic Book Club.
- Order online at <u>ScholasticBookClub.com</u> and use BHPCNS account code L8HGN. There you can add additional books to your order. Online orders require credit card payment.





BHPCNS receives points for each book purchased and uses these points to select free books, to enhance our library.

Deadline for ordering is March 10th. Books will be delivered to Bradley Hills for distribution.

Books are a great gift in Easter baskets!

Thank you for your support!



ALLA JOHNSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Alla Louise Carnduff Johnson, former museum docent and government analyst, founded the Nursery School at Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church in 1957. She expressed a keen interest in wildlife, wildflowers, the stock market, seashells, and pottery. She was a quiet benefactor to numerous educational endeavors including BHPCNS.

The Alla Johnson Memorial Scholarship was established upon her death to help ensure that any child currently enrolled in BHPCNS would be allowed to stay at school in the event of an unexpected financial hardship. During the 2021-22 school year, the school's general scholarship fund was merged with the AJMSF to provide aid to even more families. As a member of the community, BHPCNS has always prided itself in not letting finances prevent a child from attending its school. We see this need growing. Over the past ten years, BHPCNS has awarded over \$200,000 to families, with close to \$40,000 awarded this current school year.

BHPCNS feels, as Alla Johnson did, that a quality early childhood education is essential to the social, emotional, and academic well-being of every child. Your support will help ensure that no child will be turned away. To make a tax-deductible donation, please contact the office.

2023 SUMMER CAMP: THE PRESCHOOLER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY



Campers may stay until 2:30 pm for an additional \$280 per camp session

Ages:

Two-year-olds**

Three, Four & Five-year-olds

Rising Kindergartners & First Graders for Fall 2023

*An additional \$85 fee for any child who is not fully toilet trained. BHPCNS considers a child fully potty-trained when the child is able to articulate their need to go to the bathroom, can manage their clothing, and does not have recurring accidents at school.

** Must be 2 years of age by September 15, 2022 and currently enrolled at BHPCNS for the 22-23 school year.

SPACE CAMP - DONATIONS NEEDED



Please help us have an out of this world experience at summer camp this year by bringing us your emptied, cleaned, 2-liter soda bottles. We will use them to create the most fantastic jet packs which, along with our campers' imagination, will transport us to the most outer reaches of the universe.

To do so, though, we need a lot and I mean a LOT of bottles, like 200 of 'em!

Please bring by the school office anytime. Thank you!

IMPORTANT KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION



MCPS Kindergarten Registration is Happening Now!

MCPS elementary schools need to know if your child will be attending their school in September. To register your child, call your local elementary school. It is very helpful to the elementary schools to know the number of children attending in the fall as soon as possible. Based on projected enrollments your child's elementary school may need to add another class, add another teacher, increase class size, and/or close a class. While your child won't start school until September the elementary schools are already making their staffing projections for the fall

Ashburton: 240-740-1300 Bannockburn: 240-740-1270 Bells Mill: 240-740-0480 Bethesda: 240-204-5300 Beverly Farms: 240-740-0200 Bradley Hills: 240-204-5210

Burning Tree: 240-740-1750 Carderock Springs: 240-740-0540

Chevy Chase: 301-657-4994

Garrett Park: 240-740-0700

Kensington Parkwood: 240-740-3700

Ritchie Park: 240-740-6310 Rosemary Hills: 301-920-9990 Seven Locks: 240-740-0940 Somerset: 240-740-1100 Westbrook: 240-740-1040 Wood Acres: 240-740-1127 Wyngate: 240-740-1080

When contacting your local elementary school ask if they are hosting any informational kindergarten meetings for parents. Several schools offer virtual tours to give you an overview of their school.

For more information about MCPS and Kindergarten, visit the MCPS website by clicking here.

From NAEYC, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, 4 Tips Every Kindergarten Teacher Wants You to Know



SCHOOL ROUTINES

Morning Drop-Off: Children are welcome in classrooms at 8:55. Do not drop your child off before 8:55 as teachers are still preparing for the day.

Handwashing at Morning Drop-Off: All children are to be taken to the bathroom by a caregiver to have their hands washed upon arriving at school and before entering their classroom. This simple task cuts down on the transmission of germs and allergens and keeps everyone healthier.

Pick-up Times: Please be prompt when picking up your child at the end of the school day. We allow for a 10 minute grace period, but after that time, your child will be waiting in the office for you to pick them up.

PRE-WRITING SKILLS

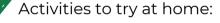
Pre-writing skills are the lines and strokes kids need to master and know BEFORE learning how to print the alphabet. Each of these lines are developed in a sequence, based on how old the child is.



- Vertical Line Age 2 imitates, age 3 copies/masters
- Horizontal Line Age 2 1/2 imitates, age 3 copies/masters
- Circle Shape Age 2 1/2 imitates, 3 copies/masters
- Cross Shape (+) Age 3 1/2 imitates, age 4 copies/masters
- Square Shape Age 4
- Right/Left Diagonal Line Age 4 1/2
- X Shape Age 5
- Triangle Age 5



Since the typical age for children working on pre-writing lines is ages 2-5, it is a good idea to focus on fine motor skills that promote learning these lines and shapes instead of using paper and pencils/crayons. Your child will need the fine motor strength these activities provide in order to have good pre-writing lines and later good letter formations.



- 10 Hands-On Ways to Work on Pre-Writing Lines
- <u> 6 Pre-Writing Activities for Kids</u>
- 12 Fun Ways to Practice Handwriting with Kids
- On The Farm Pre-Writing Packet for Preschoolers
- Basics of Pre-Writing Skills for Kids



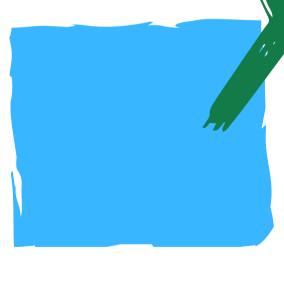
SPRING AHEAD

Sunday, March 12th at 3:00am

Spring Forward for an extra hour of daylight!

A good night's sleep is so important to having a successful day. As wonderful as it is to have an extra hour of day light, it can wreak havoc on a child's sleep schedule. Click here for more information on how to gradually prepare your little one for this change to their schedule.









SPRING 2023 Enrichment Programs for Social-Emotional Learning and Beyond ages 3-5



Facilitation of play, feelings, and social skills development, developed by Growing Minds and led by Kirstin Springer, Early Childhood Specialist



BUILDERS and MAKERS

8 Mondays: March 20, 27, April 3, 17, 24, May 1, 8, 15 (no class on April 10) 2:30-3:30 pm

Children engage in social-emotional, fine and gross motor development, and problem solving through playful experiences of building together. Each weekly session involves an opportunity to use a variety of materials to build a collaborative structure based on a story or problem that your child can help solve. Participants practice planning, taking turns, frustration tolerance, compromising, and communicating.

TEDDY BEAR PLAYDATES

8 Thursdays: March 23, 30, April 13, 20, 27, May 4, 11, 18 (no class on April 6) 2:30-3:30 pm

Children engage in social-emotional, fine and gross motor development, and empathy building through dramatic play with their teddy bear or stuffed animal. Each weekly session involves a new opportunity for nurturing dramatic play such as visiting the doctor, getting ready for bed, saying goodbye, caring for someone who is sick, or celebrating a birthday. Participants practice talking about feelings (their own and others), frustration tolerance, self-regulation, and mindfulness.



REGISTER HERE



Each 8 session program costs \$240.

Make checks payable to BHPCNS and bring to the office.

Find out more: KirstinS@growingmindstherapy 301-235-9927 x7



SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE (3-year-old & Pre-K) with Mrs. Goodstein

Mrs. Goodstein reports: In March we are going learn many different signs related to animals. We will learn lots of farm, zoo, and wild animal signs.

Most animals have a distinguishing feature that sets them apart from other animals. This unique feature is often recreated as part of the animals ASL sign. Which makes them all easy to remember. Ask your son/daughter which animal signs they learned.



ART (all ages) & SCIENCE (3-year-old & Pre-K) with Mrs. Mac 'N Cheese



The theme for the month is movement.

In Art, we will practice how to show movement in a painting. The 2-year-old classes will use their fingers as paint brushes and move the paint with their hands. The older classes will use thumb printing with stick figure bodies to show how our bodies can show movement.

In Science, we will capture movement by using our minds and our bodies to create a healthier "me".

SINGING with Ms. Casey (all ages)

What a wonderful month it's been! We sang songs that warmed our hearts and reminded each other of all of the unexpected ways we can show friends and family how we love them. There were several days this month when we had to conjure our imagination to sing about polar bears, gearing up for cold weather, and making snowmen. In March, spring fever will get under way as we start to see signs of life emerge from the winter landscape. Transitioning from songs about snow to flowers and insects is one of the gentler ways to mark the passing of time. It's been fun to reflect on all of the things we've learned since starting school and looking forward to the new things we'll experience ahead. "Make new friends but keep the old" is a constant reminder that while change is inevitable, we can cherish all of our friends past, present, and future for the things that make us each of us unique and special.



STAY & PLAY PROGRAMMING

MONDAYS

sports & games



Coach Cardoni Shares:

We throw off our dancing shoes and start a new unit on Hockey. We will be working on drills to improve hand eye coordination with the hockey stick and "pucks" through dribbling skills and shooting techniques. Mid-March we transition to a unit on Lacrosse. The bear cubs will be learning to control the ball with their lacrosse stick while running through a series of obstacles, passing a ball to a teammate, and ultimately shooting on goal. Throughout the month we will work on teamwork and agility.

TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS



dance

Dance Instructor Ms. Colleen Shares: Our dancers are having a wonderful time dancing the weeks away! As they leap, spin, twist, and practice their moves, they are preparing for our spring Under the Sea show.

When our dancers aren't dancing they are busy crafting to create the most amazing under the sea scene!

TUESDAYS

science

Scientist Biggs Reports:

In March, our Wiggling Wizards will learn about air pressure and air flow. Balloons will fly like rockets. Eggs will squeeze into glass bottles without cracking. Then, we'll make water float. Is it magic? No. It's Physics!!!!



WEDNESDAYS

cooking



Our chefs are marching right along picking up all sorts of kitchen skills! We are so proud not only of the techniques that they've mastered, but their willingness to sample everything they make. The big surprise favorite so far---asparagus wrapped with phyllo dough! Buttermilk biscuits, banana muffins, Irish soda bread, blueberry muffins and bread pudding are all on this month's menu. Will one of these become the new fan favorite? Stay tuned! Bon Appetit!!

THURSDAYS geography

Travel Agent Frid Shares:

We will be jetting down under to the only country that can call itself a continent; Australia. With an abundance of rich culture, wildlife, and terrain, there will be plenty to learn about this beautiful country. Boomerangs, marsupials and Waltzing Matilda, here we come!



FRIDAYS





Yogi Myers Reports:

Our Yogi Bears will continue to practice mindfulness while flowing through poses that celebrate the joys of spring. Our March practices will focus on the Life Cycle of a Butterfly, Springtime, St. Patrick's Day and Easter. After a long winter, we are ready to embrace the delights of the new season. Namaste

BRADLEY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Spring is in the air! At least it is in mid-February when it's 60 degrees and sunny! We look forward to opportunities to be outside again and enjoy the grounds and the sun.

Family Connections Lunch - After church on Sunday, March 5, we are holding another Family Connections Lunch for families with children from birth to 5th grade. The topic this month is reconnecting and getting to know one another with some ice-breaker exercises along with a demonstration of what Godly Play looks like in the young children's classes. All are welcome! Contact Matt at matt@bradleyhillschurch.org if you are interested in attending.



Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22. On Sunday, February 26, children will receive the traditional "fish boxes" for One Great Hour of Sharing as a way of encouraging stewardship. In our cashless society, it's hard to find ways to teach our children about money and giving. These boxes offer a great opportunity for conversation and serving the needs of others.

Weekly Church Services - We are holding in-person church services at 8:30 and 10:30 with Virtual Worship Services at 10:30 am on Sundays at the link below. We also offer "Children's Church" in person for ages 3-fifth grade during the service (see details below). Watch Services Live <u>Click Here</u>.



Church School: After the Children's Message in the sanctuary (about 10:45 or 10:50 am), all children ages 3 – 5th grade are invited to join our classes which are outside when possible. Children aged 3 – 2nd grade participate in the Godly Play model of church school with experienced teachers who are trained in that model. Children in 3rd-5th grade participate in a different curriculum geared to their age group. Masks and physical distancing are required for all participants as we encounter God's word together and respond with prayer, thanksgiving, and creative projects. We welcome all children to participate!

Sunday Nursery Services during church – We are continuing to offer care for young children during worship. Caregivers are fully vaccinated and boostered when eligible and wear N-95 masks. Children age two and up are encouraged to wear a mask. For children two years old and younger, there is a limit of six children total. When there are three-year-olds, there is a limit of nine children total. Only adult caregivers are allowed in the nursery space. Windows are cracked open for ventilation.

Please reach out to any member of Children's Lay Ministry if you have further input or questions: Rosemary Christiaens, Cathie Lutter, Cheryl Martel, Amanda Owens, Rosanna Morrison (Session Liaison), Katie Young, or to Matt Nabinger. Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 1, via Zoom at 6:30 pm. Be in touch with Matt for Zoom info matt@bradleyhillschurch.org.

