



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Look at what you, your children, our staff and supporters have accomplished. **Thank you! Denise**



◆ “Given the inclusion and accommodation shown by Downtown Ithaca Children Center this past year”, Andrew Tunison MS, CRC (Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for ACCES-VR) DICC was nominated and in October recognized for a **National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) Award**.

◆ Kellianne Smith (DICC Infant teacher and BJM Pre-K teacher) and Denise Gomber attended the 2018 Facing Race conference as part of a 30 person (adult and teen) representation from Ithaca. (Our groups opportunity funded by Park Foundation.) “A unique collaborative space for racial justice movement making, Facing Race is the largest multiracial, inter-generational gathering for organizers, educators, creatives and other leaders.”



Parents' Night Out

**HOLIDAY EDITION:
COOKIE
DECORATING**



December 15 5:30-8:00 pm

MUST Pre-Register - Dinner Provided
\$20 per child, \$30 for two children



Mon, Dec 17 DICC Board Meeting 5:30-7pm

Thurs, Dec 20 DICC Staff Meeting 5:30-7pm

Mon, Dec 24 thru

Mon, Dec 31


Tues, Jan 1

CLOSED—
Winter Break
CLOSED—
New Years Day



Happy Holidays

506 First St, Ithaca, NY • 607-272-7117

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**TCPL Story
Time Visits
10 -11:00 am**

Infants & Waddlers—

2nd Wednesday

Toddlers & Preschoolers—

3rd Wednesday



Welcome Winter Weather

Please bring your children in clothing appropriate for walks and play outdoors



- * Coats
- * Hats and mittens/gloves
- * Weather appropriate shoes/boots

When possible, an extra pair of sneakers or slippers to be kept in their cubby or backpack for use when the outdoors get their shoes cold and wet would be appreciated as well.



What's Happening In The Classroom

Blueberry Muffin Room

We have some new arrivals to the Blueberry Muffin Room. Have you met our new friend—Joe? He is settling into the routine and making new friends. We also have welcomed a new afternoon staff member, Ciara! We are happy to have her.

Eugenia is on leave until mid-January. We will miss her while she is gone, visiting her family in the Dominican Republic. Ciara and Ysabel will be filling in for her until she returns.

Reminder: Now that winter is here please be mindful and take your boots and shoes off before walking on the carpet. The babies spend the majority of their time on the floor and we'd like to try our best to keep it clean.

Butterfly Room

In the Butterfly Room, we are winding down as we get ready to transition into the new year. With many upcoming holidays around the corner, we will be focusing on families, celebrations and closeness. We are also welcoming the winter season and we will explore all things winter—especially snow! The Butterflies will be frequenting the Sciencenter more often to get their little bodies out and moving.

Please be sure your child has extra warm clothes in their cubby as well as hats and gloves.

Rainbow Room

The holidays are upon us and the rainbows will be learning about Christmas around the world. We are reading about different countries and how they celebrate the holidays. We are making many fun projects ... we even made pizzelles from Italy. Every Friday we will taste something fun from another country. Watch for picture updates of our celebration explorations.

Reminder—we will be going outside during these winter months, so please make sure you send hats, gloves, boots, snow pants and an extra set of clothes.

We wish everyone a great holiday season!



What's Happening In The Classroom

Dragonfly Room

During December, we are focusing on holidays and winter weather. Our classroom is decorated with many art projects created by the Dragonflies small hands. We are also reading some stories, and singing songs relating to this merry season. We enjoy singing "Jingle Bells" and "Frosty the Snowman" songs the most. For sensory time, we love playing with real snow and the fake snow.

During this chilly time of year please be sure that your child has appropriate set of clothing to go outside.

We hope that each of our Dragonfly families has a relaxing and enjoyable holiday.



Grasshopper Room

It has been a hectic few months in the grasshopper room! We have welcomed three new students, Fatell, Ruyi and Kieran. They are handling the transition with such grace, and we are thrilled to have them join us!

We are adjusting slowly to the cold weather, re-learning how to be self sufficient when putting on snow pants, boots, gloves, hats and winter coats.

The teachers will be focusing heavily on "effective play" in the coming months. So we have changed some of our spaces to reflect this. Our kitchen has become a construction site, where teachers can guide the children in play pertaining to community builders and helpers.

As well, together we are investigating the properties of solids and liquids, especially through snow, water, and ice!

Happy Winter, Happy Light!

Orange Ladybug Room

The Ladybugs have had the pleasure of adding three new friends to our morning program as well as welcoming Ms. Sarah to our afternoon staff.

This month we are learning about different December holidays. We are discussing what our families celebrate and why. We will be making many crafts for your children to bring home and help decorate. We will also be creating and decorating cookies and gingerbread houses.

Firefly Room

The Fireflies are very excited about celebrating their holidays and sharing what they believe. Mostly, they believe in snow and love to play in it—making snow angels, having snowball fights and tasting the snow on their tongues.

Music is plentiful here—dancing, singing and playing games. The children are making up some songs and dances. Beware parents—they are going to want to do a special recital just for you!

Life is good! What beautiful children!

Where do Fireflies go in Winter? ...To your heart.

Thank you and Happy Winter— To ALL, Peace & Love

Yellow (School-Age) Room

The Yellow Bumble Bees with the guidance of Ms. Chris have organized the DICC Holiday Giving Tree. They have assembled and decorated the tree with gift tag ornaments representing every child in the center. They also created and decorated with ornaments representing Kwanza and Hanukah. Thanks to the generosity of DICC families and community members, the gifts are stacking up. Next week each classroom will receive and incorporate the gifts for the children into their winter celebrations. The Bumblebees thank you for making this community project a success. Happy Holidays!



Staff Development Update: Beliefs Matter, Connections Matter, and Language Matters

The Power of Our Words by Paula Denton, our school wide “read,” provides two other helpful checklists for showing children and each other respect. One is showing faith in children’s (and other’s) abilities and intentions:



- Take time to notice the positives and name those positives, reflecting the good to the child/person.
- Be respectful. Avoid baby talk unless it is a baby you are talking to.
- Be aware of language patterns that treat boys and girls differently, or racial and ethnic groups differently.
- Use concrete words to describe positive actions, so that the child sees what you saw them doing—you are a reflecting and believing mirror.

Another growth area according to Paula Denton, the author of The Power of Our Words is extinguishing unwanted behavior. She teaches that adults:

- Use straightforward, matter of fact language when naming unwanted behavior.
- Keep the words nonjudgmental. Describe what you saw.
- Keep it simple.
- Leave out the warnings (Tone and pace escalate situations.)
- Know when to be silent.

Paula Denton, the author of The Power of Our Words, raises a question in her book: How do we help our children and students and ourselves create and own a vision of themselves achieving success?

She says that teaching children language, how to use their imagination and how to set a purpose can transform a human being’s life. We all learn by having a real purpose that challenges us and connects us to the real world. Humans learn best when they try to solve real problems by setting goals together; by staying focused and being inclusive. At DICC, we rely on our staff to teach wonder and curiosity. We ask your children to use metaphors and similes to compare something they don’t know to something they do. We model making connections and we ask them to make connections, too. Your gift to us this holiday season is the opportunity to serve your children.

