

STARMAKER NEWSLINE

November 2011

Florence, MBA, President/CEO

Dates to Remember

- 1** Tuition Due
- 9** Pre-Primary Conferences
- 10& 11** Primary & Elementary
Conferences
- 22** Thanksgiving Feast at 11am
- 23** No Classes – Daycare All Day
- 24 & 25** CENTER CLOSED -
Happy Thanksgiving!
- 28** Osborne Book Fair Begins

Counting our Blessings!

A great way to discuss numbers and gratitude this November is to have you and your child/children count the many things you are thankful for. As Thanksgiving approaches, now more than ever, it is important to have children understand that there are many people who are going without the basics due to the downturn in the economy. This holiday season is going to be especially challenging for everyone, as we've all had to tighten our belts. Nonetheless, we should rejoice for whatever we have and give to those who are in need.

This Thanksgiving season, I am grateful for my blessings:

1. My family
2. My parents
3. My Starmaker family
4. My health
5. My friends and relatives
6. I am grateful we survived the earthquake and hurricane Irene!

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

** Our Thanksgiving Feast is on November 22nd at 11am. Please remember to sign-up to bring a dish by November 15th. Thank you! **

Start a project this November with your child that teaches a lesson about counting and gratitude. Start a gratitude list in your kitchen and each day or each week; list something you are grateful for. I am sure there will be lots of things on your list and your child (children) would be astounded to see and count how blessed and lucky they are even if you've had to trim your budget!

Thanks to those who attended the parent education night. Your attention and interaction will certainly help you help your children at home as well as inspire more active learning in school. If you were unable to attend, a recording is being made by one of our elementary parents, which will be shared for all to see.

Hope you have a wonderful November and Happy Thanksgiving!

Gratitude is the best Attitude!
Ms. Florence

Lynn Ennis, Director

So when do we as parents and grandparents start reading out loud to our Montessori children and grandchildren? The answer is simple: as soon as possible!! Maria Montessori believed that the sensitive period for language development is between birth and age six. What better time to start reading aloud to your child or grandchild than when he is in the sensitive period for acquiring language.

When reading aloud to infants and toddlers, begin by having the baby sit on your lap with your arms around him. This full body contact promotes the positive emotional aspect and bonding of reading aloud. Around 6 months, babies become less passive. They also start teething and tend to want to eat the book you are trying to read! It may help to provide a teething ring to keep them occupied during your reading sessions. Around 8 months of age, babies become more active and enjoy turning the pages. Encourage them to do so when it's the right time. This helps develop active listening skills as they begin to anticipate the end of the page. Around 12 months babies are able to listen and point to objects on the page. By the time they start walking, babies are constantly on the go. The best time to read to them may be before a nap!

Reading out loud does not come naturally to everyone. It is a skill that needs practice. Babies and toddlers are a very forgiving audience but reading to older children may be more of a challenge. Read with lots of expression. Change your voice when reading. Slow down when it's suspenseful or speed up when it's exciting. It might seem silly to you but children really enjoy a story with a lot of emotion. Don't rush! Read slowly enough to let them grasp what is happening.

Encourage your 2 – 5 year old child or grandchild to sit and listen but don't force them to do so. Involve them by asking them to hold the book or turn the pages. Another way to help keep them involved is to ask them questions about what was just read or have them make predictions about what's going to happen next. Try replacing the main character's name with your child's/grandchild's name.

If a story is not working, it is okay not to finish it. They actually may not like the story you are reading! Reading should be enjoyable, not a chore. It is also okay for the child to ask questions. So be prepared to be interrupted. Children are thinking all the time they are listening to the story. What does that word mean? Why did she do that? All of these are signs that your child is really listening and thinking about what's being read. Take the time to patiently answer their questions and then continue reading.

If you have more than one child at home, encourage the older child to read to the younger child. This gives you a break and gives your older child reading practice! This is part of our daily practice in the Primary and Elementary classrooms with our multi-age groups.

With our busy schedules, sometimes it's hard to find the time to read at night. The saying is we find time for that which we value. If we truly value reading aloud to our children, then we will find the 10 – 15 minutes it takes to drop everything and read to them. That's all it takes. It's the quality of time spent together, not the quantity.

Take the time to sit down and read with your children. It's one of the best things you can do!

"We can always find something to be thankful for, no matter what may be the burden of our wants, or the special subject of our petitions."

-Albert Barnes

Educational Program

How Do I Know When My Child Has a Firm Understanding of Numbers?

By: Stephanie Grable

Number Sense

This term is gaining popularity within the mathematics world. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics defines number sense as having flexibility when discussing number concepts. This can be reflected in many ways. A child can show understanding for the size of numbers, representation of numbers, and the effects of operations on numbers.

Recounting (An activity for ages 2-5)

It is important to realize that young children who can count aloud may be impressive, but they do not necessarily have an attached meaning to their counts. Show a child a card with 5 dots. These dots should be easily arranged for counting. Ask the child to count the dots. Now ask the child "How many dots are on the card?" Many children who have not yet developed a meaning for their counting will actually recount the dots. This is a common step for children before they reach a mastery of primary number concepts.

Counting On (An activity for ages 6-8)

As your child gets older a new challenge will present itself. Give your child 10 counters. Now start with a problem for counting on, such as $3 + 2$. Ask the child to count out 3 and place them in one pile, then count out 2 and place them in another pile. Now cover the pile of 3 and ask the child, "How many counters are under my hand?" If the child can answer this question accurately, they are ready for this stage. Now ask the child to count how many counters there are in the two piles (one pile under your hand, one pile laying out). Make an example for the child by saying "start with 3, now keep counting, the other pile 4, 5." This skill takes a lot of practice. It is critical that a student can understand this concept prior to moving on to higher order operations. In the Montessori classroom, children are familiar with adding bead bars. Let's use the problem $5+7$ for another example. They will take a 5 bar and a 7 bar for their problem. If they count the beads on the 5 bar before counting on to the 7 bar, they need more practice. Both methods will end with the correct answer of 12, but not all right answers are equally right. You learn a lot from the child by watching their method for solving problems.

A Journey With No End

Number sense is a concept that is introduced with children ages 0-5. As the student progresses through their mathematical journey they will add to their foundation and feed their appetite for knowledge. This journey is ongoing. Each of us can unleash new understandings, even as adults. There are many curriculum objectives that address a student's understanding of the relationship between numbers. It is important to understand that these stages that take the most time to master, are often the most important. A student who continues their education without a foundation of number sense will rely heavily on algorithms to solve problems. Algorithms may lead to the right answers, but to a child with number sense, they lead to a deeper understanding of the world around them. Numbers are everywhere; help your child to explore!

Infant 1- Ms. Ashley & Ms. Keonna



It is hard to believe that the month of October is over already! Time sure does fly when you're having fun. We would like to say goodbye to Kylie and JJ who transitioned to Infant Two with Ms. Jeannette and Ms. Brandy. We would also like to give a warm welcome to Reagan and Ginger. Thank you to all the parents who came on our BAE Halloween Walk. Both the children and the teachers had a lot of fun! The children enjoyed all of the pumpkin and fire prevention activities.

In the month of November, we have a variety of activities planned! We will be having our Thanksgiving Feast on November 22nd at 11:00 am. There will be a sign up sheet on the door for parents who are attending. One last reminder, the center will be closed on November 24th and November 25th for Thanksgiving break.

Infant 2 – Ms. Jeannette & Ms. Brandy



We would like to welcome Kylie and JJ from Infant One. We would also like to say goodbye to Sydney and Ryan who transitioned into Infant 3 with Ms. Karin and Ms. Kaitlyn. Have fun with your new friends! We will miss you.

We had lots of fun in October doing all of our fall activities and learning about fire prevention. Thank you to the parents who were able to walk with us on our BAE Halloween Walk. We enjoyed showing off the infants who were dressed in their cute little costumes.

In the month of November, we will be busy learning more about pumpkins, Native Americans, Being Thankful, and Thanksgiving. We will also work on our large motor skills: pulling up, standing alone and taking steps. We would like to invite all of the parents to come and join us for our Thanksgiving Feast on Tuesday, November 22nd at 11:00am. There will be a sign up sheet on the door for anyone who is interested in attending.

We hope everyone has a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Infant 3- Ms. Karin, & Ms. Kaitlyn

October was full of new adventures. The children enjoyed our field trip to Forrest Hall Farm. We also introduced Jump Bunch to the class. The children loved the new activities Ms. Shelly brought for them. There will be a class offered every Friday at 9:15am for those who wish to participate. If you would like more information, please see the Jump Bunch poster in the lobby. Our themes for October were Fall colors, Fall harvest, and Halloween. We continued to work on sitting with a lesson, introducing the mat, stacking, shapes, sign language, and many other daily activities.

We would like to welcome Sydney and Ryan to our classroom. It is always fun to make new friends! As the weather turns colder, please check your child's cubby for weather appropriate clothing. Also, please take a few minutes to review the health policy.

In November, we will continue our Fall theme. We will also work on Thanksgiving themed activities and art. We plan to learn about new painting techniques, fine and gross motor skills, language, and practical life. We will also be doing a cooking lesson! And, of course, our daily staple is music and dance. The children LOVE to dance around and sing. Remember to join us for the Thanksgiving Feast on November 22nd at 11am.

If you would like to donate hand towels so that we can make more bibs, please let Ms. Karin know.



Toddlers- Ms. Karen, & Ms. Amanda

In October, we said good-bye to Michaela who transitioned to Ms. Megan's class and Owen who transitioned to Ms. Tuana's class. We also welcomed Dana and Emma to the Toddler side. We have enjoyed the cooler weather and getting to go out on the playground. The children got to use their gross motor skills riding the bikes and climbing up to the sliding board. We learned a lot during Fire Prevention Week through reading stories and doing art projects. The children had a great time on our field trip to the Pumpkin Patch. We like to thank all of the parents who joined us and made this trip possible. Our many art projects are covering the walls and bringing in the feeling of the Fall season. All of the children enjoyed our baking and finger painting lessons. The Parent Education Night went well. Thank you to all of the parents who We ended the month of October with our Annual BAE Halloween walk and wanted to thank the parents who were able to join us. The costumes were awesome!

November looks to be just as exciting with Thanksgiving Feast and the Usborne Book Fair. We will be learning about Farm Animals and recognizing their sounds. The children will be doing Thanksgiving and Native American themed art projects. We will also introduce fruits and vegetables that will help the children learn about colors and size. Please remember that the weather is getting cooler so be sure to dress the children in warm clothes.



Pre-Primary 1 - Ms. Tuana & Ms. Kim

The month of October brought a lot of changes. We welcomed Owen and John Michael to the PP1 environment. We also welcomed our new teacher Ms. Tynisha. Fall, pumpkins, and fire safety were the focus for the month. We had a great time doing art projects that coincided with our themes. The class also had fun washing plates and stools. We would like to congratulate the Leigh family on their winning Double layer Pumpkin Pie. Thank you to all the parents who participated in the annual BAE walk. The class really enjoyed having you there!

During the month of November, we will introduce the next sound box. This includes the letters E,P,N,J and W. Our themes will be fall, harvest, acorns, family, and Thanksgiving. The class will work on saying Please, Sorry, and Thank you to their friends. We will also learn the difference between pushing and pulling. Suggestions for home are pushing the vacuum and pulling out dresser drawers. For important dates to remember, please keep your school calendar handy as well as check the parent board for information. Please contact Ms. Tuana if you have any questions, comments, concerns, or ideas.



Pre-Primary 2 - Ms. Megan & Ms. Laura

Fall has arrived! In October, Pre-Primary II went on many nature walks. The children were able to see the many different stages of Fall. They are so excited to see when the wind blows and the leaves fall. They walk around the playground picking up leaves, pine needles, and pinecones. We have started a collection on our back porch. If the children could have it their way, something would come home everyday. You have to admire their curiosity. We really enjoyed our Harvest Festival and BAE Walk. We want to thank everyone for volunteering. All parent participation is appreciated.

In November, the children will be learning about Native Americans and Pilgrims. We will be introducing pouring, setting the table, and jackets. We are teaching the children to dress themselves and button their jackets. We encourage parents to practice at home. We will work on giving thanks and helping others. On November 9th, we will be having parent-teacher conferences. The sign-up sheet is posted on the parent board. We hope to see all of our families on November 22nd for our annual Thanksgiving Feast. Please, remember to check cubbies for appropriate change of clothes. If you have any fall themed items that you would like to share with the children, please email Miss Megan. Have a great Thanksgiving!



Primary 1- Ms. Natalya & Ms. Angelique

Thank you for your time and support by attending Parents Education Night. We have always believed that parents and teachers need to be a team as the school is the extension of the home.

In October, we learned more about the Water Unit. Now we know what the largest ocean is as well as what the coldest and the warmest oceans are. They enjoyed singing a song about the continents and oceans. The children also found out that manatees can be called "sea cows."

Our little friends learned about the water cycle, water forms, and now can explain why the ocean's water is salty. We made an experiment where we discovered how water droplets turned into water vapors, and how a tomato is sinking in fresh water but floats in salt water.

Also, our little artists spent a lot of time "dancing" with a brush and paint. They love to paint leaves, trees, and fish. If I can bring the world to the classroom, we would do so. But still there was a little magic when the students listened to the sounds of dolphins and whales "singing."

Our annual Woodland Indians Discovery Day with Mr. Mark, his son, and the Eagle Boy was full of joy and discovery for our little friends. The students loved to dance the snake and eagle dances and learned about the Woodland Indian's way of life. The room was still full of the sounds of eagle screeches after our guests left.

We would like to thank Ms. Becky for making Halloween cupcakes for the students and for Halloween stickers.

We were happy to meet Miss Christina from the St. Clements Museum who gave an amazing presentation about the life of the Native Americans in Southern Maryland.

We would like to thank Ms. Rebecca for her reading class and Ms. Amy for her Halloween craft lesson. The Halloween spirit was still in the classroom for some time.

A special thanks to the parents participating in the Forest Hall farm field trip. Our little fiends explored the kitchen garden in spite of the cold weather; we were very excited to see the cabbages, turnips, and grapes growing.

Parents, thank you so much for being there for the students and letting them learn not only through lessons in the classroom but through the world around them.



Primary 2- Ms. Rebecca & Ms. Rachel

October is a fun time of year! We have had so much fun learning about acorns, pumpkins and much more. With the help from parents and staff, our class has not only learned about fall but also learned how to celebrate it as well.

In just the past two weeks, our class has gone on a field trip to the Forrest Hall Farm. On the farm, our class was able to enjoy walking through the corn maze along with seeing, smelling, and touching the many different types of apples. The leaves aren't the only things falling from the trees!

November will be just as busy with lots of exciting activities. This year, we will start our giving tree and food drive early! The food drive will run from November 1st to November 15th. As for the giving tree, our efforts will go towards The Great Bedtime Story Pajama Drive. In order to participate, all you have to do is bring in a new pair of pajamas by December 2nd. This drive will benefit children who live in group homes, shelters, foster care, and orphanages. Remember to join us for our Thanksgiving Feast on November 22nd as well as stop by our Usborne Bookfair that starts on November 28th.



Primary 3- Ms. Allison

Ask your children about Pumpkins and Apples! In order to prepare for our field trip at the end of the month we have spent a lot of October exploring the life cycles of pumpkins and apples; as well as discovering where, when, and how they grow. It was such a treat for them to be the "experts" on our apples and pumpkins field trip! They also enjoyed making candy apples and carving a pumpkin as a class.



The children have also had a wonderful time studying about the Woodlawn Indians and were extremely excited for their visit to Starmaker. We will continue with our study of Native Americans in November, and learn about why we celebrate Thanksgiving! In our geography lessons we will focus on North America and the original 13 colonies. In science we will look closely at the parts of a tree and parts of a leaf; as well as why animals migrate and/or hibernate. In math we will work on counting seeds, odd and even numbers, and addition. For our sensorial lessons we are working with our 5 senses, specifically smelling. For art, music, and practical life we will stick with our fall and thanksgiving theme by painting trees, making collages, playing drums, weaving ribbons, and tweezing corns off of corn.



Thank you to all of our friends that have brought in objects to help us with our language lessons and our phonetic study. Please continue to encourage your children to walk around their house looking for objects that start with our sound of the week. The sounds for November will be "Pp" on November 4th and "Nn" on November 18th (reminder: we start each new sound on Friday and continue with it through the following week).



A special thank you to Mrs. Erica Wible for helping us print out some important lessons, and for making our class a wonderful set of letter boxes. Also to Mrs. Karen Stack for the baskets to keep our lessons in, and for helping to make our geography lessons!

Elementary- Ms. Stephanie

A snapshot of October lessons...

Combinations Conundrum!

Our math unit this month has been based upon making many combinations of number to reach our target. For example, we know that combinations for the target of 10 include: $1+9$, $2+8$, $3+7$, and so on. We have been able to transfer this skill to factoring with multiplication as well. For example, we know that the combinations for the target of 20 include: 1×20 , 2×10 , 4×5 , and so on. To introduce this unit we began with a poem at circle time:

Way up high in the apple tree,
 ____ little apples smiled at me.
 I shook that tree as hard as I could.
 Down came ____ apples,
 Mmmm were they good!

We used the Decanomial Box and Cuisenaire Rods to make many different number combinations to show our problem. We shared our thinking strategies with our peers and learned a lot of great ideas!

Spectacular Science!

We were very excited to use many attributes of the fall season for our experiments and graphing work. We collected leaves and learned the scientific names for each of their colors. We reviewed how the cold weather tells the trees to stop sending water to the leaves, which causes them to change color from the absence of chlorophyll and fall to the ground. We used our collection of leaves to make Leaf Books, Leaf Charts, and Leaf Graphs. We introduced many different types of graphs including bar, line, and pie. We studied how each looked very different, but relayed the same information.



Planet Green Recycling Program

Remember to keep your eye out for the Planet Green Recycling box! We will be participating in this program year round. Participating in this program helps both the environment and the school.

Please remember that in addition to recycling ink cartridges and cell phones, the Planet Green Program also allows you to purchase ink cartridges from their website! When you purchase ink cartridges from Planet Green, Starmaker will receive a portion of the proceeds. If you would like to support us by purchasing your ink cartridges from Planet Green, please visit:

www.planetgreenrecycle.com/starmakerschool.



Giant A+ Bonus Bucks Program

Welcome to the start of a new year of A+ School Rewards. Starting October 7, 2011 through March 29, 2012, Starmaker Learning Center will have the opportunity to earn cash through Giant A+ School Rewards Program.

All you have to do is:

Log on to www.giantfood.com/aplus to register online
OR

Dial 1-877-275-2758 to register your card over the phone

After you register your card, each shopping trip at Giant using your Giant card earns money for our school! Each month, the amount of money awarded will be updated on the Giant website. You can track the amount of points you earn for our school by checking your grocery receipt and online when you create an account at www.giantfood.com. Our school will receive a check at the end of the program. The money from this program can be used for any of our school's educational needs.

Remember, even if you registered your card last year, you must re-register this year for our school to receive credit. Attending to this simple process makes a HUGE difference to our school. We need your support. Please be sure to register your card to benefit Starmaker using ID #03916.



Also, don't forget to encourage your friends and relatives to do the same.

Box Tops for Education

We participate in the Box Tops for Education Program every year. This year, we have been doing exceptionally well! We are halfway to our \$250 goal. Let's strive to exceed that goal. We would like to thank all of those who have and continue to bring in box tops.

If you haven't participated in this program before, it is so easy to do! All you have to do is bring in the box tops from participating products. The collection basket can be found on the bookshelf located in the lobby. Additional information about this program can be found at www.boxtops4education.com.



Southern Maryland Food Bank Food Drive

Every year we host a food drive. This year, we will be collecting non-perishable food items for the Southern Maryland Food Bank. The Southern Maryland Food Bank has been serving Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties for the past 25 years. They support 40 pantries, group homes, and shelters that help 10,000 needy families each month!

Our food drive will start on November 1st and will end on November 15th. Please donate non-perishable food items such as canned vegetables and soup. The labeled collection box will be located in the lobby. We appreciate your donations and support!



Nutritional Information

Everyone knows that eating healthy is good for your body. Unfortunately, some people still struggle with "balancing their plate." Recently, the USDA released new dietary guidelines. This is the first time that the USDA published the dietary guidelines with not just the healthy, active people in mind. The USDA Dietary Guidelines suggest making changes in three main ways:

Balancing Calories

- Make sure you enjoy what you eat, but try to eat a little less at each meal.
- Try to avoid the oversized portions.

Foods to Increase

- Fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables.
- Incorporate more whole grains into your diet.
- Use skim or 1% milk instead of whole or 2% milk.

Foods to Reduce

- Check the sodium levels in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals.
- Switch to water instead of sugar filled drinks.

Both adults and children sometimes have trouble fitting enough healthy protein into their diet. Here are eight ways that you can incorporate proteins into your diet:

1. Experiment with a variety of protein choices.
2. Choose lean or low fat cuts of meat.
3. Eat plant proteins like beans and soy products.
4. Nuts and Seeds are a healthy protein filled snack.
5. Eat seafood at least twice a week.
6. Have an egg for breakfast!
7. Try grilling, broiling or roasting meats.
8. Have a sandwich with deli meat.

It is important to be a good role model for your child in all aspects, which includes modeling good eating habits. Try to make changes in your child's diet even if you can't seem to make all of these changes in your own diet. Remember: Just because you don't like certain foods, it doesn't mean your child won't enjoy them. Saying things like "yuck", "you won't like that", and making faces while speaking about certain foods will deter children from trying new things. Be conscious of how you react and speak about food with your children. With almost 1/3 of children in America battling childhood obesity, any change is a good change.



Student Birthdays

Gavin Reese	Nov 4
Brayden Smay	Nov 4
Addison Morazes	Nov 4
Madison Fenelon	Nov 5
Hannah Spicuzza	Nov 6
Oscar Blohm	Nov 17
Abigail Leigh	Nov 18
Madison Guldi	Nov 21

NOVEMBER 2011

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

DECEMBER 2011

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Teacher Birthdays

Allison Zerhusen	Nov 8
Kimberly Heinrich	Nov 10
Megan Lawrence	Nov 24