

HOOT-N- HOLLER



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FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

THE RICHARD F. BLAKE CHILDREN'S CENTER

65 HORSEHILL ROAD, CEDAR KNOLLS, NJ

Quarterly Newsletter

www.greatermorristownymca.org

A newsletter for enrolled families of the Blake Center

NOTE FROM THE BLAKE CENTER DIRECTOR

We have great things planned for 2024 here at the Blake Center! We continue with our safety and community involvement initiatives. In February, we celebrated Black History Month with a beautiful collage posted in our front lobby displaying some amazing historical figures. We are celebrating Women's History Month and partnering with Jersey Battered Women's Shelter to help women in need, by collecting gently used or new clothing. Helping others and teaching compassion is something we believe very strongly in. We appreciate all the support and generosity from our families and staff in helping our community.

Sincerely,
Maria Barakat, Richard F. Blake Children's Center Director



STAFF WORK ANNIVERSARIES

Meghan B, Toddler 2 teacher, has been a part of our team for over 24 years now! Congratulations to Meghan on this amazing accomplishment! Here's to many more years.

STAFF BIRTHDAYS

January Birthdays

9th	-	Justin
18th	-	Marta
27th	-	Millee
28th	-	Stephanie K

February Birthdays

10th	-	Meghan B
13th	-	Dianne
18th	-	Kim V
28th	-	Sarah S

March Birthdays

14th	-	Megan RB
19th	-	Tiana
27th	-	Cris
30th	-	Zory

INFANT & WADDLER UPDATE

This Spring we are excited to welcome several siblings to our infant program! We are honored to have 7 siblings starting over the next few months.



TODDLER UPDATE

Our Toddlers continue to thrive and explore the world around them. Our teachers are introducing many creative projects and sensory experiences for our curious toddlers.



THE CHICKS HAVE ARRIVED!

On Wednesday, March 6th, Farmer XYZ delivered 12 unhatched chicken eggs to the Blake Center. Our job was to incubate and rotate the eggs every day until they hatched. Each preschool child received the opportunity to rotate an egg while we waited with baited breath for them to hatch. The chicks create pure joy for the children and this experience plays an integral part of our curriculum every year. After hatching, the children were able to hold and pet them before they were returned to the farm.



PRESCHOOL UPDATE

We continue to follow the Creative Curriculum and enjoy seeing our imaginative and dedicated teachers bring the studies to life! From learning about the difference between wild versus domesticated animals, to learning about clothing and the importance of taking care of ourselves, our preschoolers are busy learning every day! Each study provides the foundation for our students to head into the next phase of their academic career!



CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Over the last month, the YMCA has taken the initiative to prevent future flooding at the Blake Center by installing a new drainage system. This system wraps from the front of the building, along the side, and to the back of the center. We also took this opportunity to replace old sewer pipes that run in and out of the center.

With the removal of the retaining wall, we expanded the sand-side of the playground by an extra 20 feet, providing more outdoor space for the children to play. In the springtime, we will landscape the area with plants and flowers, and install an education garden for the children. We are thrilled with the work that has been completed and we thank you for your patience and understanding as we made these necessary repairs.



UPCOMING CLOSURES

The Blake Center will be closed on the following holidays.

- Memorial Day – Monday, May 27th, 2024
- Independence Day – Thursday, July 4th, 2024
- Labor Day – Monday, September 2nd, 2024

STAFF UPDATES

We are happy to welcome some new staff members at the Blake Center this year. Please join us in welcoming Ms. Dianne, Ms. Jennifer, Mr. Christian, Mr. Eric, and Ms. Tiana to the Blake Center Family!



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PAST EVENTS

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Gertrude Hawk Candy Fundraiser which helped raise funds to use for fun events at the Blake Center. Your generosity and support is greatly appreciated!

Read Across America and Spirit Week took place from March 4th – March 8th. We held inspired theme days in honor of Dr. Seuss and in celebration of his birthday on March 2nd.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Week of the Young Child takes place April 6th – April 12th. This week focuses on how we, as citizens of a community, state, and nation, can better meet the needs of all young children and their families.

Teacher Appreciation Week is May 6th – May 10th and provides students, parents, and administrators with the opportunity to thank our dedicated and passionate teachers for all they do.

HEALTHY KIDS DAY & BLAKE CENTER OPEN HOUSE!

Please join us for our annual Healthy Kids Day event on Saturday, April 20th from 10–12pm. This national YMCA event is free for all community members. Children will enjoy a variety of events like games, arts and crafts, healthy treats, and a bouncy house! Prospective families can also take tours of our newly renovated Richard F. Blake Children's Childcare Center (ages 6 weeks to 5 years). Location: 65 Horsehill Road, Cedar Knolls, NJ.

WE'RE HIRING!

At the Richard F. Blake Children's Center, we are always looking for qualified individuals who love working with children. We offer a competitive salary, great benefits, free gym memberships and flexible schedules. Please call us at 973.984.2255 with any questions. We also accept volunteers!

