



CCC Newsletter

Volume No.15 Issue No. 8 | May 29, 2020

The mission of Concord Children's Center is to cultivate an intimate, welcoming community where children develop respectful relationships and inquisitive minds, build confidence in their individual gifts, and are engaged, prepared and inspired to learn

End of Year Reflections



It would be difficult to start this reflection on the 2019-2020 school year with anything but an acknowledgement of Covid 19 and its impact on Concord Children's Center families, children and staff. As we enter our third month of an empty school and our community under stay at home guidance from the state; we are all looking for a future time when life can go back to normal.

As I sit in my kitchen, looking out on my street rather than a busy playground, I am struck by both the changes that have taken place and the things that have remained unchanged. When I leave the house today, I will wear a mask, and when I meet with my CCC staff and colleagues in the childcare community, I will do so over a zoom call, however the trees outside my window have leafed out and the days are longer and warmer just as they always are in May in New England.

Some things change and some things stay the same. When CCC opens some things will be different. Increased handwashing and disinfecting, mask wearing teachers, smaller groups that remain together all day, and morning wellness checks as children are dropped off with CCC staff at the door. What will not change, however, is the heart and soul of CCC: our teachers, our program leaders, our educational philosophy and our unwavering commitment to the social, emotional and physical well being of children, families, and staff. I am enthusiastically preparing for our return to classrooms, playgrounds, friendships, and our *"intimate, welcoming community where children develop respectful relationships and inquisitive minds, build confidence in their individual gifts, and are engaged, prepared and inspired to learn"* (CCC Mission Statement).

Prior to the closing of school in March, we had much to reflect on and celebrate. During the 2019-20 school year, we achieved a remarkable milestone: purchasing a property in Concord upon which we will develop a single site combining Emerson and Ripley, thus ending our uncertain reliance on leased properties and creating an efficient two site model for CCC. CCC *Reimagined* is the result of almost ten years of strategic planning and building our reserve funds with this goal in mind. In December, CCC student artwork was on display at the Concord Free Public Library for an entire month! Throughout the school year our teachers shared with families the learning taking place in our classrooms using Kaymbu. The skills gained by our teachers allowed for robust classroom and family communication throughout April, May and June. Daily interactions between children and their teachers documented not only the learning taking place, but also the joy of that learning. Through the use of Kaymbu throughout the closure, families have been able to share with us their experiences both joyous and at times daunting. It has been a great cause for celebration that our families have been such generous contributors to the CCC Helping Hands Fund. This Fund, set up by our Board to help support teacher salaries and unavoidable expenses during the closure, has to date raised over \$100,000.

The amazing support of our Board, families, and committed staff of educators over the past year, as well as the past 44 years, is testimony to what makes CCC such a resilient organization. Next year we



Maintaining Learning and Connections at CCC

Over the past 11 weeks, teachers at CCC have been working hard to stay connected with their children and families using a variety of methods. When the teachers were asked "what do you hope to achieve with the projects/materials/stories/songs/etc. that you are sharing with your children and your families?," here are some of their replies:

- *To continue to create opportunities for growth and expression.*
- *To keep the children engaged in a wide range of activities that the whole family can enjoy.*
- *To stay connected, have fun, and see each other and [the teachers.]*
- *To bring a sense of comfort and a smile to the children's faces.*
- *To be a support when needed.*
- *To offer a message of hope, care, kindness, and connection for all.*
- *To offer fun things to do and educational tidbits too.*
- *To reassure our babies that we are still here for them via face to face "visits" on Zoom and through digital song and story time.*
- *To let families know that we support them and are here for them always!*
- *To remind our families that we are still here for them and that everything we offer embodies not only developmentally appropriate learning for children, but a message of hope, care, kindness and connection for all.*

Read on to learn about how our teachers are making all this, and more, happen!

CCC Loves a Parade!

When CCC first closed in mid-March, several of our teachers quickly put together parades to drive by their children's homes and say hello. Eleven weeks in, parades continue to be popular, as they allow our children, families and teachers to safely see each other in person (and many of our families take the opportunity of the parades to thank our teachers for their work while we are closed). All of the **West Concord** teachers have either done parades by their children's houses or parked in the CCC West Concord parking lot and invited their children and families to drive by and say hello, and a couple of classrooms have done both! Several of the **Ripley** classrooms have done parades to celebrate students' birthdays, accompanied by local emergency vehicles, making for a very loud and very exciting parade!





Zoom also remains a convenient and popular way for our teachers to stay connected with their children; however, the Zoom calls look different depending on the classroom. In addition to holding weekly classroom Zoom meetings, The **West Concord Heart Room** teachers are now holding Zoom and FaceTime meetings with individual children in addition to the weekly classroom Zooms because they realized that some of the children were finding the classroom Zooms a bit challenging. Our **West Concord Afterschoolers** are leading their classroom's Zoom calls ... one of our second graders introduced her classmates to her new puppy when it was her turn to lead the call! The **West Concord Star Room** is hoping to perform their traditional spring play "The Great Kapok Tree" over Zoom.

It's time for year-end conferences, and teachers will be holding these via Zoom. Some classrooms have held evening Zoom meetings for parents, and CCC held a CCC-wide [Zoom conversation](#) on May 21 featuring CCC's mental health consultant, **Bill Gresser**. Bill shared how parents can control stress at this time and promote resilience and healthy growth and development for children and family.



Cooking

Cooking continues to be an important part of the CCC program even though teachers and children can't cook side by side right now. **Jordan** and **Lynn** in the **Emerson Toddler Room** have done several baking sessions with their students over Zoom, making oatmeal chocolate chip cookies and banana blueberry muffins. **Ripley 3-4s** teacher **Monalisa** demonstrated over video how to make apple cake and then shared the recipe with the children, and **Ripley 4-5s** teacher **Wipa** demonstrated over video how to make Thai fried rice, a dish from her homeland.



Reading, Music, and Science, Too!

Reading and music are essential parts of childhood and the CCC program and, not surprisingly, all of our teachers have been reading books, singing songs, and sometimes singing musical books to their students either in real time or via video. Many teachers during their weekly Zoom check-ins sing favorite songs that they used to sing together with the children in the classroom and also sing "Happy Birthday" to children on their special day, and several classrooms have held on-line dance parties! Many of these songs and stories are on the [CCC website](#) for easy access by families.



Teachers have also been sharing science activities with their children. From videoing nature walks to inviting children to get outside and engage with nature to hands-on experiments for our older children, science is a fun way to engage with our students while they are at home.

Kaymbu@Home

Earlier this spring, CCC introduced Kaymbu@Home, which allows two-way communication between home and the classroom by providing a platform for families to share content and photos from home with their teachers. Teachers are now regularly updating their students about what other students in the classroom are doing at home, including photos and more, allowing the children and families to stay better connected with each other.

INFO FOR FAMILIES

Teacher Appreciation Responses

As many of you know, we have a long-standing CCC tradition for parents/families to write individual notes to their children's teachers at year-end. (We then collate the notes and present to the teachers at their year-end staff appreciation dinner.) While we are not sure yet what the distribution of these notes will look like, we recognize that they are such a wonderful part of the year end celebration and want to make sure we keep the tradition going.



Below you will find a link to the online form that we are asking families to complete by **Friday, June 12**. Your room parents will also be sending out a separate communication with more information about end of year acknowledgements.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf6ucV9-RLSGrYwhCjh6S4wiyPfoP9QmTCKPE6Q53oyS25Heg/viewform>

CCC ONLINE AUCTION!

One very special event of the 2019-2020 school year was the Concord Children's Center art exhibit at the Concord Free Public Library in December. *Sparking Curiosity, Igniting Imagination, Creating Joy: the Process of Art With Young Children* focused on the process of creating art,



rather than the product -- how the art is being created rather than what the finished product looks like. Each of our 15 classrooms created a unique piece of process art for this exhibit, and these pieces were going to be the classroom donations for the annual CCC auction in March. As the auction had to be postponed, these pieces are now available to families for bidding in a one-time year-end on-line auction!

Bidding is open and will close this Monday evening at 9:30 p.m. [View the items now](#) and place your bid!

Thank You and Annual Meeting

One important element of the CCC annual meeting is acknowledging parents who are departing CCC who have given a large amount of volunteer time while they have been here. As this year's annual meeting will be a virtual event, we are listing these people here. We thank each of them for the work they have done and the time they have given to Concord Children's Center.

Ripley

Sherry Lublin: Room parent
Kerry Norton: Board member, Fund for CCC volunteer, room parent

West Concord

Lindsey Dempsey: Auction co-chair, room parent
Jackie Finn: Room parent
Julia Hurley: Auction co-chair
Betsy Keller: Board member, Board chair
Tara Martin: Auction co-chair
Stephanie Rivera: Board member, room parent
Jenn Routhier: Auction and Fund for CCC volunteer, room parent
Sarah Kaufman: Auction volunteer, room parent

Every effort has been made to ensure that we have listed all of our departing volunteers; however, if we missed your name, please accept our sincere apologies!

2019-2020 CCC Board Members

West Concord

Jay Abelowitz
Chair
Betsy Keller
Co-Chair
Campbell Rowe
Secretary
Marcela Bean
Eric Boisvert
JC Conti
Karen Lennon
Kathy Manero
Becky McCullough
Jonathan Rankin
Stephanie Rivera
Yumi Suarez

Emerson

Ripley

Mark Daniel
Tom Doherty

Alumni

Stephan Bader
Treasurer