



Happy first birthday to:

Vivian R. 3/22

Happy second birthday to:

William A.	1/14	Ayric B.	3/16
Derik B.	1/20	Anthony B.	1/29
Michaela C.	3/2	Kaylee M.	1/21
Harrison M.	3/28	Nicholas R.	3/4

Happy third birthday to:

Austin A.	1/11	Robert B.	1/16
Michael C.	3/9	Mitchell C.	3/25
Nickolas D.	2/21	John E.	1/12
Geneva H.	3/9	Drake H.	1/2
Johnathon H.	3/9	Mark M.	3/30
Aaliyah P.	2/15	Blake S.	2/3
Nathaniel V.	1/18	Jeffery W.	2/12

VALENTINE'S DAY PLAYGROUP



The Birth-Through-Two Program is having its **Valentine's Day playgroup on Wednesday,**

February 14th, from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.

Please join us and other families for lots of fun! The playgroup will be held in the basement of our building at 1530 Lincoln Avenue in Charleston, Illinois. Please bring extra pictures of your child to be included in Valentines they will be making for family and our legislators.

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!



**VALENTINES
 FOR
 LEGISLATORS**

It's time to get ready for our 12th year of "Valentines for Legislators" promoting the importance of early intervention. We would be so grateful if each family would prepare Valentine's Day cards expressing your heartfelt feelings about being involved with early intervention. Having a picture of your child and mentioning your child's special needs will create an even clearer message of the importance of starting education as soon as possible.

We collect all the valentines from you and mail them to the Governor, our State and U.S. Senators and Representatives, and local city officials. Thank-you for being an active parent in our program.

REAPING REWARDS?

Lara Honos-Webb, Ph.D., doesn't like the bad rap kids with ADHD tend to get. "The medical model calls difference a disorder," she explains. "I'm challenging that by calling ADHD a difference and looking for the strengths these kids have." In her book *The Gift of ADHD*, she defines five gifts possessed by people with ADHD: creativity, exuberance, interpersonal intuition, emotional sensitivity, and ecological consciousness.

She wants parents to cherish those positive attributes. "What you focus on in your children can become a self-fulfilling prophecy," she says. "If you convey that they are not in control, that they have a disorder, the diagnosis can impair their ability to succeed. I want parents to become advocates for their children, to help them develop their strengths and not to apologize for them."

--Taken from Healthy Living Fall 2006

PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Happy New Year and Welcome to our new families in the program. Traditionally, we send out our newsletter quarterly to keep in touch with our families and share interesting news and information. If you weren't able to attend Snacks with Santa this past month, please plan to attend our Valentine's playgroup and have some fun with other young families.

Other upcoming events are the school districts gearing up for Preschool Roundup and Kindergarten registration. The Charleston Roundup will be in our building February 5th through February 8th at 1530 Lincoln Avenue. Please discuss this with your Developmental Therapist or Service Coordinator. Many of the EI children do not need to attend these, but you may have other or older children you might want screened for Project HELP or Early Childhood. These screenings are all free, but you need to have an appointment.

Wishing you all a happy, fulfilling new year.

--Linda McPhee,
Program Director

THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPATHY

Empathy—the ability to assume another's point of view—can reduce self-centeredness and promote fairness. Though it comes naturally for most kids, the emotion must be nurtured. The best ways to foster it are also the easiest.

Respond to your baby. Infants who are cuddled are being groomed to show caring behavior.

Talk about others. When you're reading together or watching someone at the park, ask, "How do you think that girl is feeling? What would make her feel better?"

Share your emotions. Telling your child when you're happy, frustrated, or angry can help her become more adept at expressing her own.

Name your child's feelings. Describe what you observe: "I see you clenching your fists. Want to talk about what's upsetting you?" Being able to recognize an emotional response ("I'm getting really

mad!") lets him exercise self-control and develop ways to cope.

Try not to belittle what she's going through. ("That doesn't really hurt!") And avoid sending mixed signals about your emotions (such as shouting, "I said I'm not angry!")

--Taken from Parenting November 2002

WHEN WORRIES TURN SERIOUS

If your school-age child's fear interferes with his daily routine—if he refuses to go to the park or a friend's house because he's scared of dogs, for instance—he might be more than simply afraid. Sometimes, these fears can be triggered by a traumatic experience. "If a child who already has a slight fear of dogs is bitten by one, obviously he might develop a phobia," says child psychologist John Piacentini, Ph.D. "It's often a combination of a biological and an environmental trigger."

Treatment is generally both simple and successful. It tends to be based on gradually exposing the child—in small doses and always when you're present—to the source of the fear with gentle encouragement and small, frequent rewards, such as stickers and other treats. Over time, he should become more comfortable and feel a sense of mastery over the fear.

For kids under five, experts don't recommend professional help—parents themselves should try to safely expose them to the fear's source. If a child is six or older and the fear persists for several months, seek professional help, preferably with a therapist who specializes in childhood anxieties.

--Taken from Parenting May 2003

THOUGHTS ON SPRING CLEANING

"One of the advantages of being disorderly is that one is constantly making exciting discoveries." --A. A. Milne

"I am and always have been an immaculate housekeeper. It's just my house that's such a mess." --Mary Ann Cahill