



# Indi Kids Newsletter January 2012



## The Great Outdoors!



When children go outdoors, they can use their large muscles, get some fresh air, explore with their senses, and enjoy the open space. At our center we take the children outdoors daily as long as the wind-chill is above 25 degrees. Children love to play outdoors any time of year and they love to play in the snow! Please make sure that your child has appropriate

clothing for outdoor play—coat, snow pants or snow-suit, hat, boots, gloves, etc. The Finns have a saying that *there is no bad weather ~ just bad clothing*. So, please be sure that your child stays warm while playing outdoors this season.

Just the act of getting dressed to go outside teaches children personal care/self help skills which include buttoning, zipping,

learning to put the snow pants on before the boots! The teachers use the outdoor environment as an extension of the classroom. Many fun activities and learning happen on the playground all year round! Going outdoors is so important to the overall development and learning of your child.

Ask your child what they did outside today!!

### Indi Kids

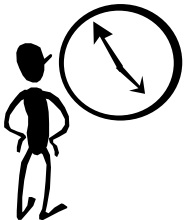
University  
Early Care and  
Education Center

Ben Franklin  
School-Age Center

Homer-Center School-  
Age Center

Trinity  
School-Age Center

Horace Mann  
School-Age Center



## Late Fee Policy

As of February 1, 2012, Indi Kids will enforce a *late policy*. Parents will soon receive a letter regarding the policy along with the actual policy which will need to be signed and returned to the office. If a parent or pick-up person arrives late to pick-up a child, the parent will be charged a late fee. The policy and accompanying letter will explain the details, please read it carefully. The form must be returned to the office by Jan. 27th. Once you have read the letter and policy, if you have any questions please see Marti or Stephanie or call them at 724-349-1821, email—[martih@indikids.org](mailto:martih@indikids.org) or [smcadoo@indikids.org](mailto:smcadoo@indikids.org).

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# Indiana County's Safe Children's Network Needs Your Support!

Indiana County's Safe Children's Network of the Children's Advisory Commission of Indiana County works to prevent accidental injury to children and adolescents. For the past few years, Safe Children's Network has provided bike helmets at the Family Fun Fest. This year we need help in raising funds to purchase the bike helmets. Please support us at our Hoss's Community Night Fundraiser on 2/7/2012. The only thing you need to do is enjoy lunch or dinner at Hoss's on February 7th and give a fundraiser card or printed fundraiser email to your server. You can get a card from Stephanie or ask for the email to be sent to you. Thanks for your support.



## Laughter is the Best Medicine!



Did you know that when we laugh, serotonin is released in our brains? Serotonin is a hormone that all animals including humans have and it is thought to be linked to feelings of well being and happiness. The more we laugh, the better we feel. We all know what makes us laugh but, what makes kids laugh?

### Babies ~

Babies often find a game of peek-a-boo hysterical and funny voices can make them laugh too! Making a stuffed animal dance and sing is usually a sure way to get a giggle. Fake sneezes sometimes work. Many moms and dads have turned into goofballs trying to get that little laugh or full blown baby giggle!

### Toddlers ~

Toddlers usually find funny faces and funny noises to be a real hoot! Adults acting super silly will get a toddler laughing too. Pretending to fall down or balancing a teddy bear on your head might make a toddler giggle. Adults doing things in an exaggerated way such as jumping all the way out of your chair when your toddler whispers "boo" is sure to get a laugh.

### Preschoolers ~

Preschoolers sometimes still find some of the same things funny that they did when they were toddlers. Preschoolers also have a good grasp on words and they find word play to be pretty funny. Asking your child to please pass the parrots instead of the carrots is sure to get a laugh. Super silly made up words will get a preschooler laughing too. Here are a few jokes to try with your preschooler:

What do frogs eat with their hamburgers? French Flies.

How does the ocean say hello? It waves!

Why did the cookie visit the doctor? It felt crummy.

Things that don't look as they normally do will get a preschooler giggling too. That's why preschoolers find the joke sunglasses that are super, super big to be really funny! Silly pictures like a car with square wheels or a dog with wings will get a laugh. They love books with silly words and silly pictures.

Be open and playful with your children and willing to laugh at yourself. It's important to respond to your child's attempts at humor. Research shows that the benefits of a good sense of humor include: better health, higher self-esteem, increased optimism and greater emotional intelligence. Some information for this article was found at [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org).

# Fun Things To Do With Your Children

Enjoy these fun activities with your children:

- Put out a bird feeder and watch the birds together.
- Cover a table with a blanket to make a play house for your child.
- Have an indoor picnic on a blanket in your living room. "Invite" your child's teddy bears/ stuffed animals to attend.
- Play the opposite game with your preschooler—you say a word and they say the opposite hot-cold, up-down.
- Let your child help you sort and match up socks.
- Snow is white. How many other things can you think of that are white?
- Let your child use the boxes leftover from the holidays to create whatever they can imagine—maybe an airplane or a car.
- Make some paper bag puppets with your child.
- Ask your child to look around your house for circles—maybe the clock, a plate, etc.
- Make a snowman.
- Read to your child.



Have fun together!!

## PA Early Learning Standards

Learning in the early years often looks different than learning in the elementary school grades. Learning in the early years takes place within the context of play and active hands-on activities where the children are exploring and discovering. Teachers have the incredibly important job of planning hands-on activities and intentional play opportunities that help children learn about the world around them.

One of the tools that teachers have available to assist them in their planning is the Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood. The Learning standards cover learning in the following areas: Approaches to Learning, Creative Arts, Language and Literacy, Logical-Mathematical, Personal Social, Physical Health, Program Partnerships, Science, and Social Studies. The standards within each area provide information that children should be able to know and/or do when they leave that age level or grade. The learning standards are meant to: inform teachers and administrators about curriculum and assessment and guide the selection of program materials and design of instruction, inform parents of age-appropriate expectations for children, and provide a common framework for community based work on curriculum and transitions. The learning standards are not meant to: be used as a specific curriculum or to mandate specific teaching practices and materials, prohibit children from moving from one age level or grade to another, assess the competence of children or teachers.

You may already have noticed that Indi Kids teachers have started including the learning standards on their lesson plans. If you have any questions regarding the learning standards or would like to see a copy, please see your child's teacher.

## Indi Kids

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**Teaming with Families to Provide  
High Quality Care and Education**



## Indi Kids

The goal of our program is to work with parents for the fullest development of their children socially, physically, and emotionally. The program environment is one that stresses interaction and exploration with adults, other children, and an assortment of experiences and materials. Since children's play is a vehicle for and an indicator of their social, emotional, and intellectual growth, child-initiated, teacher-supported play is one of the essential components of the program. Indi Kids is responsive to the individual strengths and developmental needs of each child. Teachers foster children's self-confidence, independence, curiosity, and problem solving skills. In an environment of mutual trust, caring staff members help children search for and form their own questions, ideas, and meaningful solutions. Children enjoy the pleasure of learning through direct experience.



## Save the Date

### Family Fun Fest

Saturday, March 24th, 2012

at the Indiana Mall



Our theme this year is **SCIENCE!**

**S**eek

**C**reate

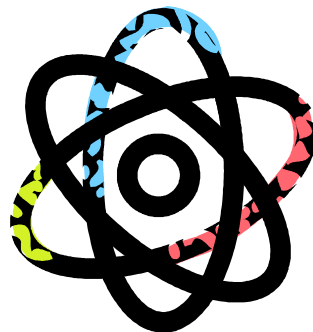
**I**nquire

**E**xplore

**N**avigate

**C**hange the World

**E**xperiment



Fun activities for children, great information for families, science assemblies from the Carnegie Science Center and so much fun!!

Does your child look a lot like you or your spouse? If so, then you should plan on entering the Parent/Child Look A-like contest! Children must be age 8 or younger.