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BrightStart Learning Center, LLC
4920 Brennan Park Drive
Alexandria, Virginia 22304

Bright Start's Monthly Shine

Director's Column

By Carin Elliott

Well, summer is almost over. I cannot believe how quickly it has come and gone. There have been so many changes to our facility and staffing. I can honestly say that Bright Start continues to shine brightly throughout our local area.

Changing of the Guards

Historically, Arlington Cemetery's "Change of the Guards" ceremony has been acknowledged as a very proud event. The ceremony is highly orchestrated. It signifies that the present guard's time has passed and a new guard has been assigned to fulfill his duties as he watches over the cemetery grounds. During this event, a uniformed commander oversees the change as the present guard passes on his orders and the new guard accepts those orders. For a soldier to be considered "The Guard", he has to be dedicated to the cause and must undergo focused training. Therefore, there is a great deal of respect among those involved in the actual event and those witnessing the event. Why should Bright Start's "Changing of the Directors", as we say in childcare, be any different other than the name we attach to it.

Bright Start's "Changing of the Directors" occurred on Friday, July 10, 2009 at our fourth annual Ice Cream Social. Beautiful skies and warm weather, welcomed all of Bright Start (our children, families, staff, administrators, and Mr. Skip) to the Gazebo for delectable ice-cream treats



and music. Bright Start's management change could not have occurred during a more appropriate event.

During a casual conversation between Amber and I, Amber indicated that no one is a "true" Bright Start employee until they have danced to "The Boogie Walk" with Mr. Skip. Therefore, Amber and I decided to have an unofficial ceremony between the two of us during the Ice-cream social as we danced together to the infamous "The Boogie Walk".

"The Ceremony" was absolutely lovely. As Mr. Skip (our uniformed commander) played the "Boogie Walk", Amber (The Active Sentinel) passed on her role and responsibilities that she filled as director and I (The Relieving Sentinel) respectfully acknowledged my new role and the associated responsibilities.

As the ancient Greek mythologist, Pericles, once said, "What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others". Amber served Bright Start well and she will be greatly missed

as we remember all the wonderful things that

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she did for us, our families, and our children. Now, it is my turn to carry all of Bright Start in my heart as I lead by example.

I would like to thank you for the support and patience that you have demonstrated during the transition within management. I am excited about my new position. Please rest assured that the love I have for what I do motivates me to do my own personal best every day.

The Transition: A Brief Update

Bright Start (The Center) was tremendously lucky to have the same director, Jacque, for its first three years in existence. The Center has been even luckier to have had time to promote one of its own classroom teachers, Amber, to the associate director position and groom her to succeed Jacque upon her departure last August (2008). Therefore, when I was hired by Kerri last August, I symbolized “change” within Bright Start.

Change has the potential to bring a mixture of harmony and adversity anytime it arises. For some, change is much anticipated and exciting, but for others, change can be daunting. I accepted the promotion to director with my eyes wide open. I understand the dynamics of change and have found that if you look change right in the face and walk towards it, change can lead to great things.

Although some of the staff were initially a bit anxious about having a “new” director, they have begun to settle in with the change well. I am greeted with smiling faces and warm expressions from my support system on a daily basis. I cannot express to you

enough what a wonderful team of teachers we have here at Bright Start. They all work very hard on a daily basis to provide love and the best possible care to your children. The teachers are also supportive to each other and to me. Many of them stopped by my office last week just to say, “Ms. Carin, I think that you are doing a really good job! Thank you!”. Their support means so much to me.

I am also aware that some of you have pondered why I am staying at the center for prolonged periods of time and if everything is going “okay” with the transition. Well, I cannot begin to tell you how pleased I am with how the transition is going thus far.

The longer hours are temporary. I have chosen to work these additional hours to accomplish several goals that I have personally set for the center that I desire to accomplish within a compressed period of time. Hence, the longer hours were self-inflicted and should in no way be viewed as an indicator that things are no on the “up and up” at Bright Start. In fact, starting this week, my goal is to work on leaving on time.

A Letter of Introduction

Dear Parents,

When I first began with Bright Start as the Closing Manager in June 2009, I had the opportunity to visit several of the classrooms and interact with several of you and your children. Since I will be spending a lot of time with your children, I wanted to take the opportunity to provide you with a little



bit of information about myself.

My love for children and drive to create a

safe and developmentally appropriate learning environment comes from my many years of experience working with children as well as the expert level of training that I received from George Mason University. At George Mason, I earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology and Master of Education Degree in pre-kindergarten through third grade Curriculum and Instruction. Some of my experiences in the local area include several internships teaching children in preschool through grade three, caring for children ages 18 months through 12 years of age in a child care center of a local gym, and teaching in the (SACC) School Aged Child Care program for Fairfax County Public Schools. Also, as a former teacher of Prince Georges County Public Schools and Arlington County Public Schools, I have over three years of experience teaching grades kindergarten through grade two. During my free time, I enjoy reading, traveling, spending time with my niece and nephews, and volunteering with various organizations such as DCCARES.

In my new role, I look forward to continuing to build positive relationships with you, the families, and your children. My goal is to aid in the maintenance of a nurturing environment in which the children are provided with the best care and educational opportunities possible. As the Associate Director, I understand that each child spends a huge part of their day here, and therefore, I truly believe communication is key to bridging the gap between home and center care.

Sincerely,

Angel M. Dungee

Staffing Updates

- Crystal’s (Lead Teacher of the Busy Bugs class) last day at Bright Start was Wednesday, July 15, 2009. Crystal was a dedicated

employee of Bright Start since 2005 and will be missed. She left us to seek out other opportunities.

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that our children are equipped with the experiences and knowledge necessary to be as ready as possible for kindergarten.

program from the local high school.

We are also working to identify and hire qualified individuals to fulfill the position of closing lead in all classrooms. With aid from my associate director, the current lead teachers, and the classroom teams, we have identified several current staff members to mentor and train over the next few months to ultimately being promoted to closing leads. Currently, we are seeking to hire one additional lead teacher other than the pre-kindergarten lead teacher.

What's New?

Staff Schedules

One of our goals within management is to arrange our staff in such a way that the needs of our center are best met while at the same time attempting to also accommodate the needs of our staff. We (Angel, Kerri, and I) realize that at certain times during the day, we are actually overstaffed. We also realize that we have a greater turnover rate during our evening shift because we tend to hire more part-time staff.

With the above realization, our staffing needs, and our desire to minimize the amount of change for the kids to maintain consistency for them as much as possible in mind, you will begin to notice slight shifts within the schedules of our staff members. Most schedules will not shift by more than one half hour. You will also notice that all of our classrooms, except the Teddy Bears, will be combining for the first and last hour of the day. The classrooms will combine as follows: Buzzy Bees with the Turtle Tots, Swinging Monkeys with the Busy Bugs, and the Tigers with the Kangaroos.

The benefits of combining our classrooms are:

1. As children slowly arrive and depart for the day, they will benefit from the stimulation of other peers since the numbers are usually fairly low in the first and last hours of the day.
2. We should not need to hire more than one part-time staff member for each classroom which allows for more focused training and mentoring for the person that is hired since we typically hire students from the Early Childhood cooperative

Center Procedures & Policy Changes

1. We are now requiring that all supplied sunscreen is hypo-allergenic and at least SPF-15. The reason for this change is that since we ask permission to pool all child sunscreen for classroom use unless specified otherwise, we feel that this would minimize the risk of any adverse reaction to the children from exposure to different sunscreens.

2. One of my most important jobs as director is to promote the safety and health of all children in our care, therefore, based upon my observations of pool day and concerns raised by you, we have decided to discontinue pool day for children who are not fully potty trained. The classes who will be able to participate include the Tiger and Kangaroo classes and occasionally the Bugs and Ducks classes as the class becomes potty trained.

Alternatively, the classes who do not participate in pool day will be engaged in water day. On water day, activities for those classes might include: water play in the sensory tables, squirting water on each other with age-appropriate devices (water guns will be prohibited), being carried or walking and running through water sprinklers, and etcetera.

Beach Day at Bright Start will be adapted to adjust for this change.

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3. An updated Parent's Manual (August 2009) will be distributed for your review. Please read the updated manual and sign off of the signature page acknowledging your receipt and return it to your child's teacher as soon as possible.

4. Photos from our Ice-cream Social will be available on our website for your viewing pleasure later this week.

Reminders

- There will be a 3% tuition increase beginning September 1, 2009.
- Please be sure to let your child's teacher or the office know when your child comes down with a contagious rash, infection, or illness such as Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis), Ringworm, or Hand, Foot, and Mouth and etcetera.
- Kangaroo class parents, please remember to provide the office with at least a two week notice of your child's last day before entering kindergarten.
- If you would like for your child to eat breakfast at the center, your child must be at school by 9:00 a.m.

- The police will ticket you if you double park outside because it serves as a hazard to cars that have to squeeze into the lot. Please do not double park outside of the center. Thank you for your cooperation.

- Any tuition due dates are listed on the parent manual.

- Bright Start classes start at 7:00 a.m. and end at 6:45 p.m. but the pickup time is before 6:45 p.m.

- The center has a \$15 late charge for any children not picked up on time. An additional \$15 is charged after 6:45 p.m. ***For the Dancing Ducks (Half Day) class, the late fee is charged after 1:00 p.m. and an additional \$15 is charge after 1:15 p.m.

Please help us maintain our licensing requirements by remembering to do the following:

- Label your child's personal belongings and any sunscreen or diaper cream with their name prior to bringing them to school.
- Label your child's food and drink with their name and the date.

Bright Start Contacts

Kerri Chase, Owner & Center Administrator
kchase@bright-start.org

Carin Elliott, Director
celliot@bright-start.org

Angel Dungee, Associate Director
adungee@bright-start.org

Check out our website:
www.bright-start.org

Continued from August 14, 2009.

**Friday, August 28, 2009
9:00 – 11:15 a.m., Bright Start Beach Day**


Bright Start will be holding its annual Beach Day on Friday, August 28, 2009. This year's events will include a 30-45 minute session for each class to engage in water play outside in our beautiful community. The scheduled water play session for your child's class will be posted on the parent board within your child's classroom cbsert to the event. For more information, please feel free to stop by the office, email celliot@brightstart.org, or call the main office (703-370-8414).

UPCOMING EVENTS

*Picture Day- Sept. 9 & 10 @ 8am
Parent's Meeting- Sept. exact date TBD*

August 2009

***Please Note: Staff leave subject to change (based on leave requests as of July 31, 2009).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 <i>Tuition Express</i> Processed for Families billed weekly & on the 1 st of the Month Carly & Cynthia Out	4 Carly, Emelyn, & Cynthia Out	5 Carly & Cynthia Out	6 Rita's Last Day Carly & Shanice Out	7 Carly & Shanice Out	8
9	10 Carly, Shanice, & Kerstin Out	11 Shanice Out	12 International Youth Day	13 Alesia Out	14 Felicia's Last Day Preschool Field Trip to the National Zoo Associate Director Out of the Office Alesia & Kerry Out	15
16	17 <i>Tuition Express</i> Processed for Families billed weekly & on the 15 th of the Month *Director on Vacation	18 *Director on Vacation Alex Out	19 Thasia & Thalia's Last day *Director on Vacation Alex & Cynthia Out	20 *Director on Vacation Alex & Cynthia Out	21 *Director on Vacation Alex, Cynthia, Yessica, & Emelyn	22
23	24 Alex, Yessica, & Emelyn Out	25 Alex, Yessica, & Emelyn Out	26 Alex, Yessica, & Emelyn Out	27 Alex, Yessica, & Emelyn Out	28  Beach Day @ Bright Start Alex, Yessica, & Emelyn Out	29
30	31 Alex Out					



BREAKFAST MENU AUGUST 2009

4116 Wheeler Ave., Alexandria, VA 22304 703-751-1286 Fax: 703-751-5031

<p>3 1/3 c Crispex 1/2 c Pineapple Juice 3/4 C Milk</p>	<p>4 1 Wheat Pancake/syrup 1/2 c Diced Pears 3/4 C Milk</p>	<p>5 1/3 c Cheerios 1/2 Banana 3/4 C Milk</p>	<p>6 1/2 English Muffin w Jelly 1/2 Apple 3/4 C Milk</p>	<p>7 Egg Puff and Corn Muffin 1/2 C Mandarin Oranges 3/4 C Milk</p>
<p>10 1/3 c Cheerios 3/4 c Milk 1/2 c Pineapple Tidbits</p>	<p>11 2 French Toast Stix w/syrup 1/2 C Applesauce 3/4 C Milk</p>	<p>12 1/3 c Corn Flakes 2 Orange Wedges 3/4 C Milk</p>	<p>13 1/2 Bagel & Apple Butter 1/2 c Grape Juice 3/4 C Milk</p>	<p>14 Scrambled Eggs & Biscuit 1/2 c OJ 3/4 C Milk</p>
<p>17 1/3 c Corn Chex 1/2 Pear 3/4 c Milk</p>	<p>18 1 Egg Muffin Egg on Wheat English Muffin 1/2 c Fruit Cocktail 3/4 c Milk</p>	<p>19 1/3 c Rice Krispies 1/2 Banana 3/4 c Milk</p>	<p>20 1 Banana Muffin, 1/2 c Pineapple Juice, 3/4 c Milk</p>	<p>21 1/2 Cheese Omelet, 1/2 Wheat English Muffin 1/2 c OJ 3/4 c Milk</p>
<p>24 1/3 c Rice Krispies 2 Oranges Wedges 3/4 C Milk</p>	<p>25 1 Wheat Pancake w/Syrup 1/2 c Pears 3/4 C Milk</p>	<p>26 1/3 c Bran Flakes 1/2 Banana 3/4 C Milk</p>	<p>27 1/2 Wheat English Muffin Margarine 1/2 c Honeydew 3/4 C Milk</p>	<p>28 1 Breakfast Burrito 1/2 c OJ 3/4 C Milk</p>
<p>31 1/2 Bagel & Apple Butter 1/2 c Honeydew 3/4 c Milk</p>				



LUNCH MENU AUGUST 2009

4116 Wheeler Ave., Alexandria, VA 22304 703-751-1286 Fax: 703-751-5031

<p>3 ½ c Macaroni & Cheese ¼ c Broccoli ½ Apple ¾ c Milk <i>Vegetarian: Same</i></p>	<p>4 ½ c Spaghetti & Meat sauce 1 Slice French Bread ¼ C Tossed Salad ¼ C Honeydew ¾ c Milk <i>Veg: Spaghetti w Soy Protein Sauce</i></p>	<p>5 Rosemary Chicken Leg 1 Parker house roll ¼ c Spinach ¼ c Strawberries ¾ c Milk <i>Vegetarian: 3 Chix Nuggets</i></p>	<p>6 <i>Barbados</i> 5/8 c Black eye Peas & Rice ¼ c Corn ¼ c Fresh Fruit ¾ c Milk <i>Vegetarian: Same</i></p>	<p>7 2 oz Hamburger on a bun ¼ C Tossed Salad w/Dressing ¼ C Cantaloupe ¾ c Milk <i>Vegetarian: Veggie burger on a bun</i></p>
<p>10 Chicken Taco ¼ c Chicken, 2 Tbsp Cheese, ½ Tortilla ¼ c Salsa ¼ c Shredded lettuce/tomato ¼ c Fresh Fruit ¾ c Milk <i>Veg: Bean Taco</i></p>	<p>11 <u>CN 3 Fish Sticks w/ Ketchup</u> 1 ½ oz meat, ½ slice Bread 1 Whole Wheat Roll ¼ C Squash Medley ¼ c Honeydew ¾ c Milk <i>Vegetarian: same alt Cheese Sandwich</i></p>	<p>12 3/8 c Turkey Sloppy Joe Whole Wheat Bun ¼ C Field Green Salad w dressing ¼ C Fresh Fruit ¾ c Milk <i>Vegetarian: 3 Chix Nuggets</i></p>	<p>13 <i>Viet Nam</i> 2 oz Vietnamese Ground Beef ¼ c Rice ¼ c Broccoli ½ Banana ¾ c Milk <i>Vegetarian: Vietnamese Soy Protein</i></p>	<p>14 BBQ Chicken leg Whole Wheat Roll ¼ C Shredded Carrot Salad ¼ c Watermelon ¾ c Milk <i>Vegetarian: 3 Chix Nuggets</i></p>
<p>17 ½ c Cheese Stuffed Shells 1 Slice French Bread ¼ c Peas ¼ c Fresh Fruit ¾ c Milk <i>Vegetarian: Same</i></p>	<p>18 <u><i>Make Your Own Boat</i></u> Tuna Boat ¼ c Tuna, ½ oz American cheese, 1 hotdog roll ¼ c Carrot Sticks, ¼ c Fresh Fruit ¾ c Milk <i>Vegetarian: Same</i></p>	<p>19 CN 4 Chicken Nuggets w Ketchup 2 oz Chicken, ½ slice bread 1 Whole Grain Roll ¼ c Field Green Salad w dressing ½ c Fresh Fruit ¾ c Milk <i>Vegetarian: 3chix Nuggets</i></p>	<p>20 <i>Puerto Rico</i> 5/8 c Rice with Red Beans ¼ c Sweet Potato ½ Banana ¾ c Milk <i>Vegetarian: same</i></p>	<p>21 Cheeseburger on a bun ¼ C Toss Salad ¼ c Cantaloupe ¾ c Milk <i>Veg: Cheese Veggie Burger on a bun</i></p>
<p>24 ½ c Vegetarian Chili 1 slice Corn Bread ¼ c Rice ¼ C Wax Beans ¼ c Fresh Fruit ¾ c Milk <i>Vegetarian: Same</i></p>	<p>25 <u><i>Make Your Own Taco</i></u> Beef Taco ¼ c Ground Beef, 1 Tbsp Cheese, 1 Tortilla, ¼ c Shredded Lettuce ¼ c Cantaloupe ¾ c Milk <i>Veg :Bean Taco ¼ c White Beans</i></p>	<p>26 2 oz Broiled Haddock 1 oz Biscuit Roll ¼ C Fresh Fruit ¼ c Cinnamon Carrots ¾ c Milk <i>Veg: Fish Filets/Cheese Sandwich</i></p>	<p>27 <i>Italy</i> ½ c Chicken Rissoutto 1 ½ oz Chicken, ¼ c Rice 1 slice French Bread ¼ c Tossed Salad 2 Orange Wedges ¾ c Milk <i>Veg: Soy Protein Rissoutto</i></p>	<p>28 Oven Fried Chicken Leg 1 Corn muffin ¼ c Spinach ½ Banana ¾ c Milk <i>Veg: 3 Chix Nuggets</i></p>
<p>31 ½ c Vegetarian Lasagna 3/8 c Cheese & ¼ C Noodles 1 Slice French Bread ¼ C Green Beans ¼ c Fresh Fruit ¾ c Milk <i>Veg: Same</i></p>				

BRIGHT START SNACK MENU AUGUST 2009

3 <u>Celery w/ Ranch dip</u> Pretzels	4 <u>Jello</u> Goldfish	5 <u>Nutrigrain Bar</u> Ritz Crackers & Cheese	6 <u>Mixed Fruit</u> ½ Banana	7 <u>Poppin' Friday</u> Applesauce
10 <u>Orange Wedges</u> Graham Crackers	11 <u>Apple Slices</u> Animal Crackers	12 <u>Peaches</u> Cheerio Snack Mix	13 <u>Celery w/ Ranch dip</u> Apple slices	14 <u>Poppin' Friday</u> Mixed Fruit
17 <u>Graham Crackers</u> Applesauce	18 ½ Banana Goldfish	19 <u>Applesauce</u> Pretzels	20 <u>Orange Wedges</u> Goldfish	21 <u>Poppin' Friday</u> Nutrigrain Bar
24 <u>Apple Slices</u> Peaches	25 <u>Animal Crackers</u> ½ Banana	26 <u>Mixed Fruit</u> Applesauce	27 <u>Pretzels</u> Apple Slices	28 <u>Poppin' Friday</u> ½ Banana
31 <u>Orange Wedges</u> Crackers & Cheese				
<u>Infants & Older Infants</u> AM- Applesauce PM- Goldfish	<u>Infants & Older Infants</u> AM- Banana PM- Graham Crackers	<u>Infants & Older Infants</u> AM- Nutrigrain Bar PM- Applesauce	<u>Infants & Older Infants</u> AM- Goldfish PM- Banana	<u>Infants & Older Infants</u> AM- Peaches PM- Cheerios