

April 2018



Play Centers at Sparks Elementary School

601 Belfast Road

Sparks, Maryland 21152

410.472.1400 ~ www.playcenters.org

Hours of Operation: 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. / 2:45 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.



This organization and its materials are not affiliated with, sponsored by, or endorsed by Baltimore County Public Schools, the Superintendent, or this Baltimore County public school or office.

FROM DIANE MELLOTT, CEO/COO

Greetings and Happy Spring! What an interesting winter we have had! Even though the cold temperatures still won't quite let go, we will do our best to focus our attention on the newness and growth all around us! It is time to spend more time outdoors, to do some sprucing up indoors and out, and to enjoy all of the energy and opportunities that come with warmer weather! You will see many of those things happening in our Play Centers' programs in the upcoming months. Outdoor play and exploration, and an increased focus on creative ways to take learning outdoors, will occur daily, weather permitting.

Growth and newness is happening in the professional child care community as well. All of our School-Age Programs are participating in the Maryland State Department of Education Maryland EXCELS program, a voluntary quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) in which child care programs located in the State of Maryland have the opportunity to participate. Through the application of this tool, progressive levels define a pathway of continuous program improvement. Play Centers is pleased to report that all of our school-age programs have successfully reached Maryland EXCELS – Level Three! Level Four involves Program Accreditation, which is a multi-year process. We are beginning professional development with our staff regarding the Accreditation process and will provide you periodic updates on our progress.

If you haven't already done so this Spring, please take a few minutes to visit our website (www.playcenters.org) to complete the Survey for School-Age / Middle School Locations. We also hope you will work with your child to complete the Survey for School-Age / Middle School Participants. Your feedback, and that of your child, is very important to us as we make on-going modifications to our programs in order to meet the wide variety of needs and interests of our participants and families.

There is also much to do as we continue to meet the changing requirements and opportunities of high-quality child care in the State of Maryland. Whether our focus is on hiring amazing staff and facilitating their professional development, implementing engaging and enriching activities, making enhancements to communication systems, implementing creative financial ideas, maintaining adherence to rigorous licensing regulations, or focusing on new and exciting ways to enhance our programs, our energy and enthusiasm is high!

We wish for all of you a happy spring filled with a sense of newness and opportunity!

FROM THE DIRECTOR

MELISSA BARNES

Happy Earth Day!

THEMES

Flowers
Butterflies
Frogs
Insects
Clouds

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

🎁 Saniya H. 4/6
🎁 Jack B. 4/12 🎁 Ben A. 4/29

FROM ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE (AR)

Questions about your account? Please contact
Sharon Gunther, AR Coordinator, at 410.296.4880, ext. 106.
Questions about Subsidy? Please contact
Kari Thomas, Subsidy Specialist, at 410.296.4880, ext. 111.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Tuesday, April 3rd

School and Play Centers will re-open.

Monday, April 23rd - Friday, April 27th

“After School Professional Appreciation Week”
Join us in thanking our After School
professionals in making a difference in the
lives of young people!



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♻️ PARENTS' CORNER ♻️

Seasonal Allergies in Children

(Excerpt by: Healthychildren.org)

Allergies and asthma often start in childhood and continue throughout life. Although neither can be cured, with proper care they can usually be kept under control. Allergies are caused by the body's reaction to substances called "allergens," which trigger the immune system to react to harmless substances as though they were attacking the body.

When to Suspect an Allergy

Repeated or chronic cold-like symptoms that last more than a week or two, or that develop at about the same time every year.

These could include:

- Runny nose
- Nasal stuffiness
- Sneezing
- Throat clearing
- Nose rubbing
- Sniffing
- Snorting
- Sneezing
- Itchy, runny eyes

Itchiness is not usually a complaint with a cold, but it is the hallmark of an allergy problem. Coughing, wheezing, difficulty breathing, and other respiratory symptoms. Recurrent red, itchy, dry, sometime scaly rashes in the creases of the skin, wrists, and ankles also may indicate an allergy.



Asthma Attacks

Many different substances and events can "trigger" an asthma attack:

- Exercise
- Cold air
- Viruses
- Air pollution
- Certain fumes
- Other allergens

Common Allergens in Home and School

- **Dust:** contains dust mites and finely ground particles from other allergens, such as pollen, mold, and animal dander
- **Fungi:** including molds too small to be seen with the naked eye
- **Furry animals:** cats, dogs, guinea pigs, gerbils, rabbits, and other pets
- **Clothing and toys:** made, trimmed, or stuffed with animal hair
- **Latex:** household and school articles, such as rubber gloves, toys, balloons; elastic in socks, underwear, and other clothing; airborne particles
- **Bacterial enzymes:** used to manufacture enzyme bleaches and cleaning products
- **Certain foods**

Controlling Allergy Symptoms

- It's helpful to use air conditioners, where possible, to reduce exposure to **pollen** in both your home and your car.
- Molds are present in the spring and late summer.
- Dust mites congregate in places where food for them (e.g., flakes of human skin) is plentiful.
- Padded furnishings, such as mattresses, box springs, pillows, and cushions should be encased in allergen-proof, zip-up covers.
- Wash linens weekly, and other bedding such as blankets, every 2 to 3 weeks in hot water to kill the dust mite.
- Pillows should be replaced every 2 to 3 years.

Working With Your Child's Pediatrician

Your child's allergy and/or asthma treatment should start with your pediatrician.

For the complete article, go to :
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/allergies-asthma/Pages/Seasonal-Allergies-in-Children.aspx>