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Did You Know...

The name "pumpkin" is derived from the Greek word, "pepon," which means "large melon." The word evolved over time and from culture to culture. The French called it "pompon." The English modified "pompon" into "pumpion." The American Colonists changed "pumpion" to the present-day "pumpkin."



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"With the new day comes new strength and new thoughts". ~ Eleanor Roosevelt



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Fall: Colorful and Crunchy

The fall is a great time for children to explore the outdoors, learn about seasonal transitions and develop a variety of cognitive skills. Nature-related experiences can foster a child's emerging sense of wonder, and the earliest years of life are the best time to begin providing direct, on-going interactions with the natural world. There's no need to venture to far-away national parks to explore nature. In fact, young children learn best when they are in an environment that is familiar and comfortable. Focus on the foliage, animals, and insects in your own backyard, the playground, or local park before venturing into heavily wooded areas. Keeping safety concerns in mind, adults should allow children to touch, feel, and smell while they explore the environment.

Following are some autumn activities for children to engage in with their family members or child care providers that can promote positive attitudes and feelings toward the environment.

- Allow older children to experience the beauty of fall by taking discovery walks. Collect leaves that have fallen or make a big pile to jump into. Children can use leaves to learn about shape and texture and create their own art by making leaf rubbings. Collect a few leaves that aren't too dried out or crunchy and place them (veins up) onto a table top. Tape a piece of paper over the leaves and rub crayons over the paper. Instantly a picture emerges that will delight and amaze young minds.
- Children's sorting skills can be enhanced by categorizing leaves by color or size. Provide an assortment of inexpensive containers (for example, empty oatmeal or pasta boxes), so they can place the red leaves in one container, the gold leaves in another, and the orange leaves in the third. Help to expand children's color vocabulary by talking with them about the vibrant colors.
- Babies enjoy color, too! Take infants outdoors and talk to them about nature. Point to the clouds or to the birds flying overhead as they migrate south for the winter months. Go on a scavenger hunt together and collect pine cones, acorns, or twig branches. Toddlers and preschoolers might enjoy counting the items they have found while sitting outside with you. Children can make bird feeders with their pine cones by tying a string to the wide part of the pine cone; rolling the cone in peanut butter; shaking it in a bag of bird seed; and hanging the cone onto a branch outside. Talk with your children about the birds as they come to feed from the cone.



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Fall: Colorful and Crunchy continued...

- Sit outside and watch the busy squirrels as they collect food for the winter. Discuss what other animals do to prepare for cold weather.

- Plan a visit to a nearby farm to watch the harvesting or visit a pumpkin patch. Older children can select a pumpkin, and with your help, roast the seeds in an oven. If there isn't a farm or pumpkin patch nearby, pack a picnic lunch and eat it in the backyard or in the park. Take along a couple of children's books about nature from the library.



- Celebrate the season by making vegetable prints. Adults should cut potatoes, cauliflower or corn cobs in half and pour a small amount of finger paint into a flat, plastic dish. Each child can dip the vegetable pieces into the paint, then onto paper or cloth to create an original design.

- Children in the primary grades can create an "autumn memory book" with pressed leaves, pictures, and writings about fall activities and specific events they have enjoyed. Wrap the book in paper and put it away until it's almost spring. When they open it again and look at the leaves and read their writings, they will be able to remember autumn and can compare the differences in seasonal colors.

Positive interactions with the natural environment is an important part of healthy child development. These experiences can enhance learning and elicit a sense of wonder and joy from young children, and play a critical role in shaping lifelong attitudes, values, and patterns of behavior toward nature. Child care professionals and family members should foster this development by providing opportunities for exploring the outdoors and sharing in the fun.

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Easy Pumpkin Pudding

Materials and Ingredients Per Child:

- 1 cup vanilla pudding
- 2 tsp. Libby's easy pumpkin pie mix
- A bowl
- A spoon



Description: Help young children measure and place one cup of vanilla pudding in their individual bowls. Next, measure out 2 tsp. pie mix with each child. Ask children to mix the vanilla pudding and the pie mix together for a seasonal and yummy treat.

Did You Notice?

The training calendar now links the trainings to the Foundations to the Indiana Academic Standards for Young Children from Birth to Five and to the CDA Competencies



For more information call Kimberly at 219-937-0381 x 317

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM OUR KIDS...

- It's more fun to color outside the lines.
- If you're gonna draw on the wall, do it behind the couch.
- Even Popeye didn't eat his spinach until he absolutely had to.
- If your dog doesn't like someone you probably shouldn't either.
- Even if you've been fishing for 3 hours and haven't gotten anything except poison ivy and sunburn, you're still better off than the worm.
- Sometimes you have to take the test before you've finished studying.
- If you want a kitten, start out asking for a horse.
- There is no good reason why clothes have to match.
- If the horse you're drawing looks more like a dog, make it a dog.
- Save a place in lines for your friends.
- Just keep banging until someone opens the door.
- Making your bed is a waste of time.
- Make up the rules as you go along.
- It doesn't matter who started it.
- Ask for sprinkles.
- Hang on tight.
- Ask "why" until you understand.

-- Author Unknown



Thanks to all of you who mailed in the Training Needs Assessment. Here are the winners of the drawing...

Lake County

Crystal South
Kidzone Learning Center, Inc.
Crown Point, IN



Porter County

Susan Thode (not available for photo)
Wee Care Child Development Center
Chesterton, IN



LaPorte County

Barbara Vega
A Mother's Love Daycare
LaPorte, IN



OTHER CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

- Northwest Indiana Early Childhood Conference
October 3 & 4, Hammond, IN
Call 219-989-7345, ext. 3570 for more information
- 2008 NAEYC Annual Conference & Expo -
November 5-8, Dallas, Texas
Call (800) 424-2460 for more information
- Child Care Professional Network (CCPN)
Guidance & Discipline ~Tuesday November 11
Call 219-756-7527 to register. The cost is \$5.00