

APRIL  
2016



# KTK News of the Day

## Notes from Our Feathered Friends

**Baby Chicks:** Happy Spring! The babies are keeping Colleen and Cassie busy all day. We have lots of rollers and busy bodies. Many of them are telling stories (we always wonder what they are saying). The walks outside have been wonderful; they all seem to enjoy the fresh air. Please bring in a spring type jacket as the weather is starting to get warmer. We have a few babies that are beginning to eat solids, which is a very exciting milestone in development. A couple of the chicks are going to be moving: Philly has recently started her new adventure as a Penguin and is doing very well. Declan O. will also be starting to visit and join the other Penguins so he can have more space to explore. We are, of course, still going to snatch snuggles when we can, but know they are ready for their next adventure! Feel free to bring in family photos so we can decorate the walls. Also, thank you for taking shoes off and washing hands as you enter the classroom, as we do spend a vast majority of the day on the floor. Thanks a bunch!

**Penguins:** We are hoping for more warm weather so we can practice our newfound skills of walking and crawling outside. Since we live in the unpredictable weather state, be sure to have outdoor clothing for cold and warm days; thanks! We said good-bye to Hazel last month as she graduated to the Parrots. We also welcome Philomena to our room this month. Both are doing well and enjoying new adventures. Watch our planner this month for some new fun activities that we will be trying out with our friends. Please remember to label your child's belongings so we can make sure they are returned. Thank you.

**Parrots:** The Parrots are so excited to explore all things spring this month. We'll be busy talking about the different things we see in spring: birds, flowers, bugs and rain. We'd also like to give a huge THANK YOU to Ponciano Canto (Aldo's dad) for constructing a box for us to

experiment with planting. Our highlights from March were dyeing Easter eggs and dealing with that silly Easter bunny that hid some eggs on our playground. Please be reminded that we go outside every day, weather permitting, so please make sure your child has what she needs to be warm and comfortable on the playground.

**Peacocks:** Spring is a crazy time for temperature changes. In the morning our playground is quite cold and shaded. Please continue to bring warm outdoor clothes during this time. Earth Day is in April, so the Peacocks' theme this month's is Earth. We will talk about water (ocean, lakes), land (dirt, sand, rocks), growing plants, creepy crawlies (worms, bugs, bees) and our environment. This is where we will talk about keeping our community clean. We will play a "trash yard" game, and pick up "trash" in our classroom. We say farewell to Sloane as she moves on to the preschool room. We know she will do great! We also say a sad goodbye to Sara and Aubrey as they start their new adventures. You will both be greatly missed!



**Preschool:** DROP EVERYTHING AND READ! This month the preschoolers will be participating in D.E.A.R., a national, month-long celebration of reading to help remind kids to make

reading a priority in their lives. As a class, we will be keeping track of the number of books we read throughout the month. We encourage you to keep track at home to help us reach our goal of 100! Please let the preschool teachers know if you are interested in reading a book to our class during the day as well. Our theme this month is Caldecott winners Dr. Seuss, Eric Carle and Laura Numeroff. We also would like to welcome Sloane as she transitions to Preschool. Please remember to keep hats, mittens and coats in your child's cubby. Dressing in layers is best, because the weather is getting warmer, but our playground is often quite chilly in the morning and somehow always seems to have lots of wind.

## A Note from the Director

Dear Parents,

Many times parents have questions concerning their child.

Please use the KTK staff as one of your resources. If you are a first-time parent, don't be afraid to ask the infant teachers lots of questions. I have a lot of experience with preschool and older children, but when it comes to baby care, the teachers have taught me a lot.

You are also welcome to come and observe the teachers in action! The toddlers and older children can sometimes be a handful, but the teachers have tips and tricks that may serve you well at home. I'm always amazed at how they can get such young children to all sit and listen for an activity or a story. There are days when nothing seems to work well or the kids just don't feel like listening. That's why we appreciate your support so much. You understand!

Remember - parents are welcome to come any time and present an activity with our classrooms. The children never seem to run out of questions and they are very curious to have visitors. We appreciate having you as partners as we educate and nurture our very cherished little friends.

Sue Schneider  
Koala-T-Kare Director

## Out of the Mouths of Babes

A mom came with her preschooler to pick up the boy's baby brother. While mom was visiting with the teacher and snuggling the baby the older brother said, "Hey, I want to pet him!"

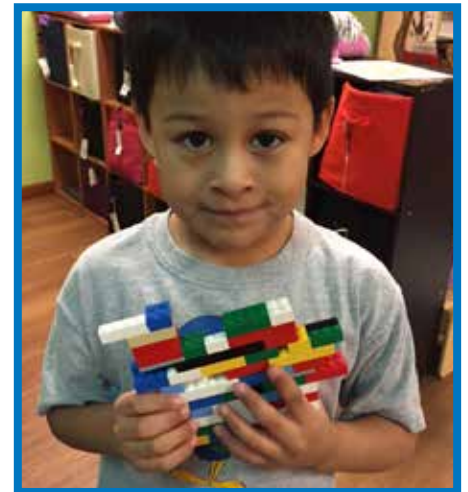
Ms. Sue was helping at nap time and told one of the little boys to go and get his buddy (a stuffed animal). The little boy said, "That's not my buddy. That's my Polar bear."

Ms. Kristi was telling a story to the preschool children about eggs that hatch. Each page had a hidden flap so the kids could guess what was underneath. When she came to the page that gave clues about a snake, Ms. Kristi asked "What do you think it is?" One of the little boys shouted, "It's a boa conductor!"

A little girl in the Peacocks has a mom who has had morning sickness. One day she told her teachers, "My tummy hurts. The baby is making it sick."

Ms. Tammy noticed the leprechaun footprints on the floor of the Peacock room. She asked one of the kids, "Who left these footprints?" A little girl spoke up and offered, "I think it was Mr. Charley."

One of the new preschoolers was being bothered by his friend. He walked up to the teacher and stated, "My friend needs to give me some space."



## Upcoming Events

April 6: MCM Free Family Night 5-8p @ Madison Children's Museum  
April 8: Family Fusion, 6:30p @ Blackhawk Church, Middleton  
April 10: UW Arboretum Family Walk, 1:30-2:30p @ UW Arboretum  
April 16: Dane County Farmers' Market, 6a-2p @ Capitol Square  
April 22: Passover begins, Earth Day  
April 30: Healthy Kids Day, 11a-1p @ YMCA locations

## April Birthdays

April 5: Sloane  
April 11: Alivia  
April 26: Maddie

Due in April:  
Baby Wurl-Koth



# Are you Raising Nice Kids?

A Harvard psychologist gives 5 ways to raise them to be kind

By Amy Joyce (reprinted from [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com))

Earlier this year, I wrote about teaching empathy, and whether you are a parent who does so. The idea behind it is from Richard Weissbourd, a Harvard psychologist with the graduate school of education, who runs the Making Caring Common project, aimed to help teach kids to be kind.

I know, you'd think they are or that parents are teaching that themselves, right? Not so, according to a new study released by the group.

About 80 percent of the youth in the study said their parents were more concerned with their achievement or happiness than whether they cared for others. The interviewees were also three times more likely to agree that "My parents are prouder if I get good grades in my classes than if I'm a caring community member in class and school."

Weissbourd and his cohorts have come up with recommendations about how to raise children to become caring, respectful and responsible adults. Why is this important? Because if we want our children to be moral people, we have to, well, raise them that way.

"Children are not born simply good or bad and we should never give up on them. They need adults who will help them become caring, respectful, and responsible for their communities at every stage of their childhood," the researchers write.

The five strategies to raise moral, caring children, according to Making Caring Common:

## 1. Make caring for others a priority

**Why?** Parents tend to prioritize their children's happiness and achievements over their children's concern for others. But children need to learn to balance their needs with the needs of others, whether it's passing the ball to a teammate or deciding to stand up for friend who is being bullied.

**How?** Children need to hear from parents that caring for others is a top priority. A big part of that is holding children to high ethical expectations, such as honoring their commitments, even if it makes them unhappy. For example, before kids quit a sports team, band, or a friendship, we should ask them to consider their obligations to the group or the friend and encourage them to work out problems before quitting.

Try this:

- Instead of saying to your kids: "The most important thing is that you're happy," say "The most important thing is that you're kind."



- Make sure that your older children always address others respectfully, even when they're tired, distracted, or angry.
- Emphasize caring when you interact with other key adults in your children's lives. For example, ask teachers whether your children are good community members at school.

## 2. Provide opportunities for children to practice caring and gratitude

**Why?** It's never too late to become a good person, but it won't happen on its own. Children need to practice caring for others and expressing gratitude for those who care for them and contribute to others' lives. Studies show that people who are in the habit of expressing gratitude are more likely to be helpful, generous, compassionate, and forgiving—and they're also more likely to be happy and healthy.

**How?** Learning to be caring is like learning to play a sport or an instrument. Daily repetition—whether it's a helping a friend with homework, pitching in around the house, or having a classroom job—make caring second nature and develop and hone youth's caregiving capacities. Learning gratitude similarly involves regularly practicing it.

Try this:

- Don't reward your child for every act of helpfulness, such as clearing the dinner table. We should expect our kids to help around the house, with siblings, and with neighbors and only reward uncommon acts of kindness.
- Talk to your child about caring and uncaring acts they see on television and about acts of justice and injustice they might witness or hear about in the news.
- Make gratitude a daily ritual at dinnertime, bedtime, in the car, or on the subway. Express thanks for those who contribute to us and others in large and small ways.

## 3. Expand your child's circle of concern.

**Why?** Almost all children care about a small circle of their families and friends. Our challenge is help our children learn to care about someone outside that circle, such as the new kid in class, someone who doesn't speak their language, the school custodian, or someone who lives in a distant country.

**How?** Children need to learn to zoom in, by listening closely and attending to those in their immediate circle, and to zoom out, by taking in the big picture and considering the many perspectives of the people they interact with daily, including those who are vulnerable. They also need to consider how their decisions, such as quitting a sports team or a band, can ripple out and harm various members of their communities. Especially in our more global world, children need to develop concern for people who live in very different cultures and communities than their own.

Try this:

- Make sure your children are friendly and grateful with all the people in their daily lives, such as a bus driver or a waitress.
- Encourage children to care for those who are vulnerable. Give children some simple ideas for stepping into the "caring and courage zone," like comforting a classmate who was teased.
- Use a newspaper or TV story to encourage your child to think about hardships faced by children in another country.

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# Happy Earth Day!

(Continued from page 3)

#### 4. Be a strong moral role model and mentor.

**Why?** Children learn ethical values by watching the actions of adults they respect. They also learn values by thinking through ethical dilemmas with adults, e.g. "Should I invite a new neighbor to my birthday party when my best friend doesn't like her?"

**How?** Being a moral role model and mentor means that we need to practice honesty, fairness, and caring ourselves. But it doesn't mean being perfect all the time. For our children to respect and trust us, we need to acknowledge our mistakes and flaws. We also need to respect children's thinking and listen to their perspectives, demonstrating to them how we want them to engage others.

Try this:

- Model caring for others by doing community service at least once a month. Even better, do this service with your child.
- Give your child an ethical dilemma at dinner or ask your child about dilemmas they've faced.

#### 5. Guide children in managing destructive feelings

**Why?** Often the ability to care for others is overwhelmed by anger, shame, envy, or other negative feelings.

**How?** We need to teach children that all feelings are okay, but some ways of dealing with them are not helpful. Children need our help learning to cope with these feelings in productive ways.

Try this:

Here's a simple way to teach your kids to calm down: ask your child to stop, take a deep breath through the nose and exhale through the mouth, and count to five. Practice when your child is calm. Then, when you see her getting upset, remind her about the steps and do them with her. After a while she'll start to do it on her own so that she can express her feelings in a helpful and appropriate way.



## News from the Kitchen

Happy April! The year is already flying by. The 25th of this month, is National Zucchini Bread Day...yum! I thought I'd share a zucchini bread recipe with you all, as it is a good snack for kids. And, bonus, it's loaded with nutritious zucchini! I guarantee if you give your child a plate of shredded zucchini they would look at you like you're crazy. But if you throw it into some delicious bread they won't think twice about gobbling it up. This is a snack you can feel good about giving your children, and they will love it.

This recipe is lightened up using a combination of applesauce and oil. You can certainly omit the chocolate chips if you choose, since the bread is already made with cocoa. After your bread is completely cool, you can cut and wrap individual slices and throw them in the freezer for a quick after school snack or a busy morning breakfast on the go. I hope you and your kids enjoy!

### Double Chocolate Zucchini Bread

Ingredients

2 cups shredded zucchini (about 1 large or 2 small)	3/4 cup brown sugar
1 1/2 cups flour	2 eggs
1/2 cup cocoa	1/4 cup canola or vegetable oil
1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda	1/2 cup applesauce
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt	1 teaspoon vanilla
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon	3/4 cup chocolate chips

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F. Spray with non-stick cooking spray and flour an 8 x 4 x 2 1/2 loaf pan and set aside.
2. Use a towel or paper towels to gently press down the shredded zucchini to eliminate some of the moisture. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, cocoa, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon. Add the brown sugar, eggs, oil, applesauce, and vanilla. Mix to combine. Stir in the zucchini, and then fold in the chocolate chips. Transfer the batter to the prepared pan and bake for 60 to 70 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
4. Let the bread cool in the pan for 30 minutes, and then transfer it to a cooling rack and let it cool completely before serving. Don't skip the cooling process - the bread will appear underdone if you slice and serve while it's still warm.

