

# Fallston Child Care Center

## SUMMER 2020 NEWSLETTER

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**IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK!** We have finally settled in after returning from our twelve-week pandemic shut down. What a bittersweet time it was. It was truly frightening to be faced with a world-wide health crisis (that continues to be an issue) with no solid answers. Each of us struggled while having to weigh risks and consequences daily for everything from work, to grocery shopping, to childcare. Life as we knew it changed overnight.

But at the same time, there were abundant blessings. In staying home, we spent far more time with our families. People connected with each other in ways we hadn't in years. We were forced to slow down and shut out the noise of the outside world for a while. We drove less, wasted less, ate out less, polluted less and consumed less. There sure do seem to be some good lessons in there.

But, boy, did we miss our kiddos! It's amazing how having a schedule and sense of purpose for each day is so important! Many of us just felt lost without our jobs to anchor us. Others of us need that social connection. And still others thrive on having that sense of purpose.

The one thing that we all agreed on, however, was that we sure did miss those kiddos!! The staff was in touch the entire time via text and a few

distance meetings. The amazing thing was that without exception, every single one of our eighteen employees was invested the whole time. They hung on every picture and email from parents. They watched Facebook for updates about their students. They loved any and all Zooms that they got to do! Those connections were so important during a difficult time. Your kids helped us as much as we helped them!

Now that we are about halfway through summer, we wanted to put out what will be essentially our Summer Newsletter. It will bring you up to speed on where we are now, and where we go from here, before we get into the thick of the school year.

**COMMUNICATION:** If ever there was a time when you wanted to make sure that you could get communication when you needed it, it was through the pandemic shutdown. We had virtually no warning that we were getting ready to be closed for three months. Luckily, we had a website, a Facebook page and an up-to-date email chain in place. If you were a parent who had read and responded to any one of the numerous reminders explaining the importance of each of these three modes of communication, you were all set!

We continue to update and upgrade

all three daily. If you have not utilized them, please do so immediately.

The email list is the most critical. It is how you will be notified of any kind of emergency. Each parent should be on it separately and you can feel free to add a grandparent or a nanny's email address if they are people who would be helping to manage your child's pick up in a crisis. If you have not been receiving the emails, simply go to the bottom of the home page of our website at [www.fallstonchildcare.org](http://www.fallstonchildcare.org) to sign up. You can unsubscribe with one click at any time.

Lots of information can be accessed on our website. Recently, a new dropdown menu has been added with the most frequently needed forms parents request. You are now able to access them on your own with just one click!

Under "Resources", you can also quickly get to the CDC, to check on the latest COVID updates, or to the Office of Governor Hogan to check on the latest emergency orders.

We are always striving to make your life (and ours) easier!

**FAMILIES FIRST:** Sometimes decisions are easy. Sometimes they are hard. Sometimes it's as simple as, it's just the right thing to do. Fallston Child Care Center is proud to say that from the first moment we shut our doors at closing time on March 13<sup>th</sup> until we excitedly opened them again on June 8<sup>th</sup>, we didn't charge our families one dime. We know that everyone was frightened and had to make difficult decisions for their family. We know that many were working from home or not at all. We know that the future was questionable for everyone. It was important to us to be one thing in your

life that could be counted on. Of our eighteen employees, we didn't lose one during the shutdown. In fact, just the opposite. They couldn't wait to zoom with the kids and connect with different ideas and plans. Everyone was excited to reach a point where we could get back to work and school.

Of course, we are running a business, but it is always our goal to keep the child and the family at the center of that business. We thank you for your faith in us!

## **FROM THE DAYCARE BOARD:**

*Happy Summer, Everyone!*

*First and most importantly, thank you for your patience, support, and prayers as we have navigated through these past few months. Every day new rules have been put into place for our daycare facility and thanks to Val's dedication, we have met every one of them. There have been many ups and downs, but through it all, our Board and Val have been committed to our parents and children.*

*As our state opens up with new guidelines, our daycare looks forward to having your children in a safe and fun environment.*

*Enjoy the summer with your family and friends,*

*Marina Lattanzi  
Daycare Board Chairperson*

## **PROGRAM EVALUATIONS:**

Thank you to those of you who took the time to complete and return the evaluations of this year's academic program. A tremendous amount of time goes into planning and preparing each step of the way. It really helps to know where we are hitting our mark and where you would like further development. If you meant to do this,

but didn't get a chance, extras are available at our temperature taking station in the morning. Just ask! Or feel free to email

[valeree.imperiale@fallstonumc.org](mailto:valeree.imperiale@fallstonumc.org) and one will be sent to you. Thank you!

**DONATIONS:** The pandemic proved, and continues to prove, to be a very difficult time for businesses. Successful business models can only thrive on careful planning and budgeting and these circumstances allowed for anything but. We are so fortunate to be in a community where those who are able to give back, often do. We are beyond grateful for the support we received in several areas and just can't pass up an opportunity to publicly thank several important entities:

- Bel Air Soft Wash power washed and sanitized all the equipment on our playground free of charge.
- Baker Forest donated high quality grade mulch for our playground. This is not just for aesthetics—this is regulatory to provide a fall cushion for when children are playing.
- Mulch Masters donated the trucks and labor to pick up the mulch and come spread the product on our playground.
- Barbara Tejada (grandmother of Mason Tejada) made a sizeable cash donation to our school during the pandemic.
- Several daycare families donated the return of their initial deposit back to Fallston Child Care Center upon the completion of their time with us.

To each and every one of these special people, families, and companies,

you made a difference to us and ultimately, to the kids. Thank you! We will pay it forward!

## **COVID RESPONSIBILITIES:**

We are working very hard to offer you affordable, reliable childcare in a very difficult time. Please do your part to protect the children and staff who work and play here every day! Each family is responsible for:

- Bringing your own working thermometer every day (this is state mandated).
- Keeping your child home if he or she exhibits ANY symptoms of illness.
- Not medicating a child and sending them to daycare.
- Reporting to director if your child or anyone else in your house is diagnosed with Covid-19 or exhibits symptoms of Covid-19.
- Making sure you are always reachable when your child is in our care.
- Making sure we have up-to-date contact information for you at all times.

**FACE COVERINGS:** Our staff wear face coverings, at all times, while at work. Whether your child wears one, is up to you. It is strongly encouraged while in our care. But, we understand that tolerance levels vary. If your child wears a face covering, we will have them remove it for mealtime, naptime, and outdoor playtime.

## **CURBSIDE DROP OFF/PICK**

**UP:** Oh, our parents are ACES in this department! This was one of the new regulations that we were most concerned with. We sure didn't want

anyone to not feel welcome in our school or disconnected from your child's caregiver. But actually, it has been an efficient and simple process and many of you have expressed how much time it saves you in the morning! How wonderful!

It has not seemed to be a problem, but please know that if you need to get information to your child's teacher or ask a question, you can certainly ask the individual at the temperature taking station in the morning and they will be glad to get a message to your teacher. Or you can email the office.

Please try to complete drop offs by 9:00 am. The door is only manned until then.

**ABSENCES:** If your child is going to be out for any reason, please call or email to let us know. There is a multitude of documentation required now for illnesses. It helps if we know that you have just gone to the beach for the weekend.

### **SUMMER REMINDERS:**

1. Please make sure your child's feet are completely covered! Sandals may be easy to dump the sand out of, but on our playground, we need socks and tennis shoes. No sandals or flip flops.
2. Apply a 12-hour, high SPF sun block to your child in the morning before dropping off. We get outside as much as possible!
3. Please arrive by 9:00 each morning.
4. Check your child for ticks nightly.
5. Read everything sent home from your child's cubby each day. Often, teachers request items to be brought back in for special activities. You don't want your child to miss out!!
6. Please make sure your child has a

complete change of clothes in his/her cubby at ALL times.

7. Remember, we cannot have nuts in lunches. Allergies are among us and they can be quite serious!

8. Please keep a bathing suit, towel and water shoes or old tennis shoes in your child's cubby. We try to get wet a little each week. The items do not have to be new. Old and functional is just perfect!

**LABOR DAY:** Fallston Child Care Center will be CLOSED on Monday, September 7<sup>th</sup> in observation of the Labor Day holiday.

**TUITION:** Remember, tuition is due every other Monday throughout the year. You will not receive bills! What you receive are statements AFTER you pay, showing that payment. PLEASE READ THEM EACH TIME! They should always have a balance of zero. If they do not, it means you owe money and need to settle that balance immediately.

The due dates for the remainder of the summer are July 20<sup>th</sup>, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, August 17<sup>th</sup>, and August 31<sup>st</sup>.

It does get a little tricky when you are on the week to week plan and are only here periodically. Remember, if your child attends at all during the time frame of when tuition is due, you owe tuition, even if you are not here to pay on the due date. Online banking is the easiest way to make sure you always remember! If you need help setting up your account, just call or email the office. It is quick, easy, and free to set up.

**UPDATING FILES:** Fallston Child Care Center is approaching our

annual inspection by the Maryland State Department of Education Office of Child Care, which is our licensing agency. This is always unannounced, so we never know when the licensing specialist will drop in. We pride ourselves on keeping things up to date, but we need your help. If you have any new phone numbers or pick up people, please put it in writing for the office. If your child has received shots, please provide us with a copy. Thank you in advance for your help.

### **FALL PROGRAM FOR 2'S, 3'S, AND 4'S:**

The Fall 2020 Program for our preschoolers begins on September 8<sup>th</sup> and will not be affected by Harford County Public Schools' decision to go to virtual learning. Our Center will be open from 6:30 am – 5:30 pm throughout the school year unless a public health crisis dictates otherwise. In case of a room or school closure, notification would be sent out via the mass email, our website, and our Facebook page, so again, please make sure you are following one or more of these sources.

### **FALL PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL AGE:**

Fallston Child Care Center has had a very full and active school age program for more than ten years now. Recently, with the new COVID distancing guidelines, the number of children that we can accommodate in the gym has been cut in half. This comes at the same time that Harford County Public Schools has announced that they will shift to an online learning from home model for the fall/winter semester. So, from at least September 8<sup>th</sup> until January 22<sup>nd</sup>, students will not attend traditional

school. Simultaneously, HCPS announced that they will be offering Community Learning Centers within the schools for a safe place for students to go that will offer wifi, lunch, and a proctor to help them access the work they need to successfully join their class online.

While the initial plans for this have been presented, the details have not yet been outlined. FCCC stands ready to provide childcare to some degree and has begun to set our own plans in motion. We have also been collecting names on a waiting list. However, the number of students we can accept, hours, and cost are dependent on receiving the final details from HCPS. Once these have been received, families from our school age list can expect to receive an email from us inquiring as to what your school age childcare need will then be. We will accommodate as many children as we are able to.

Thank you for your patience and understanding. A great many pieces are going to have to come together very quickly. We will get answers back to you as fast as we can!

### **CHECKLIST TO PREPARE FOR FALL:**

1. Practice wearing face coverings.
2. Practice hand washing.
3. Purchase thermometer (preferably
4. Make sure shots are up-to-date.
5. Make sure Health Inventories and Medication pages are complete and turned in.
6. Purchase lunch bags and Ziploc bags instead of plastic containers. Lunches to be disposable.

