

May 2018

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## Building Blocks for the March for Our Lives

By Chloe Learey, Executive Director

Regardless of where you fall on the political continuum as it relates to the issue of gun control or gun rights, witnessing high schoolers from coast to coast demonstrating leadership on these thorny issues offers a great opportunity to consider where and how leadership skills emerge.

Many have questioned how students in their early to late teens successfully coalesced into a movement in such a short time, including a national march in Washington, DC. For those who say they are puppets of adults pushing an agenda there is not much to discuss. For others, from those who say, "these young people should be seen, not heard" to those who say, "this generation will save us," it is an opportunity to reflect on what skills and experiences provide the foundation from which leadership can launch.



The importance of "soft skills" has been reported in leading business publications like Fortune and Forbes. Even the highest academic achievers will struggle in the classroom and the workplace if they are not able to communicate effectively with other people, name and understand their feelings, regulate their emotional state, manage their time, show empathy, and listen well. We know that 80% of the brain is developed by the age of 3, and 90% by the age of 5, before kids even get to kindergarten, and this is the time when the foundation of these soft skills is established. These early years are critical to future success in all realms of life.

Soft skills are about how you work with others, or so called "people skills." An August 2017 program on National Public Radio, "Social Emotional Skills, Everybody Loves Them But Still Can't Define Them," attempted a better definition of soft skills. The author, Anya Kamenetz, highlighted a variety of terms: character, grit, resilience, noncognitive traits and habits, social emotional skills, growth mindset, and agency. She discussed the difference between skills (how to listen) and internal traits (a sense of power to influence your life). While imperfect, she landed on soft skills as the phrase that best covers these key concepts.

The idea of inherent character traits is a slippery slope towards blaming individuals for lack of success – "she just didn't have enough grit, didn't pull herself up by her bootstraps." There are echoes of 'nature vs nurture' here, and it is the interplay between the two that determines the outcome.

A child who experiences trauma and develops a fight-response may eventually get labelled with oppositional defiant disorder. Her strategy for survival has been to fight, which affected the development of her brain. Support could either reinforce that or create different neural pathways to help her develop new strategies. Her brain development is not just a matter of nature.

What does this have to do with the students we are seeing on the news and on the streets? We see young people who are able to articulate their feelings (an 18-year old male crying in public, a 17-year old female expressing anger), and show empathy for others' experience (acknowledging that students in Chicago and Los Angeles live with daily violence). We see young people standing up to negative comments and threats (understanding that not everyone will agree with them and that they still have a right to speak), and moving forward in the face of adversity (organizing despite political forces working to thwart them). We see people demonstrating a range of the social emotional skills that make it possible to understand, plan and execute a variety of strategies so they can make a difference in their world. We see people who believe they have the power to make change. We see people who can think critically and adapt their understanding of an issue based on new information.

Regardless of whether you agree with their agenda, hopefully you see the value of what they bring to table. An engaged, active citizenry is vital to the health of our democracy, and the skills that all of us need to be successful on that front are developed in the earliest years of our lives.

All environments are learning environments for young children because the growth of the brain is so rapid during this time of life. If we make investments to ensure that the environments of young children, at home and in child care, are promoting healthy social emotional development, we will continue to see the kind of participation we hope for in our schools, workplaces and communities across the spectrum of beliefs. These investments pave the way for successful future leaders.

## UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS:

### 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Adult Dental Care Day

Saturday, May 5 ~ 7:30am-10:00am

Brattleboro Elks Lodge, 75 Putney Rd, Brattleboro

Windham County residents (18 or older) in need of fillings and extractions will receive care from local participating dental offices, who donate their time and expertise. This event is free, with a suggested donation of \$20 per person. Sponsored by the United Way of Windham County.

### 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Handbags for Hope Benefit

Thursday, May 10 ~ 10:00-12:00 pm

VFW, 40 Black Mt Rd, Brattleboro

Silent and live auction to benefit the United Way's Fund for Quality Early Education, which provides funds for early care and learning programs for professional development and program enrichment and supplies. More info: [www.unitedwaywindham.org](http://www.unitedwaywindham.org)

### Child Care Provider Appreciation Day

Friday, May 11

Provider Appreciation Day is a special day in May to recognize child care providers, teachers and other educators of young children everywhere. It's an opportunity to honor and recognize providers and members of the early childhood workforce for their contributions to the growth, health, and education of our next generation,



The Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development provides inclusive education and family support to promote the success of children and families.

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### Month of the Young Child Puppet Show



## COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

### CHILDREN'S INTEGRATED SERVICES (CIS)

**Alison Wheeler, CIS Coordinator**

Ext. 314 alison@winstonprouty.org

**Willie Gussin, CIS Intake Coordinator**

Ext. 303 willie@winstonprouty.org

### CIS EARLY INTERVENTION

**Lisa Adams, Developmental Educator**

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**Mary Coogan, Early Interventionist**

Ext. 315 mary@winstonprouty.org

**Kathy Hallock, Developmental Educator**

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**Ellen Ostrander, Early Interventionist**

Ext. 227 ellen@winstonprouty.org

**Joanne Shaw, Community Resource Parent**

Ext. 208 joanne@winstonprouty.org

### CIS EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH

**Jennifer Emerson, ECFMH Clinician**

Ext. 202 jemerson@hcrs.org

**Brandy Levesque, Consultation & Behavior Support Specialist**

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**Shawn Lund, Consultation & Behavior Support Specialist**

Ext. 216 shawn@winstonprouty.org

**Maura Shader, ECFMH Clinician**

Ext. 202 mshader@hcrs.org

### CIS NURSING

**Jean Vulté, CIS Nurse & Lactation Counselor**

Ext. 211 jean@winstonprouty.org

**Sally Pennington, CIS Nurse & Lactation Consultant**

Ext. 206 cisnurse1@gmail.com

### FAMILY SUPPORT

**Kerri Beebe, CIS Family Support Worker**

Ext. 204 kerri@winstonprouty.org

**Melissa Dawson, Family Supportive Housing Coordinator**

Ext. 201 melissa@winstonprouty.org

**Kellyn McCullough, CIS Family Support Worker**

Ext. 305 kellyn@winstonprouty.org

**Evon Valentine, Family Supportive Housing Coordinator**

Ext. 203 evon@winstonprouty.org

### CHILD CARE SUPPORT SERVICES

**Jeanna Genest, FAP Eligibility Specialist**

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**Tonya Kangas, CIS Child Care Coordinator**

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**Sueño LeBlond, Early Childhood Outreach Specialist**

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**Kristy Rose, Food Program Specialist**

Ext. 317 kristy@winstonprouty.org

## Welcome to Evon & Melissa to our Family Support Team

Please join us in welcoming Evon Valentine and Melissa Dawson as our Family Supportive Housing (FSH) Coordinators. The Family Supportive Housing (FSH) program provides services and supports to families to help them identify what they need, make goals towards getting those needs met, and access resources towards achieving those goals with the outcome of stable housing as a primary objective. Evon and Melissa work closely with community partners such as Brattleboro Housing Authority, Windham and Windsor Housing Trust, Groundworks Collaborative, and the Brattleboro Area Housing Review Team to implement this program.

*Melissa Dawson*

Melissa has her Masters Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy as well as a Bachelor of Science in Psychology. She has nearly 20 years of experience supporting families with young children in a variety of settings. Most recently, she worked for Healthy Starts Program in Keene, NH, providing in home social work and counseling to families around behavioral health, mental health, parenting and community resource challenges.



*Evon Valentine*



Evon worked as a Family Support Worker for three years at the Institute for Family Health in Ulster County Healthy Families in New York prior to moving to Vermont a little over a year ago. In this position, she provided in-home support to families experiencing economic, behavioral, and mental health challenges. Evon also has experience working with teenage females at a therapeutic treatment facility. Since moving to Vermont, she has been working as a Community Skills Worker for Northeastern Family Institute (NFI) and is happy to have found a position that aligns with her work at the Healthy Families program.

## EARLY LEARNING CENTER

**Kimberley Paquette, ELC Program Coordinator**  
Ext. 306      kim@winstonprouty.org

**Angela Hoag, ELC Administrative Coordinator**  
Ext. 210      angela@winstonprouty.org

**Paul Rossi & Liz Martin, Kitchen & Lunch Support**

**Kathy Wright, Floating Teacher**

**Bob Peebles & Susan Mandell, Volunteers**

### ELC WISH LIST:



Portable CD Player



Seedlings for our garden



### Help us Raise the Roof!

Our Early Learning Express (ELE) Bookmobile needs a new home! In order to sustain the ELE program for years to come, we need a safe and dry spot for the vehicle. We're kicking off our campaign on May 17, which is Vermont Gives Day, a statewide Day of Giving designed to bring the state together as one community, raising as much money and awareness as possible for Vermont's nonprofits. Our goal is to raise \$5000 to create a new home for the ELE. Please join the cause and keep this cherished and valuable service available to local children and educators!

## Acorn Room

*Nancy McMahon, Mandi Martin / Ext. 218 / Email: nancy@winstonprouty.org*

It always amazes me when children come back from spring break. After a week they come back with new words and hitting new developmental milestones, and they look so much bigger! It's bittersweet as I see them becoming toddlers and beginning to show signs of readiness for the next room. These babies amaze me every day. They are so eager to learn. They are now eating at the big table, and enjoy self-feeding, drinking from cups, weaning off bottles, and walking away from the table.

May will be full of warm summer like walks. We are exploring spring, flowers, mud, and zoo animals. We have begun playing in the infant toddler yard, and look forward to spending more time outside. We enjoy watching the big trucks drive by on 91 and we are discovering the grass, dirt and motor toys. We are planning a spring cleanup day in the yards on May 20, 2018. More details are to come but pencil the date if you are looking to do your volunteer hours. We will also need volunteers to prep our gardens if that's a talent! Also if you have extra plants we are accepting donations for our planters, our new garden plots and various flower herb planters throughout the campus! Happy Spring!!!



We love feeding ourselves now!

Reminder:  
Family Circle  
May 4, 2018  
at 4:30!



## Elm Room

Susan Heimer, Allie Barrett, Brianna Root / Ext. 207 / Email: [susan@winstonprouty.org](mailto:susan@winstonprouty.org)



Look what happened to the seeds we planted! The Elm room children enjoyed spraying our seeds and observing our green and growing "cat grass" as we also noticed the return of green plants outdoors!



This red and blue fingerprint did eventually become purple, our color of the month, as children blended it with their fingers.



Visual recognition of numbers was an April focus originally inspired by our Storyboard clock, but reinforced with materials such as number magnets and puzzles like these.

We are so happy to now be able to spend more extended periods of time outdoors! Watch for notice of a work clean up party as we get our play



The "Fruit Stand" morphed into a "Grocery Store" and has been the center of great imaginative play in our dramatic play center. Doll houses have been our other favorite pretend toys lately.

## Maple Room

Amy Fulton, Melaney Moorhead, Sara Fradkin / Ext. 205 Email: [amy@winstonprouty.org](mailto:amy@winstonprouty.org)



Thanks to the families who attended our Nutrition Fun Night. Together we tried out some toddler-friendly lunch ideas. Here are some recipes that are a bit hit in our classroom:



### UNCRUSTABLES

Using a glass or biscuit cutter, cut 2 pieces of bread into circles. Spread one half with PB and the other with jelly. Place two halves together. Using a fork, press edges together to seal using a fork. You now have your very own "uncrustables"

### SANDWICH KABOS

It's almost like a chef's salad on a stick! You could use turkey and whatever cheese your children enjoy. Pack a roll or some crackers on the side



## Willow Room

Colleen Quigley / Ext. 212 / Email: [colleen@winstonprouty.org](mailto:colleen@winstonprouty.org)

We explored a five senses theme in the Willow Room this month. We talked a lot about our body parts (eyes, nose, ears, hands, tongue) and how they help us learn about the world around us. We engaged almost all of our senses during our fizzy rock experiment. We took round balls of food coloring and baking soda, and used a dropper to squeeze vinegar on top of the baking soda. When the reaction occurred, friends said it was "bubbling!", "fizzy!", and "getting bigger". They also commented on the colors mixing together. At the end of the project we added a lot of vinegar and made a larger explosion of bubbles.



As the weather has been warmer we have been taking more walks. A classroom favorite is walking on the trails on campus. We climb over logs and through streams.

Next month's theme in Willow Room will be Nature. We will grow grass in recycled milk cartons, paint with items that we collect on our walks, and hatch our own butterflies!



## Birch Room

Jamie Champney, Kim Jacques, Alfred Hughes, Jr. / Ext. 220 / Email: [jamie@winstonprouty.org](mailto:jamie@winstonprouty.org)

This month we have been loving our transition into the springtime! Now that the snow is gone, we have been enjoying some longer nature walks in the woods and spending more time on the playground. And of course with the start of mud season, we have enjoyed playing in the mud and puddle jumping!

Inside, we have continued to enjoy our memory and matching games, building with blocks, listening to new stories at the listening center, and playing in our favorite dress up clothes.

In May we will be learning about gardening; we will start by planting our small classroom planters, and will take care of them inside until it is time to transfer them to our class garden on the playground.



## Oak Room

*Sarah Bemis, Alyssa Kelly / Ext. 217 / Email: sarah@winstonprouty.org*

The month of April our theme was animals. We learned about farm animals, pets, and jungle animals. A highlight of the month for us was our pajama day when we got a visit from Alyssa's dog Mater! Our friends loved seeing his tricks and feeding him treats. We also enjoyed creating different animal inspired art projects from our chickens to our 3D fish bowls to our peacocks made by blowing paint through straws. We practiced our writing by creating a book about our pets. Our sensory table was filled with feed corn and animals. This month we also worked on the steps needed to solve a problem. We have enjoyed more woods walks as the weather gets warmer. We often go on hunts for animal tracks and observe the changes in the pond.

The month of May we will be learning about gardening and where our food comes from. Our dramatic play center has transformed into the Prouty Farmer's Market. We have also started planting seed for our classroom garden box. We can't wait to notice the changes these plants bring as they grow each day.



# 2018 MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 Cora is 3! Gabriel is 3! Center closes at 3:30 for All Staff meeting	3 Acorn Room Family Circle	4	5 Rebecca is 3!
6 Emma is 2!	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15 Happy Birthday Kellyn!	16	17 Vermont Gives Day - Raise the Roof for the ELE	18	19 Jacob is 5! Olivia is 4!
20 Spring Clean-up Day 	21	22 Charlotte is 5!	23 Brooke is 2!	24	25	26
27	28 The Center is closed for Memorial Day	29 Zion is 1!	30	31		



**Wednesday, June 6** - ELC closes at 3:30 for ELC staff meeting

**Thursday, June 28** - Preschool Graduation

**Friday, June 29** - ELC closed for First Aid/CPR training