

November 1, 2019

Dear Families,

Our November study is "Friendships and Feelings" We will continue to focus on building our classroom community into a loving and empathetic place. We will do this by centering our literature, songs, and activities around emotions, staying safe, and empowering our little sprouts with more responsibility.

Whether your toddler is using one-word phrases or complex sentences, it is never the wrong time to talk about emotions and how to handle them. Our class has already been practicing mindful breathing and using emotional regulation charts, but this month we will be adding more to enrich our social-emotional curriculum. Join us as we read books about feelings, listen to songs about expressing those feelings, and doing themed art projects to reinforce these ideas in your toddlers.

### Inside Look at This Month's Circle

#### Songs:

- If You're Happy, sad, angry, calm and you know it.
- Gentle hands, gentle hands, with my friends I use gentle hands
- Twinkle, Twinkle Little star. What a wonderful child you are!
- Friends, friends, 123.
- Amigos, Amigos, 123

#### Books:

- Sometimes I'm Bombaloo
- Sophie's big voice
- We care
- The pigeon has feelings too

And many more!

### Sleep

Several parents have been asking how much their toddler should be sleeping. Though it varies from child to child, the general rule is 11-14 hours a day, including a two-hour nap in the middle. The mid-day nap is critical for your toddler's development and for resting their sore muscles, and that's why we do it here at Growing Tree. Consider waking your child up earlier as they grow older in order to ensure they can have a midday nap. To see more information about how much your child should be sleeping, visit

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/children-and-sleep> or call up your pediatrician.

### Morning Transitions

A huge "Thank you" to all the parents that have participated in our new morning check in ritual. When done consistently, it has been helping our Sprouts transition into the classroom. This won't help every time for every child, but by everyone participating it strengthens our home and school relationship with your child and empowers them every morning.

### Mindful Breathing with Toddlers: How and Why We Do It in Sprouts

When a young child gets upset, they tend to breathe shallowly or quickly. This can worsen their ability to regulate their emotions at the time, and in some children, it can aggravate respiratory disorders like asthma.

### How can you help?

You can help your child mindfully "take a breath" when upset. Sometimes, simply saying take a breath won't work when they are upset, because their brain is quite literally functioning different when they are upset. Instead, we teach them specific breathing strategies when they are calm, and then reference them when they are upset. Examples that we use in class that you can use at home are "smell the flower, blow out the candle", balloon breathing, and Spiderman breaths. For more questions on mindful breathing, feel free to ask Ms. Elizabeth or check out what pbs.org has to say <https://www.pbs.org/parents/crafts-and-experiments/practice-mindfulness-with-belly-breathing>

### Empowering Older Toddlers with More Responsibility

Because there is such a huge age difference in our class, we have many differing needs and abilities. Something that we do to empower our toddlers and meet their needs of control/independence is offering the Sprouts more opportunities to be responsible for themselves and giving them more choices for helping.

Finding a way for your child to lead in our classroom will help them model good behavior, gain confidence, and become more independent.

### *Examples of classroom jobs:*

**Cleaning Cubbies** - each child cleans their own cubby on Friday. This includes bagging up their blankets to go home and wiping out their cubby

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**Scrubbing Tables / Chairs** - This work will go right along with our transitions and benefit our toddlers working their arms and chest muscles. You may find that since they haven't been crawling, they push a bit more, due to their upper bodies begging for more work. By adding this responsibility, we are working their muscles and building confidence.

**Hold My Bag** - Before Ms. Elizabeth's circle, a friend may hold the circle time bag while others get ready. This is great for children that need help getting engaged after the transition from outside to inside and gives them something to look forward to at the start of circle.

**Attendance Checker**- Sometimes, not all our friends can come to class. Checking attendance with the teacher by using our morning transition board will help children reflect and connect!

**Coat Helper** - Friends may be asked to help lay coats out onto the tables before outside time. Children will have more of a sense of control for outside time and it will help reinforce how we gently treat things as we carefully take them out and lay them on the table.

**Dusting** - This activity is a fan favorite that our friends do quite often already. We use our classroom dusters to clean cubbies, shelf tops and more. Friends really feel like they are helping and love this activity.

### October Highlights

**Miles:** Trains have been a huge favorite for our Miles this month. Nearly every free play session, we see him run over to our car/block area to put together train tracks. His favorite train is the yellow one that he has named "the school bus train."

**Archer:** Transitioning from the Big Seeds to our room hasn't been easy, but Archer is handling it like a champ! Being reunited with his older friends has been great, and he's making an awesome addition to class. His favorite activities this month were the sandbox, bikes, and art.

**Teddy:** When Teddy first transitioned to the Sprouts last month, he was hesitant with art, but he's now embraced it fully and participates at nearly every art session. His favorite art activities are painting and coloring with markers.

**Aubree:** "Go!" she yells as she runs from one side of the playground to the other. She loved giggling and running through fallen leaves with her friends this month.

**Izzy:** Izzy is mastering putting her coat on all by herself, but the fun part is experimenting with the zipper on her coat. Though she's awhile from zipping it herself successfully, she loves pulling it up and back down.

**JJ:** Curiosity has plagued JJ, he has had many questions, "What are we doing? What are we making today? What are we reading? Where's \_\_\_? Why, why, and why?" We love answering his questions and encourage him to keep them coming.

**Saylor:** Art has been a focus this month, and she just doesn't seem to want to stop! Saylor will race to the art table after circle and get started right away, she just loves that fine-motor building and imagination driven activity!



# NOV-19

Notes:

This Month's Books:
<i>Sometimes I'm Bombaloo</i>
<i>Sophie's Big Voice</i>
<i>and more</i>
This Month's Songs:
<i>Twinle Twinle little S.T.A.R</i>
<i>Friends, friends, 123</i>
<i>Amigos, amigos, 123</i>
<i>Gentle hands</i>
This Month's Sign:
Together

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1 Happy Coloring
4 Paint Brush Trade	5 Friendship Painting	6 Tearing Skills	7 Picture Trade	8 Sharing Collage
11 Conferences	12 My Feelings	13 Face Craft	14 Friendship Wreath	15 Volcano Emotions
18 Friendship Craft	19 Bombaloo Mask	20 Feeling Sad	21 Heart Stamping	22 Slice of Pie
25 Collaborative Coloring	26 Water Colors	27 Turkey Craft	28 THANKSGIVING	29 BREAK

# Sprout One