A wide variety of organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and the White House Let’s Move Initiative, have developed position papers on the extent to which children should be exposed to and engaged in watching television and computer screens. Early childhood education expert John Surr has written an excellent summary of these reports’ recommendations, "Too Many Channels? Sifting through the Recommendations on Screen Media and Technology." Surr concludes: "It is clear that today’s young children are being raised in a media-saturated environment, dramatically more so than in their parents’ generation. Although many parents and early childhood educators grew up after President Reagan de-regulated television in 1984, they need to be aware of the effects of that saturation for today’s young children, even though scientists are still learning about the full scope of those effects.

"It is also clear that young children's intense involvement in screen media has adverse effects on their growth and health. We in early care and education have a responsibility, in the best interests of the child, to wean them from excessive dependence on screen media, especially while they are with us and in our care. We also need to be able and willing to work with parents to help them to make informed media choices for their families."

"All of the authorities cited in this article are agreed that children under two should be exposed to screen media as little as possible, and that preschool or child care is a place for relationships and concrete explorations of the world around them, not for the children or caregivers’ screen media experiences. Passive screen media in the early years should be very limited. Parents and teachers need to be aware of the danger that a sedentary media habit can lead to obesity, sleep problems, and other health difficulties." Although some authorities are more enchanted with interactive screen media than others, there is a widespread feeling that there should be limits on total daily media exposure, and much stronger limits on exposure for children between 2 and 5 years of age.

"Violence, sex, and commercials on screen media available to young children should be discouraged", according to the health authorities. Others recommend that children need time away from media to develop more fully their own imagination and capacity to play.

"We in early childhood education have a responsibility to reach out to parents and community leaders, to convince them to make their lives more child-friendly and less media-saturated. We all need to go outside and play."

Join us for a 2nd Cup of Coffee
Thursday, December 11th
9:00 a.m.—10:00 a.m.
Wintonbury Lobby
Flu season is upon us. The flu is a virus which causes us to feel ill. The flu can be spread through: coughs, sneezes, touching contaminated objects or surfaces, or by sharing eating utensils or drinking from cups that have been used by someone who is sick. The flu is not caused by exposure to cold temperatures or the flu vaccine and cannot be treated by antibiotics.

The flu can cause several symptoms. People who have the flu may have only a few or all of the symptoms depending on the severity. Symptoms can include:

- A high-grade fever up to 104 degrees F
- Chills and shakes with the fever
- Extreme tiredness
- Headache and body aches
- Dry, hacking cough
- Sore throat
- Vomiting and belly pain

The symptoms of flu in children are more severe than symptoms of a childhood cold. Symptoms of flu in children start abruptly and usually cause kids to feel the worse during the first two or three days of onset.

The flu can be prevented or the severity can be lessened by these steps:

- Getting the yearly flu vaccine - required for all Pre-K students.
- Good hand washing when returning home from school or the store.
- Getting plenty of rest each night.
- Eating a balanced and healthy diet.
- Keeping sick children home from school.
- Staying away from people who are sick.

Creative Curriculum® objectives will assure that young children will:

- Use scientific inquiry skills
- Demonstrate knowledge of the physical properties of objects and materials
- Use emergent writing skills
Pre-K Curriculum Corner

Developmental theorist, Lev Vygotsky, tells us that young children “stand a head taller” when engaged in pretend play. Creating and following rules for specific roles in dramatic play promotes self-regulation and executive function. These skills help students to attend to tasks, remember to follow rules and be “ready to learn”.

In the Dramatic Play Area children take on different roles and recreate real-life experiences. They use props and make-believe to deepen their understanding about the world they live in.

The ability to pretend is very important to your child’s development. Children who know how to make believe develop a good vocabulary, which is important for reading. They learn to cooperate with others and solve problems, and are able to think abstractly—all important skills for success in school. When children pretend, they have to recall experiences and re-create them. To do this, they need to picture their experiences in their minds. For example, to play the role of a doctor, children have to remember what tools a doctor uses, how a doctor examines a patient, and what a doctor says. Being able to visualize an experience or characters from a story is a critical skill for reading comprehension in later years.

At home you can encourage the same kind of pretend play by simply playing with your child and providing some simple props. A sheet and a large empty box creates a house, a hide out, a pirate ship, a doghouse, a castle or a train. The best part about dramatic play is that it only requires your imagination!

From the Creative Curriculum®

Have some clothes your child has outgrown? The nurse’s office is kindly accepting donations for our “extra clothes” supply. Sizes 3-6 are needed.

Kindergarten Happenings

Did your kindergartener recently come home using words like cirrus, cumulus, stratus, or cumulonimbus? Students were busy in November studying weather and seasons. Children learned about the different types of clouds and how they are formed. This most recent unit of study engaged students in learning experiences such as sketching clouds and writing observations in their journals. Mrs. Sherwood invited kindergarteners to a special demonstration of the water cycle. Students acted out the stages using balloons as water droplets.

As the weather changed from warm to cool (even frigid!) children generated a list of winter clothes they would need at school and crafted a letter to parents with their list.

Books such as Arnold’s Apple Tree and Pumpkin, Pumpkin helped children understand that different crops are harvested during different seasons. The idea of “harvest” led classes into discussions about the first Thanksgiving, culminating in a Thanksgiving Feast with family and friends.

Annual Food Drive

This year’s food drive was spearheaded by Rooms 205 and 206. Families from the entire Wintonbury community donated over 300 food items including several large turkeys! Classrooms discussed the concepts of thankfulness, kindness and being fortunate. The food was delivered on November 21st to FoodShare located in Bloomfield, CT.

Children in Room 205 sorted and classified donated items into food that comes in boxes, cans, bags and jars. They counted 86 items!

Weather and Seasons

Irene Garneau

Irene Garneau
WHAT CAN ADULTS DO?

- Be a role model—yes, this means allowing your child to go into the bathroom with you. If possible, be gender specific.
- Provide positive reinforcement—preferably lots of praise, smiles, hugs, etc.
- Have a positive attitude! Be relaxed, encouraging and patient. Respect your child’s pace.

WHAT ADULTS SHOULD NOT DO

- Do NOT make toilet training a power struggle. Children can hold their bowels resulting in a painful medical condition that certainly hinders the process.
- Do NOT make toilet training a game for your child, make it a habit. Use the bathroom at consistent times of day, building trips to the potty into your child’s daily schedule.
- Don’t ask, “Do you have to go?”, instead say “It’s time to try the potty!”
- Do NOT use pull-ups. These diaper like training pants send a mixed message to children. Rather let your child feel what it’s like to be wet in real underwear, this natural consequence will help the process move forward.

POTTY POT-POURRI

- The 2-3 day approach works for many children but not all. Don’t become frustrated, stay the course!
- Accidents happen. Respond calmly. Have your child change their own clothes and even put the soiled ones in the laundry.
- What to do about wiping? Young children can and should wipe themselves. After they are done, adults can follow up to ensure they are clean. (Remember to teach girls to wipe from front to back!)

Finally, with your guidance and patience your child will be confident in using the bathroom!

http://www.kidsinthehouse.com/playlist/top-potty-training-tips?

Creative Curriculum® objectives will assure that young children will:

- Interact with peers
- Show curiosity and motivation
- Use an expanding expressive vocabulary