

# Early Times

The vision of the Infant & Toddler Connection of Fairfax-Falls Church is: All infants and toddlers with a developmental need are identified, supported, accepted, included and valued in their family and community.



## A Note From the Director by Allan Phillips

Dear Families of ITC,

I hope the holidays were fun and relaxing for all of you.

Every two years the Governor of Virginia presents his biennium budget to the general assembly. Included in Governor McAuliffe's budget request is increased funding for early intervention for the Infant and Toddler Connection. It is 1.7 million for FY2017 and an additional 2.5 million for FY 2018. This is great news and very much needed as the State is serving more and more children and their families.

The State has been very supportive of the early intervention program over the years by increasing the budget regularly to meet the growing demand. The Board of Supervisors for Fairfax County has also been very supportive of early intervention by providing local funds for this program.

Although the Governor's proposal is positive, it is the first step of the process for the General Assembly to review, modify, support or reject the Governor's proposal. This will take place over the next 60 days as the General Assembly is now in session.

I would like to ask you to contact your legislator stating your support for the Governor's budget and to thank your legislators for their support over the years to ensure all children will have the services and supports needed during the first 3 years of life.

You can use the map on this link to identify your legislator: <http://bit.ly/1Z1KkYT>

Allan Phillips, Director ITC  
Allan.Phillips@fairfaxcounty.gov  
703-246-7170

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### ITCFF's Purpose:

The Infant & Toddler Connection of Fairfax-Falls Church provides early intervention supports and services to infants and toddlers from birth to age three who are not developing as expected or who have a medical condition that can delay normal development. Early intervention supports and services focus on increasing the child's participation in family and community activities that are important to the family. In addition, supports and services focus on helping parents and other caregivers know how to find ways to help the child learn during everyday activities. These supports and services are available for all eligible children and their families regardless of the family's ability to pay.

## Alternative Nutrition

by Abigail McAlister

Coming March 2016, ITC will be starting an Alternative Nutrition Playgroup in the North Region of the County.

Come on over to play and meet other families who love and care for a child who receives feedings through any type of tube (G-tube, NG-tube, PEG-tube, J-tube, etc). A family counselor will facilitate discussion between parents and there will be play activities and snack with your kids.

This is NOT a feeding group, rather a supportive space to connect with other families who have infants and toddlers dependent on feeding tubes. Please contact your Service Coordinator for details.

## Giving Thanks

From Our ITC Family To Yours by Syndy Citron

The Fairfax County Infant and Toddler Connection Annual Holiday Food Drive for 2015 was very successful in supporting ITC families in need. Infant and Toddler Connection staff donated hundreds of food items for families currently enrolled in ITC.

Eighteen families in ITC received 2 holiday food bags filled with items for a Thanksgiving meal. All bags were delivered to the families by ITC staff before the Thanksgiving holiday. This is the fourth year that ITC staff volunteers have coordinated a food drive and distribution.



*ITC Staff collect, sort, pack and distribute food to families in need.*

# Fall Fun At Cox Farms

By Karyn Patino

On Wednesday, September 30, Cox Farms welcomed ITC families as special guests of their beautifully decorated and fully outfitted Fall Festival. Our families enjoyed navigating the Cornundrum corn maze, climbing straw mountains, visiting the animals, listening to live music, and posing for pictures in front of gorgeous harvest-themed backdrops.

Several of our ITC guests reported that the farm environment and activities provided numerous opportunities for their children to practice new words and experience new sights, smells and sounds. Many of our families took home pumpkins and cider doughnuts from their Festival Market, along with memories of a fun-filled outing in our beautiful community!

We love getting out and about with our families, so be sure to catch our other ITC events throughout Fairfax County in the coming months.



# ITC Costume Parade

by Silvia Zaleta-Meza

The Infant and Toddler Connection First Annual Costume Parade took place on October 29th at Mount Eagle Park in Alexandria. We had a marvelous day with beautiful sunshine and a nice fresh breeze.

ITC staff worked hard setting up the pavilion with Fall and Halloween decorations like pumpkins, friendly ghosts, party streamers, bright table cloths and colorful balloons.

There were a variety of activities for the kids to enjoy such as Playdoh, coloring, bubbles and photo stand and a Spider and Ghost craft to take home. Families came fully outfitted in their costumes and enjoyed the beautiful weather.

This was a wonderful opportunity to meet and chat with other families as well as ITC staff. Children had fun playing on the playground and they participated in all the fun activities under the pavilion. In addition, refreshments were offered and families shared their favorite snacks.

# ITC Day At Kid Junction

by Karyn Patino

On Wednesday, October 5th, Kid Junction in Chantilly opened its doors exclusively to Infant & Toddler Connection families for two hours of exploration and play. Kid Junction is an indoor playground with climbing structures, slides, a kid-sized interactive town for pretend play and dress-up, and a fully enclosed toddler play area.

We had 45 children using their imaginations to be veterinarians, postal workers, and chefs, strengthening their gross motor skills on the climbing equipment, and engaging in symbolic play at the train tables.

We also made use of Kid Junction's sound-proofed party rooms to offer quiet table activities such as modeling clay and coloring for children who preferred a break from the action.

Our Kid Junction event was a great opportunity for children to play in a stimulating and safe environment, and a wonderful way for our families to connect with each other while the little ones were entertained.



## Gobble Gobble On The Farm

by Allison Fantauzzi

On Friday, November 6th, ITC families gathered at Frying Pan Farm Park for a unseasonably warm and spectacular day. Fifty-six moms, dads, grandparents, caretakers and children joined in the fun.

The day started with a wagon ride where ITC families were able to chat and get to know each other. From there, families navigated through the farm visiting with animals, trying out farm equipment and basking in the sunshine.

Smiles were plentiful as the kids enjoyed animal crackers and participated in a take home turkey craft project. We heard a lot of animal imitations and laughter during this awesome event that ended our season of outdoor activities.

If you couldn't make it to Frying Pam Farm, we hope to see you in the spring when our outdoor activities resume!



## Coming Up This Winter...

The Family Support Liaisons, along with Regional Managers have been working hard on gathering feedback from families, brainstorming, planning events and organizing information that would serve ITC families in the best possible way.

This winter, we have several things in the works. We are planning our annual Transition Meeting for January 31st, as well as a Resource Fair that will be held prior to the start of the Transition Meeting.

We will also be organizing our first ever "Family Favorites Survey" where we will ask ITC families to provide referrals and positive feedback on a variety of places, things to do, service providers and companies throughout Northern Virginia.

Stay In Touch!



Subscribe to our listserv to receive news and local event info

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/itc/family-news/>

For more events,

please visit our events page at:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/itc/events.htm>

From A Parent:

I just wanted to write and express my appreciation for these events.

My son went to the story time this morning and had a wonderful experience!

I have always had trepidation in taking him to public story hours, not knowing how he would respond, but it was so comforting to know that no matter what- he would be accepted and understood at an ITC event.



## Winter Activities At Home...

There is an amazing website called Zero to Three that provides fantastic advice and great ideas of ways to play with your children. Here are a few, but check out their website for more great ideas!

**Frogs On A Lily Pad:** Cut out big green circles from paper and scatter them across the floor. Suggest the children hop from lily pad to lily pad. Talk about what they are doing as they hop along. Games like this build motor skills while encouraging children's imagination, creative thinking and language skills.

**Mail Mayhem:** Cut squares from colorful paper; write a short note on each one. Place them throughout the room and have the children collect the letters and bring them to the mailbox. You can be the "mail carrier" and hold a shoebox where the children can drop the letters. Switch roles and let the children hide the letters. Games like this encourage imagination and creative thinking, as well as early literacy skills.

Look for more here:

<http://www.zerotothree.org/parenting-resources/play.html>



Infant & Toddler Connection  
of Fairfax Falls Church

INFANT & TODDLER  
CONNECTION OF FAIRFAX-  
FALLS CHURCH

3750 Old Lee Highway  
Fairfax, VA 22030

Phone: 703-246-7121  
Fax: 703-653-1385



**Monday, January 18<sup>th</sup> – 10-11am**  
ITC Story Time @ [Richard Byrd Library](#)  
7250 Commerce Street  
Springfield, VA 22150  
Contact: Sylvia Zaleta Meza

**Thursday, January 21<sup>st</sup> – 10:30am**  
ITC Story Time @ [Burke Centre Library](#)  
5935 Freds Oak Rd.  
Burke, VA 22015  
Contact: Karyn Patino

**Friday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> – 10:30am**  
Connect-the-Tots Playgroup  
ITC Annandale Office  
7611 Little River Turnpike, East Wing, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl  
Annandale, VA 22003  
Contact: Tracey Phillips Edman

**Tuesday, January 26<sup>th</sup> – 10:30am**  
ITC Story Time @ [Chantilly Regional Library](#)  
4000 Stringfellow Road  
Chantilly, VA  
Contact: Karyn Patino

**Wednesday, January 27<sup>th</sup> – 10:30am**  
ITC Story Time @ [City of Fairfax Regional](#)  
10360 North Street  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
Contact: Karyn Patino

**Wednesday, January 27<sup>th</sup> – 10:30am**  
ITC Story Time @ [Herndon Fortnightly Library](#)  
768 Center Street  
Herndon, VA  
Contact: Allison Fantauzzi

**Thursday, January 28<sup>th</sup> – 10-11am**  
ITC Terrific Thursday Playgroup  
8350 Richmond Highway, Suite 515G  
Alexandria, VA  
Contact: Sylvia Zaleta Meza

**Tuesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> – 10:15am**  
ITC Story Time @ [Sherwood Library](#)  
2501 Sherwood Hall Ln.  
Alexandria, VA  
Contact: Sylvia Zaleta Meza

**Wednesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6-7:30pm**  
Dad's Pizza Night  
Joseph Willard Health Center (rear entrance)  
3750 Old Lee Highway  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
Contact: Allan Phillips at 703-246-7170 or  
[allan.phillips@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:allan.phillips@fairfaxcounty.gov)

**Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup> – 9:30am**  
Music and Movement  
[Mott Community Center](#)  
12111 Braddock Road  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
Must RSVP to Karyn Patino 703-449-6142 or  
[Karyn.patino@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Karyn.patino@fairfaxcounty.gov)

**Friday, February 5<sup>th</sup> – 10:30am**  
Music with Miss Beth!!  
[Dolley Madison Library](#)  
1244 Oak Ridge Avenue  
McLean, VA  
Contact: Allison Fantauzzi

**Monday, February 8<sup>th</sup> – 10:30am**  
ITC Story Time @ [Reston Regional Library](#)  
11925 Bowman Towne Drive  
Reston, VA  
Contact: Allison Fantauzzi

**Tuesday, February 9<sup>th</sup> – 10:30am**  
ITC Story Time @ [Chantilly Regional Library](#)  
4000 Stringfellow Road  
Chantilly, VA  
Contact: Karyn Patino

**Thursday, February 11<sup>th</sup> – 10-11am**  
ITC Terrific Thursday Playgroup  
8350 Richmond Highway, Suite 515G  
Alexandria, VA  
Contact: Sylvia Zaleta Meza

**Friday, February 12<sup>th</sup> – 10:30am**  
Connect-the-Tots Playgroup  
ITC Annandale Office  
7611 Little River Turnpike, East Wing, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl  
Annandale, VA 22003  
Contact: Tracey Phillips Edman

**Friday, February 12<sup>th</sup> – 10:30am**  
Crafty Kids – Holiday Craft  
[Herndon Fortnightly Library](#)  
768 Center Street  
Herndon, VA  
Contact: Allison Fantauzzi

**Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup> – 10-11am**  
ITC Story Time @ [Richard Byrd Library](#)  
7250 Commerce Street  
Springfield, VA 22150  
Contact: Sylvia Zaleta Meza

**Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup> – 10:30am**  
ITC Story Time @ [Burke Centre Library](#)  
5935 Freds Oak Rd.  
Burke, VA 22015  
Contact: Karyn Patino

**Monday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> – 10:30am**  
L'il Giggles Playgroup  
ITC Annandale Office  
7611 Little River Turnpike, East Wing, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl  
Annandale, VA 22003  
Contact: Tracey Phillips Edman

**Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> – 10:30am**  
ITC Story Time @ [Chantilly Regional Library](#)  
4000 Stringfellow Road  
Chantilly, VA  
Contact: Karyn Patino

**Thursday, February 25<sup>th</sup> – 10-11am**  
ITC Terrific Thursday Playgroup  
8350 Richmond Highway, Suite 515G  
Alexandria, VA  
Contact: Sylvia Zaleta Meza

**Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup> – 10:30am**  
Connect-the-Tots Playgroup  
ITC Annandale Office  
7611 Little River Turnpike, East Wing, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl  
Annandale, VA 22003  
Contact: Tracey Phillips Edman

**Monday, February 29<sup>th</sup> – 10:30am**  
ITC Story Time @ [Herndon Fortnightly Library](#)  
768 Center Street  
Herndon, VA  
Contact: Allison Fantauzzi

**The cold weather won't stop us, but snow might! We follow FCPS's inclement weather policy, so please check for closures!**

CONTACT US!

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