

# Alverno Early Learning Center

February 2018



## National Accreditation Self Study Continues



The center staff is entering the final phase of self-study in preparation for our upcoming National Accreditation Commission validator visit this spring. The center has held national accreditation since 2005. Many thanks to all the parents who completed the family survey last fall. We value your input. Look for accreditation updates in future newsletters.

## Upcoming Events

<b>Week of February 19</b>	Author Week
<b>March 1 - 31</b>	Youth Art Month
<b>March 27</b>	Gallery Night - 3:45 - 5:45 p.m.
<b>March 30</b>	Center Closed
<b>April 2</b>	Center Closed

## Original Works Fund Raiser

In March, the center will again be participating in "Original Works." This art-based fundraising Program creates high quality products from your child's original art work. Look for more information in coming weeks.

To preview products, visit [www.originalworks.com](http://www.originalworks.com)

## Early Learning Center to Celebrate Art this Year Throughout the Month of March

Youth Art Month was founded in 1961. Its goal is to "emphasize the value of participating in art for all children." Early Learning Center staff and children will celebrate art this year from March 1 - March 30.

The culmination of this celebration will be our third annual "Gallery Night" to be held:

**Tuesday, March 27 from 3:45 - 5:45 p.m.**

During this exciting event, you will be able to view art made by center children. A "gift shop" and silent auction will allow for you to purchase art work.



## Our Mission

Alverno Early Learning Center exists to promote educational and personal development of every child and staff member who enters our doors. We will respect every child, parent and co-worker by keeping the lines of communication open and confidentiality a priority.

## Our Philosophy

Alverno Early Learning Center believes in high quality care and education for each child. Our program is based on the philosophy that:

- Children grow and develop through active exploration in a warm and nurturing environment.
- We believe in the uniqueness of each child and strive to meet the individual needs of each child.
- We provide a variety of educational experiences that place emphasis on child involvement and decision-making.
- Activities are focused to enhance social, emotional, cognitive and language development.

### Hours:

Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

### Phone:

(414) 382-6076

### Administration:

Barb Groshek—Manager

Kathy Moosavi—Program Coordinator

*Serving Alverno College since 1969!*

# **Bundle Up and Get Outside: Why Kids Should Play Outdoors in Winter**

By Carleigh Flannigan for Community Playthings

During cold winter weather children's play is often limited to the indoors. Adult fears about safety and negative attitudes toward exposure to cold weather are the barriers that prevent children from accessing play in winter months. It is common to hear adults say that "my child will not like being in the cold weather," or "the cold is too dangerous to play in," or "there's nothing to play with." It is up to adults to focus on the importance of children's play, regardless of the season. After all, play should not be restricted to warm weather. Let's welcome this winter season with a playful attitude.

## **How Snowy, Cold Weather Benefits Children's Development and Health**

When the weather drops into the single digits, it is common for parents to want their children to stay indoors to play. Before you go and curse the cold weather for keeping your playful children indoors all winter, let's consider all of the benefits that cold weather has when it comes to children's health, development, and well-being.

### **1. Children get to see the outdoors through a new lens**

During the summer months, children become used to the warm, green climate that the season has to offer. After the change in season or the first snowfall, children view their environment through a different lens: fallen leaves, brown grass, snow, ice. This new lens enables them to imagine the outdoors differently and to be creative and play in different ways.

### **2. Increases in Exercise and Using Different Muscles**

The winter months provide us with different ways of moving our bodies, such as sledding, walking up a snow hill, or building a snowman. Our larger muscles are put to great use in the winter months due to the challenges that snow provides. This large-muscle use and increase in physical activity support children's gross motor development and overall health.

### **3. Getting Fresh Air and Avoiding Bacteria**

Most adults associate the winter months with getting colds and illnesses such as the flu. However, it is not the cold weather that necessarily causes colds and flus—it is increased exposure to indoor environments where bacteria and viruses live. For example, during the winter months, you turn on your home's heating and venting systems. The bacteria and viruses within your home are continuously being moved around inside. Adults and children who spend long periods of time in a heated and poorly ventilated home, without exposure to fresh air, can easily pass germs to each other.

### **4. New Challenges and Problem-Solving**

Weather that we consider "messy" provides environments and materials that are inspiring and fun for children; for example, patches of ice, large snow hills, and trees covered in snow. These environments provide children with opportunities for new challenges, such as sliding down the ice patch and climbing a snow hill. Engagement with outdoor environments in the winter provokes new problem-solving skills—"How can I slide down this ice patch without falling?" "How fast can I run up this snow hill?" "Can I climb this tree using a branch as a snow pick?" The ever-changing environments that the winter months have to offer provide children with the challenges that they so often crave.

### **5. Vitamin D Exposure**

When we stay indoors during the winter, we are not only missing out on play, but also on necessary vitamins that the outdoor environment gives us. Children get vitamin D through sun exposure, and absorb it even though the sun is not as warm in the winter. Vitamin D helps regulate mental and emotional moods, doing so by increasing serotonin levels in the brain. Serotonin plays an important role in regulating mood and keeping us happy. So the more exposure you have to the sun, the higher your serotonin levels will be. It is recommended that you get at least half an hour of playtime outdoors in the winter.