


# A note from the office:

*November 2026*

Welcome to the month of getting together as friends and family.

A few reminders as we head into November:

- Please make sure your child has weather appropriate extra clothes in case of spills or accidents.
- Make sure to take home blankets on Fridays to wash and return on Monday.
- Please be sure to call the center and let us know if your child will not be riding the van.
- We will continue to go outside as the weather allows. Please make sure your child has a sweater or jacket for those chilly mornings.

**Staff Spotlight:**
**Miss Esme** is very creative when it comes to activities. She is great at communicating with the children, as well as redirecting them.

We hope this month brings families together. Happy Thanksgiving!

*Miss Erica & Miss Yesenia*




Kaybree
Sophia
Kashton
Chadwick
Ashten

Charles
Miss Erica
Miss Ginger
Miss Jaylee




# Backpack Connection Series

## About this Series

The Backpack Connection Series was created by TACSEI to provide a way for teachers and parents/caregivers to work together to help young children develop social emotional skills and reduce challenging behavior. Teachers may choose to send a handout home in each child's backpack when a new strategy or skill is introduced to the class. Each Backpack Connection handout provides information that helps parents stay informed about what their child is learning at school and specific ideas on how to use the strategy or skill at home.

## The Pyramid Model

The Pyramid Model is a framework that provides programs with guidance on how to promote social emotional competence in all children and design effective interventions that support young children who might have persistent challenging behavior. It also provides practices to ensure that children with social emotional delays receive intentional teaching. Programs that implement the Pyramid Model are eager to work together with families to meet every child's individualized learning and support needs. To learn more about the Pyramid Model, please visit ChallengingBehavior.org.

## More Information

More information and resources on this and other topics are available on our website, ChallengingBehavior.org.

National Center for Pyramid Model INNOVATIONS

ChallengingBehavior.org

# How to Plan Activities to Reduce Challenging Behavior

Brooke Brogle, Alyson Jiron & Jill Giacomini

Unfortunately, there is no "Guidebook for Parents" that tells you exactly how to raise children who behave perfectly at all times. Each child and family is unique, which means that there is no one solution or strategy that is going to work for everyone, every time. However, while it isn't magic, simple planning ahead can work wonders to help improve your child's behavior. You can plan activities to teach your child important skills such as sharing, taking turns or handling disappointment. You can also plan ahead to prepare your child for new events in her life such as changes in her schedule, a road trip, a new baby or a visit from grandparents.

For example, Abby is three years old and is usually happy at preschool where she loves to draw and play with the doll house. However, at home when Abby plays one-on-one with another child, she often ends up throwing toys, screaming "Mine!" or crying. What can Abby's mom do? Instead of always "managing" these outbursts, she can intentionally plan activities to teach Abby the skills of sharing and taking turns. She can also plan activities that give Abby an opportunity to practice these new skills.

## Try This at Home

- **Tell your child exactly what to do.** Telling your child to "share" or "be nice" does not actually tell her what she should be doing. For example, if Abby throws her toys, her mom can say, "Abby, toys stay on the floor or on your lap." If Abby hits her friend, her mom can say, "Hands down. Hands are for playing, eating, and hugging. Use your words. You can say, 'I am angry. Help please'."
- **Use a Visual Schedule.** A visual schedule will help her to understand what is expected. To learn more about visual schedules, read the *How to Use Visual Schedules to Help Your Child Understand Expectations* handout in the Backpack Connection Series.
- **Practice, practice, practice.** Intentionally create situations where she can practice the desired behavior. For example, Abby's mom can help Abby learn to take turns while playing with her sister or an older friend. She can ask Abby's sister to "help teach Abby to take turns" while playing with one doll. Abby's mom provides the toy and reminds the girls to take turns when playing. The girls can practice the skill of sharing during their time together.
- **Catch your child being good!** When your child is using the desired behavior, you can encourage her by responding with enthusiasm. For example, "Wow, I saw you share the sand toys at the park with those two girls. What a great friend you are!"
- **Prepare your child before an event.** For example, Abby's mom can say, "Abby, your friend Ella is coming over to play today. When friends come over, we share our toys. I know how special doggy is to you. We could put doggy in a safe place and you do not have to share her."



- **Hope for the best but plan for the worst!** If you know that your child might have problems when playing with other children, stay nearby so that you can intervene if needed. You might also provide two sets of an identical toy (e.g., two bubbles or two balls) and then offer a change in location to play to diffuse difficult situations.

## Practice at School

School offers many opportunities for children to practice social skills and learn emotional vocabulary. Teachers can set up art or quiet activities where children have the opportunity to practice sharing, learning to wait and taking turns. As children interact with each other, teachers provide positive language. For example, "Abby, I see that you are pointing to the red marker. You can tap Jacob on the shoulder and say, 'Can I have a turn?'" After the interaction, the teacher provides the children with encouragement. For example, "Way to go! Class, Abby and Jacob are working together. They are sharing and taking turns!" Teachers can also use daily schedule changes to teach the skill of handling disappointment. For example, "Oh no, Miss Marcie is not here today. We won't be able to go to music. I am really disappointed. What should we do?" At this point, the children can learn to problem-solve and come up with a positive solution.

## The Bottom Line

Much of the frustration that parents experience can be avoided by planning ahead and teaching children a desired behavior before a difficult situation occurs. When you are unprepared for your child's challenging behavior, such as whining or temper tantrums, you might respond with anger or in other ways that make the situation worse. Remember that you are in control of the daily schedule and routine. If your child is having problems with activities such as play with others, drop-off at school, or bedtime, you can plan activities that will give her the opportunity to learn the social skills she needs. Planning ahead can reduce challenging behavior such as meltdowns, whining and temper tantrums and increase desired behavior such as flexibility, using words and patience. Planning activities that teach skills such as sharing and taking turns will provide her with the tools she needs to increase self-esteem and be successful in school and life.

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University of South Florida

IDEAs that Work — Office of Special Education Programs

## Weekly Themes:

| | |
|---|---|
| 11/2 - 11/6 | Opposites |
| 11/9 - 11/13 | We Love Our Veterans |
| 11/16 - 11/20 | Sports |
| 11/23 - 11/27 | Thanksgiving |
| 11/30 - 12/4 | Winter Wonderland |

## Stay in touch :

@BuildingBlocksPreschoolIowa

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## Teacher Fun Fact

### What is your favorite Thanksgiving food?

Miss Erica: Green Bean Casserole
Miss Yesenia: Green Bean Casserole
Miss Hali: Cranberry Sauce
Miss Shantel: Pumpkin Pie
Miss Becky: Mashed Potatoes
Miss Breonna: Dressing
Miss Jaylee: Green Bean Casserole
Miss Ashley: Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Cherry Delight
Miss Lexi: Turkey & Green Bean Casserole
Miss Soraya: Pumpkin Pie
Miss Kali: Cheesy Potatoes
Miss Esme: Mashed Potatoes
Miss Chloe: Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
Miss Shelby: Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
Miss Izabelle: Sweet Rolls, Ham, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
Miss Bonnie: Turkey, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy & Stuffing
Miss Anna: Mashed Potatoes
Miss Braylie: Green Bean Casserole

# Love Our Center?

# HELP US GROW !

### 3 WAYS TO SUPPORT US ONLINE

- FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM
- LIKE, SHARE, COMMENT & SAVE OUR POSTS
- SCAN THE QR CODE & LEAVE US A REVIEW!

**WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP !**

# Health & Fitness Tips:




## Apple Pie Yogurt Dip




**Ingredients**

- 1 Greek 100 Vanilla Yogurt Cup
- 3 tbsp. Fresh Ground Almond Butter (or any natural nut butter)
- 1 tsp. Apple Pie Spice
- Apple Slices (for dipping)
- Graham Crackers (for dipping)

**Directions**

- To make your dip, simply stir the almond butter and apple pie spice into the yogurt cup. You don't even have to dirty any extra dishes! Mix well. Then dig in!

## Fall Outdoor Activity



Rake Leaves. Jump Into the Piles.
Throw Leaves Up in the Air. Repeat.
Make Physical Activity FUN!

## Care-A-Lot

Hello Care-A-Lot families! I am thankful to have your children in my class!

This month we will be making fun Thanksgiving art and reading books about Thanksgiving. We will be working with the children in the classroom to meet their next milestone. Some of our friends are so close to holding their own bottles and we will help them practice by doing hand-over-hand while we feed them. We will also help friends spend time on tummy time to build their neck and tummy muscles. We will place fun toys by them to focus on while they are in tummy time.

**Elianna** is working so hard at holding her own bottle. **Rowan** is starting to roll over!

I hope you all have a wonderful holiday!

**Miss Hali**

## Bees

Happy turkey month!

This month the kids will be learning about Thanksgiving and fall! We will do painting, coloring and gluing. The kids will experience different textures with turkey feather & leaves. We will talk about the size and colors of the leaves and the turkey feathers as we play with them in the sensory bin. We will also practice staying at the circle time rug during our songs and dancing.

**Josiphene** has started saying colors after I say them during circle time. **Renlee** is getting better at stacking the rings on the pole in the correct order or size!

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving!

**Miss Ashley**

## Butterflies

Welcome November!

This month we will be learning the months of the year and continuing to learn ABC's, colors, shapes and numbers! We will learn about emotions and how to respond to the emotions we might be feeling. We will also focus on the classroom rules and expectations. We will practice how to use walking feet in the classroom and hallways to stay safe at Building Blocks.

Please remember to check your cubby for updates from the classroom or notes about supplies that are needed.

**Chloe** is always using her listening ears and is a great helper at clean up time. **Eugene** is a great participant at circle time and always has his listening ears ready to go!

Have a good Thanksgiving!

**Miss Lexi**

## Disney

Welcome November! May this month remind us to be thankful for all we have.

We will be learning about Thanksgiving! We will read *Baby's First Thanksgiving* while also doing a turkey footprint with the kids! We will be practicing sharing and trading toys with our friends. We will roll a ball back and forth and use words like "my turn" and "your turn" while we play. We will also be using walking toys to practice getting in steps!

Please make sure you check the extra clothes in your child's cubby to make sure they are size and weather appropriate as the weather gets cooler.

**Yasiel** is officially walking! **Jesynia** is pulling herself up on things to stand!

Here's to an exciting, joyful, peaceful and blessed month!

**Miss Shantel & Miss Becky**

## Ducks

Gobble, Gobble, Gobble! Happy Thanksgiving!

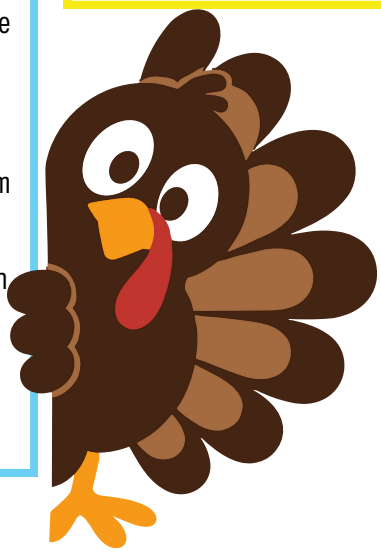
We will be spending the month learning about turkeys! We have so many fun art activities planned. We will be working on using nice touches and listening ears. We will practice counting our fingers to learn numbers and how many friends are in the room.

Please make sure you are checking your child's cubby for updates or notes about needed supplies. On Mondays, please make sure you bring 2 blankets for your child to use at nap through the week and take them home on Fridays to wash them.

**Zoe** does a great job pointing her finger up in the air during the circle time song, *One Little Finger*. **Jalen** started walking all by himself.

We hope you have a good and blessed Thanksgiving.

**Miss Breonna & Miss Jaelee**



# Dragonflies

Welcome November! This is that in-between month where pumpkins meet snowflakes!

This month our friends will be learning sign language and working on the solution cards. We will focus on sharing by practicing how we should use toys together and be kind to our friends. We will be doing a lot of fall activities this month! If you see some new faces in our room, they are our friends from Head Start and they are here to help us build our classroom skills and support our center! Please be sure to check your child's cubby for any notes about supplies that are needed or updates from the room!

**Mylo** is always using his listening ears and walking feet in the hallway! **Aiyana** is always attentive during circle time and sits so nicely!

May all the desires of your heart be granted! Happy Thanksgiving!

**Miss Soraya & Miss Kali**

# Caterpillars

Welcome November - may this month bring you peace, satisfaction and joy!

This month we will be working on how to share and using our words when we need something. We will also practice saying "please stop" when we want a friend to stop doing something. We will be working on our sign language! Our sensory bin will be filled with candy corn to get in the fall spirit!

**Jakari** loves to do circle time and really likes naming the colors and shapes. **Lilyana** is very good at helping when it is time to pick up.

I hope you enjoy the time spent with family and friends this month!

**Miss Chloe**



# Snails

Welcome to November! Let's have a happy and cozy month!

This month we will learn about opposites, Veterans, sports, Thanksgiving, and winter wonderland! We will enjoy fun, hands-on activities, stories, songs, art and so much more! We will be talking about gratitude and what it means to be thankful before shifting our focus to wonder at the end of the month! We will read *The Thankful Book* and discuss what we are thankful for. As we get ready to jump into December, our sensory bin will look like a winter wonderland with cotton balls and arctic animals. We will spend time working on our solution cards and practice how to ask for things nicely when a friend has something we would like to take a turn with.
As a special topic this month, we will learn what a veteran is and practice being thankful for the people who protect the USA.

**Dominic** has been participating activities and showing great excitement for learning. **Lucy** has been helping all of her friends. She always asks if they need help or sometimes she tries to calm her friends down when they are having a difficult time.

We are thankful for your continued support and look forward to a wonderful November together!

**Miss Esme**

# Frogs

Happy November to the Frog families!

A brand new month is here bringing cooler days, colorful leaves, and so many exciting opportunities to learn and grow together! This month our little Frogs will be busy exploring, creating, asking questions, and making memories with their friends. November is also the perfect time to slow down and celebrate kindness, friendship, family and all the things we are thankful for. We have a lot of hands-on activities, messy masterpieces, silly songs and stories planned. We will practice recognizing letters, counting, number recognition, strengthening our fine motor skills, and using our words to communicate our thoughts and feelings. Our Frog family is becoming more independent everyday, and we are excited to encourage them as they grow and try new things, solve problems and build confidence in themselves. We have a full month of learning, laughter, creativity and fun ahead of us and we can't wait to see all the wonderful things our Frogs accomplish. We will also be taking a field trip to the Museum of Aviation and Transportation on **November 13th!**

We will spend extra time this month learning how to ask for things nicely from our friends and family. This includes using our manners and asking for a turn before taking a toy. We will practice this through role-play at circle time and through practice during center time.

**Fox** has made tremendous growth in letter recognition! We are so impressed and proud of his hard word! **Masen** is writing her name completely on her own! Great job, Masen!

We are so thankful for each and every one of our Frog families! Happy November from all of us in the Frogs!

**Miss Shelby**

# Alligators

Hello November! May this new month bring a fresh start full of gratitude.

This month is going to be filled with fun learning activities and activities that will have us exploring with our taste buds! We will make apple pie in a cup and we will sample pumpkin pie! Yum! We will also go leaf hunting to try to find all of the autumn colors! We will dive a bit further into learning letters and begin our journey of tracing our names. We will practice asking nicely for a turn and role-play scenarios where kind words should be used to ask for things. I can't wait to see how this month goes and I am very thankful to be a part of your child's journey!

**Serena** has been doing great during circle time. **Nasir** has been a great addition to the classroom! He is learning so much and is always excited to see what activities we have planned.

We are thankful for you!!

**Miss Izabelle**

# Pre-K

Happy Thanksgiving!

This month we will finish the tree study by visiting the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center. We will also make "apple pie" with apples, graham crackers and whipped cream. We will have a friendship celebration potluck where students can bring their favorite snack to share with the class. Our sensory bin will be filled with corn for a fun fall bin and we will read the book, *A Tree is for...* to wrap up our tree study. We will also be practicing the social skill of taking turns by showing the kids how to ask for a turn when they see a friend playing with something they want to try.

**Baely** and **Odalie** played with puppets to pretend to go to school. **Olivia** and **Abraxas** worked together and Olivia helped Abraxas with his name tracing sheet.

Cheers to another wonderful month!

**Miss Bonnie, Miss Anna & Miss Braille**

# School-Age

Welcome to the most thankful month of the year!

This month, School-Age students will learn opposites by identifying them. We will also have a colorful week by decorating hearts for our Veterans. The School-Agers will be able to participate in their favorite sport. Our class will be learning about being thankful and talking about our favorite Thanksgiving meal. We will also be creating snowflakes at the end of the month! We will do salt crystal art in a fun sensory activity and we will continue to read the Junie B. Jones books. We will also continue to practice using kind words with one another. We will continue to walk up to the water tower, when the weather permits, to explore nature and see how the trees are changing with the cooler weather.

**Selena** is a wonderful help around the classroom. If something is wrong, she always goes up to a teacher and lets them know. **Caydence** is our door holder! She loves to hold the door for her friends in the morning.

We hope this month brings friends and families closer together!

**Miss Megan & Miss Ali**

# November

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3<br>CATERPILLARS<br>Big & Small Activity<br>SNAILS<br>Hot & Cold Activity<br>FROGS<br>Opposite Exploration Day<br>SCHOOL-AGERS<br>Identify Opposites | 4<br>DISNEY<br>Right Hand Left Hand Art<br>CATERPILLARS<br>Clean & Dirty Art<br>SNAILS<br>Up & Down Activity<br>FROGS<br>Big & Small Activity | 5<br>SNAILS<br>Fast & Slow Activity<br>PRE-K<br>Make Oil & Water Lava Lamps | 6<br>CATERPILLARS<br>Opposites Coloring Page<br>FROGS<br>Bring Something Big or Small | 7 |
| 8 | 9<br>DUCKS<br>Star Stamps<br>BEES<br>Make Paper Flags<br>BUTTERFLIES & DRAGONFLIES<br>Star Art<br>SNAILS<br>American Flag Art | 10 DISNEY<br>Feet & Flags Art<br>BEES<br>Red, White & Blue Handprint<br>CATERPILLARS<br>Camo Heart Art<br>SNAILS<br>Write Thank Yous to Veterans<br>FROGS<br>Red, White & Blue Art<br>PRE-K<br>Tie-Dye Camo Washclothes | 11<br>BUILDING BLOCKS<br>Dress Down Day: Wear Red, White & Blue<br>BEES<br>Make Purple Heart Rainbow<br>BUTTERFLIES<br>Make a Flag<br>CATERPILLARS<br>Eagle Handprints<br>SCHOOL-AGERS<br>Heart Decorating | 12<br>DISNEY<br>Army Boot Art<br>DUCKS<br>Flag Footprints<br>CATERPILLARS<br>Flag Art<br>SNAILS<br>Star Counting<br>ALLIGATORS<br>Solider Art<br>SCHOOL-AGERS<br>Salt Crystal Art | 13<br>FROGS & PRE-K<br>Field Trip to Military Base<br>PRE-K<br>Make Leaf Prints | 14 |
| 15 | 16<br>DUCKS<br>Soccer Handprint Art<br>DRAGONFLIES<br>Paper Plate Football<br>BUTTERFLIES<br>Build a Soccer Ball<br>ALLIGATORS<br>Play a Ball Game | 17 DISNEY<br>Football Art<br>DRAGONFLIES<br>Design a Ball Art<br>CATERPILLARS<br>Soccer Ball Art<br>FROGS<br>Basketball Fun<br>ALLIGATORS<br>Football Art<br>SCHOOL-AGERS<br>Read Junie B Jones | 18<br>DISNEY<br>Baseball Art<br>BEES<br>Make a Goal Post Art<br>DRAGONFLIES<br>Football Player Art<br>PRE-K<br>Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center Field Trip | 19<br>DISNEY<br>Read How to Catch a Turkey<br>DRAGONFLIES<br>Design a Baseball Cap<br>BUTTERFLIES<br>Build a Baseball Bat<br>CATERPILLARS<br>Football Art<br>FROGS<br>Olympics<br>ALLIGATORS<br>Baseball Art | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 DISNEY & BEES<br>Turkey Handprint<br>DUCKS & BUTTERFLIES<br>Build a Turkey<br>DRAGONFLIES<br>Feather Letter Turkey<br>SNAILS<br>Pumpkin Science<br>FROGS<br>Field Trip to Lewis & Clark Center<br>PRE-K<br>Make 'Apple Pie' | 24 DISNEY<br>Read My 1st Thanksgiving<br>BEES<br>Thanksgiving Food Plate<br>BUTTERFLIES<br>Build a Pie<br>CATERPILLARS<br>Turkey Handprint<br>FROGS<br>Thanksgiving Celebration<br>ALLIGATORS<br>Make 'Apple Pie' | 25 DISNEY<br>Pie Art<br>BEES<br>Paper Plate Pumpkin<br>DRAGONFLIES<br>Pie Art<br>ALLIGATORS<br>Go Leaf Hunting<br>PRE-K<br>Friendship Potluck - Bring a Snack<br>SCHOOL-AGERS<br>Thankfulness Activity | 26<br>Happy Thanksgiving<br>BUILDING BLOCKS<br>Closed Today | 27<br>BEES<br>Make a Stuffed Person<br>DRAGONFLIES<br>Paper Plate Art<br>CATERPILLARS<br>Turkey Coloring Page | 28 |
| 29 | 30 BEES<br>Snow Dots<br>DISNEY<br>Snowflake Handprint<br>BUTTERFLIES<br>Make a Snowflake | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |