

# What's UP?



JCCDC Newsletter for Parents, Providers, Community Partners & Staff



## A Note from the Director

Dear Families,

November is such a special month here at JCCDC. It is a time when we pause to reflect on the many things we are thankful for — our families, our friends, and the joy of learning and growing together each day.

As the days grow shorter and the air a little cooler, our family childcare homes and centers are filled with warmth and excitement. Children are exploring the changing season through art, stories, and outdoor adventures. We're hearing wonderful conversations about gratitude — what it means to show appreciation. It's amazing to watch our preschoolers begin to understand that even small acts of kindness can make an enormous difference.

This time of year, also reminds me how thankful I am for **our incredible staff** and **our supportive families**. Your involvement, encouragement, and trust make JCCDC a truly special place. Whether you are volunteering, joining us for family events, or simply sharing a kind word at drop-off, please know that your partnership means the world to us.

As we move toward the holiday season, I encourage you to take a few quiet moments with your child each day to talk about what you're grateful for. These simple conversations build empathy, strengthen family bonds, and help children develop a lifelong habit of appreciation.

We appreciate you being part of our HS/EHS family. Have a joyful November.



## FALL/WINTER EVENTS!!!



11/4 – Election Day  
11/11 – Veteran's Day  
11/13 – JCCDC Festival/Health Fair  
11/13 – World Kindness Day  
11/27 – Thanksgiving Day  
Native American Heritage Month  
Lung Cancer Awareness Month



12/14 – Hanukkah Begins  
12/25 – Christmas Day  
12/26 – Kwanzaa Begins  
12/31 – New Year's Eve  
HIV/AIDS Awareness Month  
Universal Human Rights Month  
Learn a New Language Month

**Riddle: If December 31 is the end of the year, what is the end of Christmas?**



Answer: The letter "s".

## Celebrating World Kindness Day

Dear JCCDC Families and Partners,

As we enter the season of gratitude and giving, we pause to honor **World Kindness Day**, observed annually on **November 13**. This global celebration reminds us that small acts of compassion can have a ripple effect, transforming classrooms, communities, and lives.

At Jefferson County Child Development Council, Inc., kindness is more than a value; it's a practice. Whether it's a teacher offering a calming space for a child with sensory needs, a parent modeling empathy during a tough moment, or a peer helping a friend navigate a new routine, kindness builds the foundation for **inclusive, trauma-informed care**.

### Why Kindness Matters

Research shows that kindness:

- Boosts emotional resilience and reduces anxiety in children
- Fosters stronger peer relationships and inclusive play
- Encourages prosocial behavior and empathy development

In our Disability and Mental Health Services, we see firsthand how kindness supports neurodiverse children in feeling safe, seen, and valued.

### Ways to Celebrate

- **Kindness Challenge:** Invite children to complete one kind act each day—helping a friend, sharing a toy, or offering a compliment.
- **Storytime Spotlight:** Read books like *"Have You Filled a Bucket Today?"* or *"Kindness is My Superpower"* to spark discussion.
- **Family Reflection:** Encourage families to share stories of kindness at home and in the community.

Let's continue to nurture a culture where kindness is not just encouraged, it's expected.



## SAVE THE DATE!!!!

Jefferson County Child Development Council

Join us for a rootin'-tootin' good time that's fun for the whole family ---and good for your health too!

# RODEO ROUND-UP

## FESTIVAL & HEALTH FAIR

2025

November 13

Thursday 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Black Creek Park  
777 Yarbrough Rd.  
Fultondale, AL 35068

**Wear your boots and bring your loved ones!**

For more information contact JCCDC  
205-933-1095

"Scan & send—let Ms. Floyd know you'll be joining the fun!"

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## Guess who???

How well do you know our wonderful teacher!!!!



Contact us with the answer.  
Prize awarded in December!

## Parent/Child Fall Activity Center



A branch, some construction paper leaves, and a few things to be thankful for. That's all you need to make this thankful tree! Have the whole family add leaves with the things they're thankful for. Use it as cute fall décor or as a centerpiece for your Thanksgiving table.

## Recipe Magic



For: Thansgiving Fun

### Apple "Turkey" Snacks

Prep Time: 10 minutes  
No cooking required

**Ingredients**

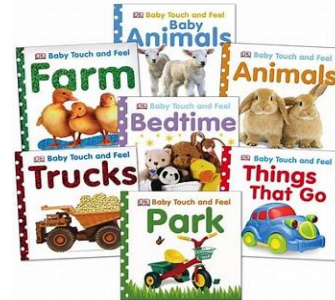
- 1 apple (red or green)
- a handful of grapes or berries
- 1 baby carrot
- a handful of grapes or berries
- 1 baby carrot
- 2 candy eyes (or use raisins)
- 1 toothpick (adult use only)

**Directions**

1. Cut the apple: Slice the apple into thin wedges — these will be the turkey's "feathers." (Parent does the cutting.)
2. Build the turkey: Lay the apple slices in a fan shape on a small plate. Place a baby carrot in front for the turkey's body
3. Add the face: Use two candy eyes and a tiny piece of apple or raisin for the beak.
4. Decorate and eat: Add grapes or berries around the plate for extra color — then enjoy!

## "Little Ears Are Always Listening — Make Every Word Count!"

Little brains need lots of loving words to grow and thrive. Just like a baby needs healthy food to grow a healthy body, they also need good words to grow a healthy brain. All you have to do is talk, interact, and engage with your child every day.



### *The Importance of Talking to Your Child (Birth to Age Three)*

#### 1. Builds Early Language Skills

From the moment babies are born, they are listening and learning. Hearing your voice helps them recognize sounds, words, and sentence patterns. Talking, singing, and reading aloud helps your child understand how language works — long before they can speak.

#### 2. Strengthens Brain Development

The first three years of life are a critical period for brain growth. Each time you talk, read, or sing to your baby, billions of brain connections form. These early experiences shape how your child learns and communicates later in life.

#### 3. Encourages Bonding and Emotional Security

Talking during routines — like feeding, diapering, or playtime — helps your child feel loved, safe, and connected to you. When you respond to your baby's sounds and expressions, it teaches them that their voice matters.

#### 4. Supports Social and Emotional Growth

When you use words to describe feelings ("You're happy!" or "That startled you"), your child begins to understand emotions and how to express them. This helps build empathy and healthy relationships later on.

#### 5. Sets the Foundation for School Success

Children who are spoken to often in their early years enter school with stronger vocabularies, better listening skills, and more confidence in expressing themselves. Every conversation builds the foundation for reading, writing, and learning.



## Childcare Attendance Matters!

### Why Attendance Is Important in Early Childhood Education

At JCCDC, Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start Program, we know that every day counts in your child's early learning journey. Regular attendance is key to helping preschoolers build the skills they need for future success. Here's why it matters—and how you can help!



### Why Attendance Matters



- **Learning & Development:** Daily routines and activities help children develop language, motor, and social skills.
  - **Social Connections:** Being present helps children form friendships and feel part of the classroom community.
  - **School Readiness:** Consistent attendance builds habits that prepare children for kindergarten and beyond.
- Tips for Improving Attendance**
- **Establish a Consistent Routine**  
Set regular bedtimes and morning routines to make getting ready for childcare smoother.
  - **Plan Ahead**  
Schedule appointments and vacations outside of childcare hours whenever possible.
  - **Stay Healthy**  
Encourage handwashing, healthy eating, and rest to help prevent illness.
  - **Communicate with Us**  
Let us know if your child is sick or if there are challenges affecting attendance—we're here to help!
  - **Make Childcare a Priority**  
Talk positively about childcare and celebrate your child's learning experiences.
  - **Use a Visual Calendar**  
Help your child understand their schedule by marking childcare days on a calendar at home.

We're Here for You!

We understand that life can be unpredictable. If you're facing challenges with attendance, please contact the family engagement services team at **205-933-1095**. Together, we can help find solutions that support your child's learning and well-being.

## Building Study

The children are enjoying exploring *The Creative Curriculum Building Study* theme!

They have been using popsicle sticks and playdough to design and construct their own imaginative structures. Their creativity and curiosity have truly brought the study to life.



### Why Imagination in Early Learning Settings?

Imagination plays a vital role in cognitive development by allowing children to explore new ideas and concepts. It encourages them to think creatively and develop their unique perspectives. Engaging in imaginative play helps children practice decision-making and enhances their ability to visualize scenarios, which is essential for problem-solving.

## We're Proud of our Team Members Melanie Washington



We are delighted to announce Ms. Washington's new role as **Disability and Mental Health Specialist**. In this important position, she has already begun making significant strides in supporting families, LEAs, and educators. Her dedication to promoting inclusion, well-being, and equitable access to resources is making a meaningful difference across our community. Please join us in congratulating Ms. Washington and celebrating the positive impact of her continued work!

## Brittney McClain



We were excited to welcome **Ms. McClain** as one of the newest members of our team! In less than 90 days, she has already made remarkable progress by launching a coaching platform designed to provide educators with additional support and a comfortable space for professional growth.

Her initiative and dedication are already making a positive impact across our community, and we look forward to seeing the continued success of her work in strengthening our educators and enhancing student outcomes.

## "Congratulations"

**Dana Bailey**

For once again achieving a 5-STAR rating! This outstanding accomplishment reflects her continued dedication, excellence, and commitment to providing high-quality education and care.

Way to go, Mrs. Bailey! Your hard work and leadership continue to shine and inspire us all.



## November Birthdays



Yolanda Woods 11/22

## December Birthdays



Valerie Square 12/4  
Porsha Davis 12/24  
Laketra Wrenn 12/31

## Honoring Children's Rights During Universal Human Rights Month

Dear JCCDC Families and Partners,

As we close the 2025 year, December offers a powerful reminder of our shared responsibility to uphold the rights of every child. **Universal Human Rights Month**, observed throughout December, commemorates the adoption of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** on December 10, 1948. This foundational document affirms that all people, including children, are entitled to dignity, safety, education, and freedom from discrimination.

At Jefferson County Child Development Council, Inc., we recognize that **children's rights are human rights**. From inclusive classrooms to trauma-informed care, our work centers the needs of young learners—especially those with disabilities, neurodiverse profiles, or experiences of adversity.

### What Are Children's Rights?

According to the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**, children have the right to:

- Be protected from harm and exploitation;
- Access education and healthcare;
- Express their views and be heard; and
- Grow up in safe, nurturing environments.



These rights are not privileges; they are promises. And they guide our commitment to equity, family partnership, and developmental support.

### Images from October 25, 2025, Halloween Safety Awareness Family Event

