bgc Durham

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INCLUSION MATTERS

OCTOBER

NEWSLETTER

As the leaves change and the air turns crisp, October gives us many chances to come together in celebration and reflection. This month, we'll explore the importance of gratitude, creating safe and inclusive ways to enjoy Halloween, and continue conversations about mental health and well-being. We'll also share ideas for keeping routines steady, preparing for colder days, and finding joy in outdoor play. At BGC Durham, inclusion means making sure every child, family, and staff member feels valued and supported — and October is the perfect time to celebrate kindness, community, and togetherness.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct 10
World Mental Health Day

Oct 13
Thanksgiving

Oct 20
PA Day

Oct 31
Halloween

OCTOBER

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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

PARENT CORNER

PA DAY - OCT 20TH

BGC IS OFFERING A FUN, FULL-DAY PROGRAM ON THE UPCOMING PA DAY! SPACES ARE LIMITED—REGISTER NOW TO SAVE YOUR SPOT.

HALLOWEEN

ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO TRY SIMPLE WAYS TO MAKE HALLOWEEN MORE INCLUSIVE—WHETHER BY OFFERING NON-FOOD TREATS, OR CREATING SENSORY-FRIENDLY SPACES.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

FROM ALL OF US AT BGC, WE'RE GRATEFUL FOR OUR AMAZING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY. MAY YOUR HOLIDAY BE FILLED WITH JOY AND THANKFULNESS.

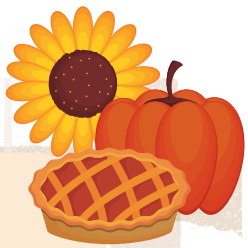
QUESTIONS ABOUT INCLUSION?

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT INCLUSION, REACH OUT TO CHANTEL, OUR INCLUSION COORDINATOR, AT CGENEREUX@BGCDURHAM.COM

INCLUSION MATTERS

Being Thankful

October is the perfect time to practice gratitude. Being thankful helps children (and adults!) build empathy, improve their mood, and strengthen relationships. At BGC, we encourage kids to notice small moments of joy — like a friend sharing a toy, a teacher giving encouragement, or a family member making their favorite meal!



Let's practice gratitude!

Gratitude Jar: Drop in notes about happy moments or kind acts. Read them together at the end of the week or month.

Gratitude Walk: While walking outside, notice things to be thankful for—like trees, sunshine, or friendly neighbors.

Gratitude Wall: Add sticky notes or drawings of things you appreciate on a wall or bulletin board.

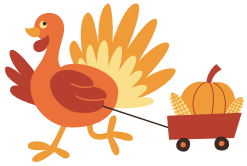
Daily Gratitude Share: At snack or circle time, take turns saying something good that happened that day.

Acts of Kindness: Show gratitude by doing something kind for someone else, like helping with chores or sharing toys.

Gratitude Journal: Write or draw one thing you're thankful for each day.

Thank-You Notes: Make cards or pictures for friends, family, or teachers to show appreciation.

Gratitude isn't just seasonal—it's a life skill that fosters inclusion, resilience, and kindness year-round. When we practice thankfulness together, we create a stronger, more connected community.



INCLUSION MATTERS

Prepare for Colder Weather

As the season shifts, cooler temperatures mean bundling up! Outdoor play is just as important in fall and winter, but it takes a little planning to make sure all kids are comfortable and ready.

Practice wearing layers, hats, and gloves at home to get kids used to new textures

Label items like coats, boots, and mittens so they don't get lost

Send a cozy coat and warm boots so your child can keep enjoying outdoor playtime

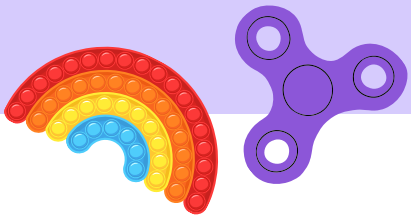
Create cozy indoor spaces with blankets, books, and quiet activities for chilly days

Be flexible with children who may not tolerate bulky clothing; offer alternatives like thinner layers or ear warmers.

Cold weather doesn't mean less play — it's just about having the right gear and the right mindset. With preparation, kids can embrace the season's adventures in comfort and joy.

INCLUSION MATTERS

Sensory Processing Disorder

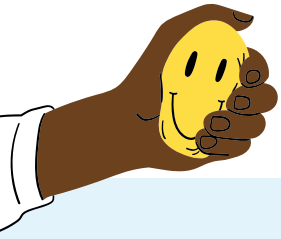


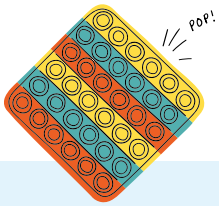
Kids with sensory processing issues often behave in ways that parents, teachers, and peers may find confusing. Some children may react strongly to loud noises, bright lights, or scratchy clothing. Others might seem clumsy or struggle with fine motor skills like buttoning a shirt. A child may even scream when water touches their face — not out of defiance, but because their brain is having trouble processing sensory input.

Children may process the world in very different ways:

Hyposensitive kids often need more stimulation. They may love to move, jump, or crash into things.

Hypersensitive kids avoid strong sensations. They may get overwhelmed easily by noise, textures, or movement.





How We Can Support Kids

At BGC: Provide calm spaces for children who need breaks, and offer active play opportunities for those seeking movement.

At Home: Keep routines predictable and give kids a heads-up before transitions.

For Staff: Use patient, clear communication and celebrate children's strengths instead of focusing only on challenges.

Every child's sensory needs are different. When we create flexible environments — with quiet zones, movement breaks, and choices — we give all children the chance to thrive.

INCLUSION MATTERS

CELEBRATING World Mental Health Day

This day reminds us that mental health is just as important as physical health.

Talking about it early helps reduce stigma and builds resilience in children. At BGC, we encourage open conversations, simple daily habits, and supportive routines to help kids feel safe and included.

Here are some FUN ways we can celebrate this year...

Mindfulness Games

Play "5-4-3-2-1" scavenger hunt — find 5 things you see, 4 things you touch, 3 things you hear, 2 things you smell, 1 thing you taste. It's grounding and fun.

Affirmation Art

You can try decorating rocks, cards, or posters with uplifting words or drawings. You can keep them or give them away as "kindness gifts."

Mental Health Matters

Music & Movement

Create a "happy playlist" together and have a mini dance party. Movement helps release stress and boost mood!

Self-Care Bingo

Make a bingo card with fun wellness tasks (drink water, take 3 deep breaths, draw a picture, give someone a high five) and see who can get a line first.

Taking care of our mental health doesn't have to feel serious all the time—small, fun activities like these remind us that laughter, kindness, and connection go a long way. By celebrating together, we help children and adults build healthy habits for both mind and heart.

INCLUSION MATTERS

Fall Fun!

Crisp autumn air is the perfect excuse to get outside! Outdoor play in cooler months has so many advantages — fresh air boosts mood, movement builds coordination, and exploring nature sparks creativity. At BGC, we're committed to making outdoor time inclusive and engaging for every child.

Here are some fun fall activities for everyone!

Nature scavenger hunts
Create lists with accessible clues for all kids, such as

- "Something round"
- "A crunchy leaf"
- "A bird sound"

Adapted games
Try low-barrier activities where every child can join in

- Parachute play
- Bean bag toss
- Sidewalk chalk art

Sensory Benefits!

Jumping in leaves, feeling pinecones, or listening to the wind are calming ways to connect with nature.

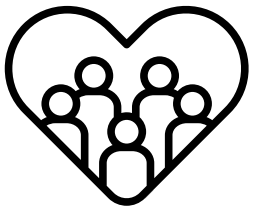
Outdoor play doesn't have to be competitive to be fun! By offering activities that focus on teamwork, creativity, and exploration, we ensure every child feels included and successful.

FREE COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Adventist Community Services

The Clothing Bank allows each person or family to take up to 40 items per month. The Food Bank is available once per month, and Christmas assistance is offered for registered clients. Adventist Community Services accepts donations of cash, food, and gently used clothing, with additional seasonal programs offered throughout the year.

Check them out at https://acscentre.ca



Simcoe Hall Community Programs & Food Bank

Simcoe Hall provides a monthly food hamper with a 3–5 day supply of nutritious food, fresh produce, and hygiene products. Families and adults can also access information on low-cost meals, cooking classes, healthy living, money-saving tips, and referrals to community supports. Seasonal programs include the Holiday Food and Toy Drive, offering hampers for families and vulnerable adults, and a Toy Program for children ages 0–16.

Check them out at https://simcoehall.com

Cornerstone

Located at 133 Simcoe Street South in Oshawa, Cornerstone offers safe housing and support services for individuals and families in need. The program is open to single men, men with children, couples with children, and seniors who have extraordinary medical needs that cannot be accommodated in an emergency shelter. Cornerstone provides a stable environment where residents can access resources, referrals, and assistance in working toward long-term housing solutions. Please note that pets cannot be accommodated.

Check them out at https://cornerstonedurham.com