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412-531-1225



## FEBRUARY 2017

### Important Dates & Info

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**MARCH TUITION DUE NOW – FEB. 1**  
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**Registration for the 2017-18 school year has begun!** See Joan if you have not registered yet.  
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**BeautyCounter sale in conference room, 9am-1pm – Feb. 9**  
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**MFLC Board Meeting – Feb. 15**  
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**No Classes Monday, Feb. 20 – Presidents Day**  
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**MFLC Staff Meeting – March 1**  
Early dismissal at 11am;  
afternoon classes start at 1:00pm.  
No lunch.  
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**Vision Screening – March 1-2**  
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**School Pictures – March 6-8**  
Look for details in your classroom!  
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**Conferences – March 23-24**  
Look for sign-up info soon!  
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**Spring Musical/Open House – April 6**  
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**Spring Break – April 10-17**  
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**Outside Play** – We will go outside if it's 25+ degrees and no rain. Please be sure your kids are prepared with labeled cold-weather gear.  
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**Proper Shoes** – Please be sure your child has proper play shoes (closed toe with a back), especially on movement day.  
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**Enrichment Classes and "Munchin' Lunchin'"**  
Contact Ms. Melissa at melissa.oprison@gmail.com.  
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**Ways to Help MFLC**  
- Youcaring.com/mushroom-family-learning-center  
- smile.amazon.com  
- United Way agency # is 885339.  
- Giant Eagle Apples for the Students program # is 5245.  
- Save Tyson Project A+ labels.

### From the Director ~ Joan Harrison

Wow! We are already into the second month of 2017. Happy Valentine's Day to you and your family.

Through my job as director, I have had the wonderful opportunity to know so many new families and children. Each child who walks through the door every day is such a blessing. Every family that is enrolled at our school is part of the Mushroom family. It is that time of year when our family will be growing.

I want to take this time to encourage you to be ambassadors for our preschool program. Please take the time to share your experiences in our program with a friend. We hope to have a large number of new families join our Mushroom family. You can help us by spreading the word, or encouraging a new family to visit our preschool. Thank you for sharing our wonderful school with others.

Our school is unique in so many ways. No two classes at Mushroom are alike but all are promoters of our philosophy: individual growth in a shared environment. Our teachers also have different styles, and teacher teams offer the talents of those working together. Our classes are somewhat like taking a recipe and making a few adjustments. No two cooks ever produce the same exact finished product, and no two Mushroom teachers have exactly the same style. Instead we integrate our strengths and gifts and hope that we pass on to the children a fun-filled day of playing/working and learning together.

It is the uniqueness of each of us that mixes up a "spicy" classroom. The common goal is to enjoy, to learn, and to grow. We are so lucky to have such a talented and dedicated group of teachers who love their jobs and love your children.

Thank you for entrusting your children to us and for inviting others into our Mushroom family – together we make an award-winning recipe!

### Friendly Reminders About School Safety and Building Security...

> **Please hold on to your children and watch them carefully as you enter and exit the school.** Always make sure your child doesn't run out of the building unescorted. If a child is waiting at the door, please do not open it until the child has connected with his/her parent or caregiver. *Let's work together to keep our children safe!*

> **Anyone coming to MFLC for child pickup/dropoff should have a security fob to enter the building.** If you have forgotten or don't have a fob, please wait for Joan to let you in. If you are in need of a new or additional fob, let Joan know.

## **BIG Thanks to...**

- **Two Men and a Truck** for the donation of a truck for our Play it Forward drive.
- The **Homitsky family** (McKenzie, Penelope, 3/4s) for their donation of three drying racks for painted items – and to Miss Melanie who built them!
- To the **Betler family** (Sylvie, 3s) for their donation of Pittsburgh Foundation gift cards. They will be used to purchase classroom materials.
- To the **Geletko family** (Vivienne, 3/4s) for their donation of books to our hallway book rack.
- To **Sarah Staffilino** (Sophia, Pre-K; David, EL a.m.) and **Danika Lagorio** Dash (CeCe, KToo) for co-chairing the Equal Exchange Fair Trade fundraiser.
- To **Kate Gigliotti-Gordon** (Rowan, Pre-K, Laszlo, 3s) for her help directing traffic for school registration... and for the sweet treats she brought. : )
- To **Miss Jamie** for her help registering all our wonderful students. Also for hosting the staff game night!
- To the **Lotter family** (Evan, 4s) for their donation of recyclable art materials.

## **From the Board President ~ Erin Betler**

Happy February! I'm a big fan of winter, and I'm not afraid to say it. Growing up in Rochester, NY, I was presented with plenty of opportunities to embrace all the fun that winter weather offered me as a child. My daughters, my husband, and I happily exhaust ourselves whenever snowflakes fall by sledding, throwing snowballs, and making snowmen and snow angels – it makes me feel like a kid again!

And even though it's cold outside, February is a month that warms the heart. It's full of love, cards, and those cute little conversation heart candies. In a bowlful, you'll find hearts stamped with words like "dream," "love" and "hug me." They're simple words, but ones that you'll hear all of the time if you walk into any classroom at Mushroom. With Valentine's Day around the corner, we will see the increase of pink, red and purple hearts, as well as the ever-present glitter, in the classroom projects. Love abounds at Mushroom!

Many thanks to all our Mushroom families for making our "in-house" 2017–2018 school year registration process a smooth one. Several classes are already full! That is a true testament to what a wonderful school we have. So if you haven't already turned in your registration forms, please get them in as soon as you can. Registration went "public" on January 30. The biggest compliment you can give our school is to tell others about it. I know I came to Mushroom on a recommendation from several other Mushroom parents. So, please, spread the word!

## **[ Parents' Corner ]**

**Sponsler family**  
(Miles, PreK-PM)

I grew up in Mt. Lebanon around the block from the "old" Mushroom Family Learning Center. In high school, I needed a job to earn spending money and help fill the lazy days of summer.

A neighbor, Debbie Beachler, asked if I would be interested in becoming a camp counselor at Mushroom's Slice of Summer program. Since I was hoping to become a teacher someday, it was a perfect opportunity. That summer I learned the joy of working with children and the special relationship and love a teacher shares with his/her students. Mushroom helped influence my decision to major in elementary and early childhood education.

After seven years of teaching, my husband and I decided to start a family. Miles was born in 2012 and I was fortunate to have the opportunity to be a stay-at-home mom. In May of 2016, four years after Miles was born, my husband passed away. I became a single parent overnight and was terrified. I quickly made the decision to move back home.

In the midst of a summer filled with anxiety, pain and fear, Mushroom came to my aid. Debbie and Joan Harrison contacted me and reassured me that there would be a spot open for Miles. It was a sigh of relief. Miles would attend a school that would give him a routine that was sorely missed that summer as well as love and support.

A few weeks after Miles started in the Pre-K class, Joan asked if I was interested in substitute teaching. I quickly jumped at the chance. It is an incredible feeling to work alongside this loving staff once again. Mushroom school, teachers and families have been a blessing in my life. I am beyond grateful and happy to be back in the Mushroom family. But really I never left.

-- Lara Sponsler

I hope that you and your family stay safe and warm throughout the remainder of the winter season. Please remember to check your email, the Mushroom website, and local television station broadcasts for notices of weather delays and cancellations.

## **Little Sprouts – Kelsey**

January was a short month for Sprouts. Our theme was body parts. We started a new set of songs, including "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes." We also sang a song about clapping our hands, tapping our knees, and the tough one was blinking your eyes.

We read about teeth and noses and talked a lot about our hands and how they can feel different textures. The Sprouts loved "Pat the Bunny"! In art, we created faces, using sticker eyes and mouths, as well as some accessories like glasses and

earrings. We also traced our hands five times. On each hand, we added different textures: smooth, rough, scratchy, soft and bumpy.

Already halfway through the school year, I've really noticed how our Sprouts are blossoming in language, awareness of their peers, as well as a growing eagerness to listen and learn. I'm looking forward to February, where our theme will be all about LOVE!

### **Illness: When to Keep Your Child Home . . .**

While fever is a good indication of sickness, it is not the only one. If your child is "not himself," has vomited or had diarrhea within the last 24 hours, has a green nasal discharge, or is tired and irritable, something more than a cold is likely to blame. In addition to potentially infecting others, children are also less resistant to other germs when ill. If you have any doubts, it's best to have the child stay home. Of course, a big way to help prevent illness is to make sure children wash their hands upon entering the classroom every day.

### **Early Learners – Amy, Sheila, and Marlene**

February is the perfect month to tell you how much we just love spending time with your children! They are learning and talking and growing so much each month. As always, we are working on socialization and using words to express ourselves rather than our hands. While everyone isn't at the same point, all of the children have made so much progress.

February means Valentine's Day, too. We will be having a small party (read: Fancy Napkin Day!) in each of our classes. If you would like, your child can bring in valentines to share with friends. We have found that it's best if you don't write "To:" names on the valentines. Just write your child's name on them.

Making valentines can be a fun activity if your child likes to do art projects. Don't feel like you need to go out and buy a fancy kit or preprinted valentines. Construction paper hearts that you cut out and your child decorates with some animal stickers would be perfect! Keep it simple and fun. We will pass them all out together at the end of class.

Just a few reminders to help us have smooth school days. Please remember to close the door behind you when you come in or out of class (unless of course someone is immediately behind you!). Since there are so many illnesses going around right now, it's really important to wash hands when you arrive. We'll be sure to do it before snack. We will also do our best to get the children outside whenever possible, so please pack their mittens and hats and boots if you want us to put them on. If you can tuck those coats in there too as you arrive, that's a big help. Sometimes coats fall off the hooks and then it's a mystery!

Thank you for all of your generous donations for our snack! We really appreciate that you keep our cabinets full. Stay warm and cozy!

**Have you registered for the 2017-18 school year?**

**If not, please stop by the office and talk to Joan ASAP.** Registration opened to the public on Jan.30. The very best compliment you can pay us is to recommend Mushroom Family Learning Center to a friend or neighbor. *We thank you for your continued commitment and support!*

### **Threes – Jamie, Debbie, and April**

I always wanted to be a rock star. I would spend hours writing down the words to my favorite songs, preparing to perform in front of my stuffed animals. I remember putting my cassette player near the radio in order to tape the top hits. Since I wasn't sure of the order of the music being played, I had to wait until I heard the right song. My fingers were ready to push the record button at any moment. I was a star. I was confident. I had found my strong voice.

The students and teachers in the 3s classroom have found the music in their souls and there is no turning back now. Music motivates us to clean our room a little faster. We have learned six dances already this year, and continue to add a new dance each week. Music during snack time is a must, with requests being made by the students. We try to eat our snack quickly so as to have a little extra time to sing and dance to our favorite tunes. We were made for the stage and try to perform there as much as possible. We are stars. We are confident. We have found our strong voice.

One of our favorite activities is to perform a talent show. The students will automatically set up the room, lining up the chairs, for our show. Each student is allowed to sing, dance or tell a joke in front of his/her classmates. The audience shows respect and encouragement to all performers. The talent shows are magical. We have students who started the year choosing not to perform. They are now singing songs, with their heads up high, to their classmates. We had students who sang with such soft voices we were barely able to hear their words. These same students are now singing loud and

**Say "Cheese"!**



School pictures will be taken March 6 – 8.  
Look for info in the cubbies soon!

proud during their performances. The talent show not only encourages confidence building, it also allows the students to be supportive of their friends. The children will help a student with the words of a song, singing along with him/her. It is difficult to put into words how powerful music can be to a child's confidence. They are stars. They are confident. They have found their strong voices.

Music is a powerful tool in providing happiness, confidence and positive relationships. I encourage all of you to sing a little more, dance a little more and share this joy with your children. And, if you follow my lead, you could be a rock star too!

### **School delay/cancellation**

MFLC will follow Mt. Lebanon School District decisions during inclement weather: When MTLSD is delayed, MFLC will be delayed; when MTLSD is canceled, MFLC will be canceled. Delayed start time will be 10 a.m. for morning classes which will dismiss at regular time; afternoon classes will begin on schedule. Please check local TV and cable stations, email blasts and the school answering machine when in doubt.



### **Three/Fours – Liz, Melissa and Jamie**

Growing up in Los Angeles, I experienced winter as an abstraction. I have always enjoyed teaching about the seasons here in Pittsburgh, where the seasons are so much a part of our daily lives. When I first started teaching here, I was still very new to the area. I would get so excited about teaching the seasons that I tended to get ahead of nature. It took me a couple of years to learn that the best fall leaves do not appear until mid-October and snow is not reliable until January. I have to say, though, that this January let us down when it came to direct experiences of winter. I am not complaining about the mild temperatures and virtual lack of snow and ice, but this is the first January I can remember when I felt a little like I was teaching winter as an abstraction!

This month, we explored the theme of "Animals in Winter." We focused on the two main challenges animals face in cold winter climates: staying warm and finding food. Your children should by now be familiar with the idea that some animals stay, some go to a warmer place, and others hibernate. We read many excellent books about birds, squirrels, rabbits, bears, and other woodland animals.

We found many ways to incorporate our learning into our play. Even though nature did not cooperate and provide real snow for our sensory exploration, Insta-Snow made a fun substitute for our sensory table. We found ways to make dens for the animals in the "snow." We made cardinals and blue jays using clothespins and searched for berries.

As we finish the month, we looked forward to having a hibernation party on February 1. It was fun to wear our pajamas to school and get cozy!

In February, we will focus on feelings and our five senses. We will also have a Valentine's Day party and valentine exchange on February 14.

### **Fours – Liz and Melissa**

Our theme for January was "Animals in Winter." We explored the ways that animals cope with cold days and scarce food supplies. We learned that animals must find a way to keep warm and stay fed when the temperature drops. Some animals migrate, others hibernate, some animals gather and store food, and still others continue to forage or hunt for food.

We also learned about different ways that animals keep warm. We learned about the subnivean world, where small animals keep relatively warm and safe from predators under the snow. We tried a hands-on experiment to see how fat (shortening) acts as an insulator. We touched ice with our bare hands, with a layer of fat, with fur, with feathers, and with trapped air. We discovered that all of these materials provided some protection from the cold.

We learned a little bit about how the winter weather affects us, too. First, we learned how thermometers measure temperature. By checking our thermometers indoors and out, we discovered that the red material inside goes up when it is warm and down when it is cold. We learned that the school rule is that we can only play outside if it is above 25 degrees (factoring in the wind chill) and not raining. We added a weather helper to our daily rotation. With the help of a weather app and our giant thermometer, the weather



### **"Slice of Summer" Mushroom Summer Camp 2017**

**June 5 - June 30**

**Four-week summer program for ages 3 to 6!**

*Arts and crafts, games, science, nature, music, movement and, of course, playing outside!*

**9:15 - 11:45 a.m. every day,  
Monday through Friday, \$75 per week**

Non-refundable registration fee of \$15 per child/\$25 per family. Registration forms will be in cubbies at the beginning of March. If you have any questions please ask Joan!

helper's job is to determine whether it is safe to play outside (aka, whether it will be a good day or not!). With this empirical data, it is a little easier to bear when we are not able to go outside.

We began working on letter books this month, too. Once a week or so, we choose a new letter to highlight. We trace the letter and try to think of things that begin with that sound. During Gathering, we take turns pulling items from the letter box that begin with the target sound.

We have noticed the children's increasing interest in pursuing their own original projects and working on them over time. We introduced a "work in progress" box to hold the creations the children would like to revisit from day to day. One project that sparked a lot of interest as well as persistence involved weaving on small looms. It takes a lot of patience and focus to weave the yarn over and under the strings of the loom. It has been wonderful to see the children's pride and satisfaction as they notice their own progress! This activity has also offered an opportunity to learn to cope with mistakes. We discovered that although we might make a mistake in our weaving from time to time, these mistakes are hardly noticeable when the weaving is viewed as a whole.

We wrapped up our "Animals in Winter" theme with a hibernation party on February 1. We will spend the month of February focusing on feelings.

## FEBRUARY ENRICHMENT CLASSES

Enrichment classes are available for those 4 and older on Mondays and/or Fridays each month, 11:30am-2:00pm. Please pack your child a healthy, meat-free lunch. \$15 per class. Email [melissa.oprison@gmail.com](mailto:melissa.oprison@gmail.com).

### Days and Themes This Month...

#### MONDAYS with Ms. Sheila

Feb. 6 - A fun and fizzy science experiment! Feb. 13 - "How Do Dinosaurs Say I Love You?" by Jane Yolen and Mark Teague and related craft! Feb. 27 - Create Painter's Tape Masterpieces!

#### FRIDAYS with Ms. Marilyn

Feb. 10: Valentine Calzone: That's Amore! Plus read "Full, Full, Full of Love" by Trish Cooke! Feb. 17 Kids' Grammy Awards Friday dance party and related craft! Feb. 24: "The Tooth Book" by Edward Miller and a "mouth" and "tooth" craft!

## Pre-K – Cara, Jane, Marlene and Melanie

Oftentimes before I begin writing my newsletter article, I like to look back and see what I wrote at the same time last year. There are times when I re-read what I shared last year and it again provides the "a-ha" connection to what I was thinking of sharing at this time. Interestingly enough, it appears that this time of year is a reflective time for me as we move forward for the rest of the school year. The children are



*Does your child want to have more fun at Mushroom??!!*

**Sign up for enrichment and/or "Munchin' Lunchin"!** Supervised lunchtime is \$8 per day for students 3+. Enrichment classes are \$15 per class for students 4+ available on Mondays and Fridays. Contact Ms. Melissa at [melissa.oprison@gmail.com](mailto:melissa.oprison@gmail.com)!

settled into their routines, feel familiar with their classmates and teachers and we are embarking upon that magical time in the classroom where things become even more magical.

I've said before that often what we are trying to do in the classroom is find the "sweet" spot for each child in their areas of development. This means that you have to be flexible and present with each child to provide a secure environment so that the child is stretched but not overly frustrated. For example, a child who is practicing their scissors skills might look at an activity where they need to cut along the lines with trepidation because it feels like they might fail. We have to tune into that feeling, provide appropriate encouragement and give some helpful strategies. Each child is different and there is no one-size-fits-all so we must really continue to be present and observant with each child. When we can help children stretch themselves so they can accomplish such a task, it is amazing to see what a sense of accomplishment they feel and how it builds their confidence. It is magical.

So, a lot of what is happening in our classroom requires us to BE with your children. Last year I wrote about this for my newsletter article, and it seems appropriate for me to share it again this year. Amazingly, this is where my heart and mind are again right now. This article, posted by Growing Children, is entitled "**Let the Children Be.**"

*I've decided I want to get the word "Be" tattooed on my wrist as a reminder. For me, it would be a reminder of a lot of different things. Relax. Be in the moment. Let the children be. Let the activity be. Watch. Observe.*

*It's becoming increasingly stressful to be an early childhood educator. The demand to get children ready for school is an ever-present thought in every educator's brain. My reaction to these demands is to BE. Be with the children. Grasp those teachable moments. Be in the process. Give children finger paint and let them explore. Be outside. Participate in the wonder of nature. Be amazed at the children's curiosity. Read books. Be in the story. Be quiet. Listen to the environment. Listen to the children. You may be surprised at how much children learn during these moments. You may also be surprised at how much YOU learn as well.*

*As we are being, we are teaching and children are learning. Children are learning the scientific process while interacting with paint. They are learning about textures while exploring*

*nature. Children are learning writing skills while using crayons and markers. They are learning math skills while working with blocks. Children are learning self-regulation while engaged in dramatic play.*

*Most of all, children are learning to BE. They are learning to be competent learners. They are learning that school is fun. They are developing a passion for learning. Children are learning to trust their adults. They are learning to trust themselves.*

Oh, how I love the sentiments of that article. You might wonder how this looks in our classrooms. Well, right now both our morning and afternoon Pre-K classes have begun our study of the solar system. In the morning class, I was sharing the book "Planets" and had gotten into the book about two pages when a child had a question. The question didn't get answered by me, but it was answered by the children. This conversation inspired yet another question, which again was answered by the children. They were having this amazing group conversation about the solar system, sharing their immense knowledge with each other and sparking areas of curiosity for deeper understanding. We were there to just facilitate their conversation. You can write this into the lesson plan, but we have to make sure we are BEING with the children so that when we see the magic happening, we don't get in the way.

Lately, we have provided more opportunities for the children to make their own books. This means providing a couple of blank pages stapled together and oftentimes some theme-style stampers to provide inspiration. The children are loving these because they get the opportunity to create their own story and hear their words spoken out loud...so powerful. A child in the afternoon class had created a book at home and had asked to share it with the class during snack time. So, she pulled up a chair in front of everyone and shared her story with the class. They loved it and clapped excitedly for her!

We also saw a spark light up in their eyes as they then decided that they too would love to share a book with the class. So, the next day several children created their own books and declared they would like to share them at snack time as their friend did. We, the teachers, just sat back and let them BE as they themselves directed this activity. At the end of the day, there were a few children who still wanted an opportunity to share their book so we just watched the magic happen as they pulled their chairs together in a circle to share and listen to each other. It was like witnessing a literary circle. Again, just magic...this is the stuff we teachers live for, the stuff that comes from their own inspiration.

Childhood is such a magical time, and we will continue to strive to BE present for your children to witness the magic.

## **K-Too – Marilyn**

In January we wrote about the holiday break. We learned about Hanukkah and Kwanzaa (U.S.) and made our own menorahs and kinaras. For Martin Luther King's birthday K-Too mixed different skin paint colors for life-size self-portraits. We also discussed the inauguration of our new president and wrote what we think he should do to make the world a better place. Look for our writing and portraits in the hallway outside the classroom. We ended the month learning about the three branches of government, its checks and balances, and how a law is made.

In February, children will make replicas of the iconic buildings the White House, U.S. Capitol, and Supreme Court with recycle art materials. They will write a law and act out presenting it to their classmates who will play members of Congress, senators, and the president. Their law will also have to pass a constitutionality test before the Supreme Court! We will talk and write about "love" this month as well as our 'founding fathers.' This month we will begin learning about electricity: What is it? Who discovered it, and how? How can we be safe with it? What work can it do? We will construct an electrically powered house and write about what we learn.

For families not familiar with K-Too, it is a kindergarten enrichment class. Next year we will meet Tuesday and Thursday or Monday and Wednesday from 12:30-3:00. Classes are available based on enrollment. The class combines fun, creativity, and academics in the warm environment of Mushroom. Children often need an activity beyond their day at kindergarten. K-Too is an extension of their learning and social time in a smaller, more intimate setting. Please feel free to stop in and observe the class any time. You can register for K-Too with Joan in February.

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### ***Need help moving down the street or across the country?***

Mushroom highly recommends Two Men and a Truck to help you manage your relocation stress. Its exceptional services provide you with:

- Fully licensed, insured and bonded service
- Packing and unpacking services
- Clean trucks with proper equipment
- Friendly and courteous staff
- Much more!



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♥ BeautyCounter loves Mushroom Family Learning Center! ♥

Alaina Stockhausen invites you to Meet BeautyCounter and support Mushroom!

Check out this toxic free skin care line that offers safe products for everyone including kids!

**Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**9:00am – 1:00pm**

In the Beth El Conference Room (across from Joan's Office)

10% of sales will be donated to Mushroom!

Preview BeautyCounter products or shop online at [www.beautycounter.com/alainastockhausen](http://www.beautycounter.com/alainastockhausen) and click on "mushroom social"





## CALLING ALL MUSHROOM "KIDS OF STEEL"



Mushroom Family Learning Center's Board of Directors is proud to announce that MFLC is once again participating in the 2017 Kids of STEEL Program through P3R, a nonprofit organization that promotes the love of running and access to health & fitness education and activities.

Kids of STEEL (KOS) is an award-winning, free youth physical activity and nutrition program designed to instill lifelong, healthy habits in children. Each training plan is geared towards age-appropriate exercise and healthy eating habits. This program is open to all children ages 2 and up, family members, and friends regardless of athletic ability. You need not be a track superstar to enroll. It's all about having fun and being healthy! Kids of STEEL participants can complete their program in one of three optional running races (held the Saturday of marathon weekend - **Saturday, May 6, 2017**).

### TRAINING PROGRAMS

The [2016 Kids of STEEL Program Guide for parents](#) includes 3 training plans for the Toddler Trot, Kids Marathon and 5K. All plans have corresponding training logs that can be turned in for a KOS finisher prize (not required).

Children can participate in the free Kids of STEEL training plan and not register for a race. ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST REGISTER FOR THE KIDS OF STEEL PROGRAM AND COMPLETE A LIABILITY WAIVER, EVEN IF THEY WILL NOT ATTEND A RACE.

Program Choices	Cost	Benefits	Online Registration Info
Kids of STEEL (NO RACE)	FREE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training log</li> <li>KOS finisher prize</li> </ul>	Deadline: February 1, 2017. Contact Erin Betler for registration link.
Kids of STEEL and Pittsburgh Toddler Trot (100 meter run recommended for ages 2-5)	\$10 per child Adult is free	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training log</li> <li>KOS finisher prize</li> <li>Toddler Trot race number, shirt &amp; finisher medal</li> </ul>	Deadline: March 31, 2017 <a href="http://thepittsburghmarathon.com/kidsofsteel">thepittsburghmarathon.com/kidsofsteel</a>
Kids of STEEL & Toyota Pittsburgh Kids Marathon (non-timed 1 mile fun run for children to run with family and friends)	\$20 per child 1 adult runs free; additional adults \$10 each	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training log</li> <li>KOS finisher prize</li> <li>KM race number, shirt, goody bag &amp; finisher medal</li> </ul>	Deadline: March 31, 2017 <a href="http://thepittsburghmarathon.com/kidsofsteel">thepittsburghmarathon.com/kidsofsteel</a>

### RACE WEEKEND

The Kids of STEEL races will be held on **Saturday, May 6, 2017** (5K race, Kids Marathon & Toddler Trot).

Team Mushroom plans to offer plenty of support for these programs including:

- Training Mentors, Training Runs and Training Logs
- Fun and exciting presentations and activities with the Kids of STEEL trainers and dietitian
- Big smiles and encouraging words!
- Cheerleaders along the race routes and a Mushroom Family Reunion at the finish line



REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN - [thepittsburghmarathon.com/kidsofsteel](http://thepittsburghmarathon.com/kidsofsteel)

When registering your child, please make sure to select "YES" that they are participating in a Kids of STEEL Program and select Mushroom Family Learning Center from the drop-down list, to be included on our team. When we pick up Kids Marathon race items prior to race day and your child isn't listed with our school, his/her items will not be boxed up.

### QUESTIONS

For more information or to sign up, contact Erin Betler with any questions at [erinbetler@gmail.com](mailto:erinbetler@gmail.com) or 703-201-2602.

## February is American Heart Month!

Some heart-healthy reminders for families...



### Encourage healthy eating habits. Small changes can lead to a recipe for success!

- Provide plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole-grain products.
- Include low-fat or non-fat milk or dairy products.
- Choose lean meats, poultry, fish, lentils and beans for protein.
- Serve reasonably sized portions.
- Encourage your family to drink lots of water.
- Limit sugar-sweetened beverages, sugar, sodium and saturated fat.

**Help kids stay active.** Children should participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity most days of the week, and every day if possible. You can set a great example! Start adding physical activity to your own daily routine and encourage your child to join you. Some examples of moderate-intensity physical activity include:

- Brisk walking
- Playing tag
- Jumping rope
- Playing soccer
- Swimming
- Dancing

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