

ACORNS MONTHLY

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baby
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NEWS UPDATE

Acorns – the first international participant at Talk to Your Baby Conference - 4th November 2011

At the beginning of November Valentina participated at the annual "Talk To Your Baby" conference in London, on behalf of Acorns Foundation. Cathy Hamer, who was one of the speakers at the Acorns Seminar in May this year invited Valentina to attend and she was very happy to find herself among 140 early education specialists who work with children aged 0-3.

The day was opened by the Manager of National Literacy Trust who welcomed everyone and explained the aims of the day. Helen Wheeler, Principal Officer of National Children's Bureau Early Childhood Unit addressed the issues of having parents as partners and the importance of the home learning environment. Dame Clare Tickell, DBE Chief Executive of Action for Children and the Early Years Foundation Stage review author delivered a keynote speech on transforming outcomes for children by improving practice in the early years, supported by effective policy. Later in the day, Viv Bennett, Deputy Chief Nursing Officer, Department of Health, offered the participants practical ideas about how to use the Talk To Your Baby philosophy in the setting. The use

of story sacks and the routine used by practitioners in North Yorkshire was shared with great enthusiasm by one of their representatives, who explained how important it is to give very young children a choice - and how parents travel up to 30 Km in order to take part in Talk To Your Baby sessions with their child. A true inspiration!

Other examples from Nottingham's Language for Life programme were also given, followed by a presentation by Angela Sugden from Kirklees, who Valentina also had the pleasure to meet. Angela introduced "A Child's Journey", a programme for parents made up of 4 components: "Attachment", "Play", "Communication and Language" and "Developmental Movement" which will shortly be made available to parents in Romania, through a Baby Acorns initiative which is planned to begin in Spring 2012.

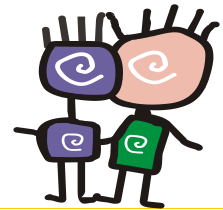
Cathy Hamer from Talk To Your Baby reminded everyone of the achievements made so far by her organisation, including international partnership with Acorns Foundation and the launch of 2 sites: www.talktoyourbaby.org and www.wordsforlife.org.uk

The conference was brought to a close by Jean Cross, Communication Champion who outlined the highlights of the 2011 National Year of Speech, Language and Communication and the steps being taken to ensure this initiative leaves a fruitful legacy for years to come.

The participation at this conference confirmed once more the attention and dedication given in UK to early education and the message throughout the conference was: "The earliest years in a child's life provide the foundation for everything else!" A powerful message for all of us to follow!

*Talk To
Your Baby*

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Events in Acorns and Baby Acorns

Acorns and Baby Acorns Children Evaluation Meetings

In November, we held Child Evaluation Meetings for all children enrolled in our nurseries. On these occasions, parents were able to watch video of various activities selected for this occasion, to talk to their child's key worker about their recent progress and to look through their child's "work" completed in the nursery. The theme for this meeting was Mathematical Development, giving parents an idea about how we teach maths in Baby Acorns and Acorns. Parents were able to see the progression in mathematical development through each of the groups and the way in which new concepts and ideas are introduced. Eg. From the way in which jigsaw puzzles are used in Tiny Tots (age 1-2), to familiarise the children with first concepts of shape and colour to the way in which children develop concepts of spacial awareness (up-down, over-under) in Baby Acorns (age 2-3), the recognition of colours and sorting abilities in Tweenies (age 3-4), the ability to count, read and write numbers in Rainbows (age 4-5) and addition and subtraction in Early Explorers (age 5+): In Baby Acorns and Acorns, mathematical development takes places throughout the day and the films shown at the parents meeting gave examples of this in imaginative play, creative or messy activities, in outdoor play etc. You will be able to read about how we support children's learning in other British curriculum areas in future newsletters!

Bonfire Night Celebrations

All children enjoy the month of November in Acorns and Baby Acorns due to the many activities that they have linked to the theme of colours. They learned about the concepts of light and dark, how fireworks can only be seen at night and the names of the colours seen in fireworks. Tweenies played in their dark cave with torches that they spun around like fireworks, Rainbows made paper lanterns and painted with bright colours on a dark background like the night sky, while in EE the children made 'splatter' paintings by tapping watery paint on their hand and then watching it splatter onto the paper. They also listened to the story behind the bonfire night celebrations: that of Guy Fawkes who tried to blow up the House of Parliament in London with gunpowder and from where the celebration originates.



Support for Light into Europe

For the past 4 years Acorns has supported Light into Europe charity organization by promoting the celebration of Bonfire Night organized every year in November or by inviting Light into Europe representatives to Acorns who talk to the children about their work, such as with blind or deaf children or by training guide dogs. This November Acorns promoted the Bonfire Night party organized by Light into Europe at Crown Plaza hotel and sold tickets for the event to our parents and friends. We sold over 40 tickets in our nurseries; all the money raised went to support the work of Light into Europe with sight/hearing impaired children and young people, including the continuing training of the second generation of guide dogs for the blind. Everyone who came to the Bonfire Night had a great evening out, with barbecue, drinks, a firework display and large (and very hot!) bonfire. All our Acorns families enjoyed meeting outside the nursery and of course the children had a great time playing safely together in the grounds of the hotel. We invite you to support the work of this organization either by donating money through their office, being a volunteer (please contact the organization to find out more details) or by helping with the costs of training and feeding a guide dog. Thank you to everyone who bought tickets for the event on 5th November. Check out Light into Europe on Facebook too!

Diwali The Hindu festival of light was celebrated across both nurseries. In Baby Acorns the children used paint and brushes and made their own version of Rangoli patterns while in Acorns the children made special candle holders from dough, paper lanterns, and Rangoli patterns with coloured rice (on display on 2nd floor). They also listened to the traditional story about Rama and Sita, looked at pictures of people wearing special new clothes, Indian food, dancing and exchanging gifts so that they understood more about how this festival is celebrated. As the children progress through the nursery they remember more and more about festivals that they have celebrated at home and in the nursery and are able to make connections between them, seeing the many things they have in common with others.





More events ...

Remembrance Day Children in Acorns marked this special day on 11th November in which people in UK remember those who have died in wars. We sold poppies during the week and many children proudly wore them on their T shirts. Altogether we raised 2550 Ron from donations in both nurseries, which will go to help the children of a Romanian soldier killed in action. The children learnt about poppies, they painted poppies using their finger prints, Rainbows made their own poppies which they displayed in their window while Early Explorers looked at black and white photos of the First and Second World War, seeing the conditions in which soldiers had to fight in the trenches and then observing 2 minutes silence, as is tradition at 11am on 11th day of the 11th month.



World Kindness Day was an opportunity to remember how to show kindness to others in the nursery and at home, by giving a hug, helping a friend who may be feeling sad, remembering to say please and thank you or by helping to tidy up. In Rainbows, the children made a giant bubble gum machine, which they filled with gum ball pictures for each act of kindness shown by each of the children while in Early Explorers the children shared a kindness ribbon, each child had the ribbon pinned to their T shirt when they were kind and then chose another child to pass it to when they saw another act of kindness.

Trip to Antipa Museum EE enjoyed a trip to the recently opened Antipa Museum of natural history. They enjoyed looking at all the exhibits, especially the animals, displayed in different habitats—some of which they learned about in the nursery. The other visitors heard our children talking in English throughout their visit and naming many of the animals correctly. One of their favourite parts where they saw skeletons of prehistoric elephants, marvelling at how many years old their bones were.

Thanksgiving in Acorns

Each of the groups celebrated this in their own way, while emphasising the importance of the word “thank you” and introducing the idea of being thankful for the many things we have. Tweenies practiced giving and receiving toys, saying “thank you” each time they received something. Rainbows looked at pictures of turkeys and then made their own, using bright colours for each of the turkey feathers; they also decorated their door with ‘reasons to be thankful’, with some help from the teachers. In EE the children also made turkeys and on each of the feathers, they wrote something that they are thankful for such as ‘my mum, because she cooks nice things’, ‘my dad, because he plays with me’ etc.



World Hello Day....bonjour,



alo, buna ziua...the groups learnt to say ‘hello’ in many different languages, they took turns to say hello to each other in circle time, as they practiced making eye contact and taking turns. Rainbows painted posters which were written in different languages while in EE the children talked about ‘hello’ as being an important word to use everyday, along with body language such as waving and shaking hands.

Trip to Danone Factory

Early Explorers were very interested to see inside the Danone



factory, where they enjoyed seeing one of their favourite foods made. First of all they were greeted by one of the staff who explained what they would see and they watched a short film explaining why Danone yoghurt is healthy. Next the children dressed up in special hats and coats to visit the factory; they were able to see how the yoghurt pots are made, filled with yoghurt or sour cream and then packaged. They also saw where the products are stored, which they likened to being like a big fridge! A big thank you to Laura Lungu (Maia's mum from BA) for organizing this trip for us!

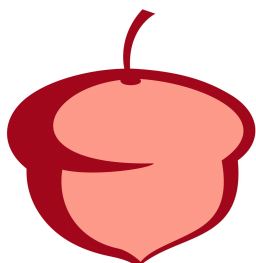


"From small acorns big oaks grow"

Baby Acorns -36 Chiparosului Street
Sector 3 Bucharest
Acorns - 80A Matei Voievod
Sector 2 Bucharest

Phone: 0213231101
Fax: 0213231101
E-mail: office@acorns.ro

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Something Extra:

Asociatia "Ai Grija de Mine" This month, we share information about one of our Acorns partners: Ai Grija De Mine (Take Care of Me), the organisation run by our Baby Acorns doctor Kamal Almassari. "Ai grija de mine" (Take Care of Me) is involved in medical and educational activities which take place in day centres. The aims of the Take Care of Me Association are to encourage the free and harmonious development of the individual, to ensure general medical services for healthy children and specific ones for people needing care and special education according to their temporary or permanent physical needs, and to help those who have disabilities to integrate successfully in society, while meeting their physical and emotional needs. Take Care of me is also involved in promoting the autonomous and creative development of pre school children and also organises and delivers education through nurseries, primary schools, high schools, art schools etc.

Take Care of Me Association organises many events and workshops in the following areas: art, theatre, personal development (philosophy/psychology), foreign languages, music and dance, martial arts, children's parties. You can visit their website for more information or call to make an appointment for a visit: www.aigrijademine.ro



APA's corner: We would like to say a big thank you to Alina Pascale (Lotus's mum from EE) who sent us also this month suggestions for events for parents and children. You could choose to go and see a show to Opera House and you can see: **Craiasa Zapezii - 17th Dec, 8th Jan**, **Spargatorul de Nuci - 18th, 23rd Dec, 8th Jan** or go to **Tandarica Theater for Alice in Tara Minunilor 17th Dec, Frumoasa si Bestia - 18th Dec, Lampa lui Aladin - 29th Dec**. There is a new bookshop in town, great to visit with your child **Libraria Bastilia** din Piata Romana -<http://metropotam.ro/La-cumparaturi/Libraria-Bastilia-si-cafenea-uadin-al-9-lea-cer-rt4114588147/> or you may be interested in the clubs organized by Calea Victoriei Foundation (http://www.fundatiacaleavictoriei.ro/category/pentru-copii/?ec3_after=today) or this event <http://www.astro-urseanu.ro/calatorie-univers.html>. Thank you so much Alina!

Birthdays

We wish to say "Happy Birthday" to those children whose birthday will be in

November

07th Petre aged 3 on 07th
Maria-Caterina aged 3 on 12th
Darius aged 5 on 15th
Petru aged 3 on 22nd
Vlad Carasel aged 6 on 23rd
Luca Buzdugan aged 6 on 24th
Vlad Niculae aged 5 on 29th

Baby Acorns Calendar

Our second edition of the Baby Acorns calendar has just been published, promoting the need for early education particularly in the age group 0-3. Containing beautiful photos of children currently enrolled in Baby Acorns and shot at the British Gallery, the calendar makes an ideal Christmas gift. Please order your calendars from Georgiana in Baby Acorns or by mail



Medical and medicine

Please do not send your child to the nursery if they do not feel well. We kindly ask all parents to respect the recommendations made by our nurses and doctor who examine the children regularly. Please ask for a copy of our updated Sickness Policy if you have not received one. We can not admit any children while they are following a course of antibiotics. Don't forget to bring in a doctors note if your child has been off sick for 3 days or more.