



BIG BEAR NEWS



WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY NURSERY SCHOOL
FEBRUARY 3, 2020



Dear Wonderful Big Bear Families,

For the past three weeks Big Bears have been exploring the concept of Community. We kicked off our unit with inspiring real-life stories of communities that came together to make their communities better, stories such as **Maybe Something Beautiful** by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell (featuring a little girl named Mira ;) and **Pedal Power: How One Community Became the Bicycle Capital of the World** by Allan Drummond as well as **Hey, Wall: A Story of Art and Community** by Susan Verde. We identified communities that each of us are a part of: family, Big Bears, WUNS, St. Louis. Physically we used our fingers to show the individuals that, when they come together (in a circle with our fingers) and take care of one another, create a community. How important it is to teach our children growing up in this world today that they need to take responsibility for themselves AND look out for another.

The children explored helpers in our community, particularly in the writing center where they created individual books about the more recognizable helpers such as doctors and police officers, and the less appreciated helpers such as sanitation workers and librarians. For the latter Big Bears had to think more deeply about how these "unsung heroes" in our communities help us. We are sending the books home today! Check them out - they are special!

In the art center, inspired by **Maybe Something Beautiful**, Big Bears designed a community mural with WU student helper Sam outside in the hallway in order to beautify our BB bulletin board/"wall." They also collaborated in pairs to create mini-murals with oil pastels to beautify our classroom.

In other centers, the children explored the hard work of community helpers: they designed buildings with blocks and drafts a la architects and engineers (inspired by Andrea Beaty's excellent children's series which includes Rosie Revere, Engineer), they created grocery stores, classrooms, and doctor's offices, and put out fires in the block center.

We were also visited by Nurse Molly a.k.a. Mason's mom, who read Janet Yolen's **How Do Dinosaurs Get Well Soon**, shared staying-healthy tips, and created a student project for the kids to draw their own patients and then apply care/bandaids. Thank you Molly!

To wrap up our unit we took our pattern links we had created to kick off the new year 2020, and connected them altogether at circle to demonstrate individuals coming together to create community. Mr. Rogers even paid a visit to remind us to "look for the helpers" and to look out for one another. The future is...COMMUNITY!

Next up: our abc/123 unit!

Love,

Heather & Suzy :)

Molly's Visit



Center Time



Our Community "Chain"



Love,
Ms. Heather & Ms. Suzy :)