

 Child Care Connection

Quality Team Newsletter

FEBRUARY & MARCH 2026

In our newsletters, the Quality Team is pleased to provide activities and ideas in the spirit of celebrating young learners and their families. We hope you will take some time to get to know us, and reach out with any questions about the services we provide to Mercer County child care providers and the families they serve.

Department Spotlight

In this issue, we're proud to introduce our Referral Department. This team provides families with community resources as requested and works closely with the One-Stop Career Center in Trenton to serve families in the WorkFirst New Jersey program.

They also provide families in our community with options of licensed child care centers, registered family child care providers, school-age programs, nursery schools, and summer camps based on their needs and educate them regarding quality indicators for child care so they can make an informed decision. You might even see team members at community events providing a wealth of information about Child Care Connection!

Any questions? Call the Referral Team at 609-989-8101.

Community Events

U.S. Passport Clinic at Mercer County Library: West Windsor Branch

333 N Post Road, Princeton Junction, NJ 08550

- February 19, 2026, 2:00PM-6:30PM. Call 609-989-6473 for guaranteed service

Trenton Library

- Black History Moving Morning, every Wednesday, 10:00AM- 12:00PM, for the month of February
- Toddler Storytime & Play, every Monday, 10:00am-10:30am

Temper Tantrums: Bad Behavior or Communication?

Temper tantrums are often seen as bad behavior—but they're really a form of communication. Young children don't yet have the words or emotional skills to explain what they're feeling, so their emotions come out through tears, yelling, or frustration. A tantrum is usually a child's way of saying, "I'm overwhelmed," "I'm tired," or "I need help."

Big feelings can be confusing and intense, especially in small bodies. When a child melts down, it doesn't mean they're being manipulative or defiant, it means their brain is still learning how to manage emotions, impulses, and disappointment. Tantrums are most common when children are hungry, tired, overstimulated, or facing something they don't yet understand.

When a child has a tantrum, your most helpful response is to stay calm and present. Speak in a steady, reassuring voice, keep the child safe, and avoid arguing or giving long explanations while emotions are high. Acknowledge the feeling—such as "I see you're really upset"—without giving in to unsafe or inappropriate behavior. If possible, offer simple choices or quiet space to help the child regain control. Once the tantrum has passed, talk briefly about what happened, and help the child name their feelings so they can learn better ways to communicate next time. It would even help to explain that you have those same feelings sometimes!

Visit the *Helpful Resources* shared below for support in guiding children through these big feelings.

Helpful Resources

[Social and Emotional Development in Early Childhood - Very Well Mind](#)

[Social and Emotional Development - Head Start](#)

[Common Tantrum Scenarios: How to Respond - Zero to Three](#)

[Heading Off Temper Tantrums - Child Care Aware of America](#)

Activity

You can't fight nature, so go ahead and explore it!

Freeze some cranberries and pine leaves in ice. Then provide tools to pick the items out as the ice melts. This is a great fine motor activity and a fun science activity as well!



Holidays/Special Celebrations

February is Black History Month, National Children's Dental Health Month, & American Heart Month

- February 2-Groundhogs Day
- February 14-Valentine's Day
- February 16 - Presidents' Day

March is Women's History Month

- March 8 - Daylight Savings (set your clocks forward one hour!)
- March 14 - Pi Day
- March 17 - St. Patrick's Day 
- March 20 - First day of spring

Keep in mind, this list is non-exhaustive and is not intended to purposefully exclude any religious holidays or festivals

Puzzle Corner

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QUESTIONS
OR
COMMENTS?

CONTACT US AT:

609-989-7940

OR

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