

### Early Education Curriculum

## UPK/Preschool

### Bruins and Patriots: Growing & Changing

The children will finish Unit 3 the first week of April. On April 14th, we'll begin our final unit for the school year, "Growing and Changing." This unit celebrates children's growth and encourages them to observe and wonder about other living things as they grow and change. They'll plant seeds as well as observe caterpillars as they transform into butterflies, documenting their observations. Key questions include: How does a seed become a plant? How does a baby become an adult? What observable changes do we notice?

#### Big Ideas:

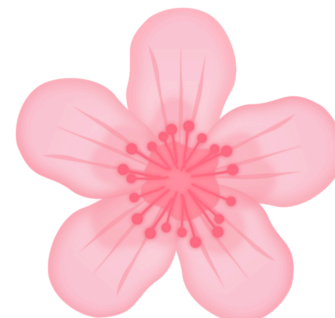
- Plants are part of the community.
- Like animals, plants have specialized parts that help them meet their needs (water, food, air, sunlight).
- Living things depend on each other and their local environment.
- All living things grow and change over time. Living things need to grow and be healthy.
- We have already grown, we will keep them growing, and we each grow in our own way.

### Maple, Celtics, and Red Sox: Starting Unit 4 - Light and Darkness

In Unit 4, children will learn about how light affects people and animals, and how different activities happen during the daytime and nighttime. The children will investigate natural and artificial light sources.

#### Big Ideas:

- Light comes from natural and artificial sources.
- People use their senses to see and feel light.
- Different things happen during daytime and nighttime.
- Light affects people, animals, and objects.
- Light can affect what people do, how we feel, and how things look.
- Shadows are created when an object blocks light.
- People use lights for different purposes.



# Toddlers

## Exploration Unit - Nature All Round Us

Over the next two months, children will explore different aspects of nature. They will go on neighborhood walks, make nature paintings, notice small animals living around us, and taste herbs, fruits, and vegetables.

Big Ideas:

- How can we explore the natural world with curiosity and respect?
- What are the different forms water can take?
- What are the properties of water?
- What animals, plants, and natural materials can we find where we live?
- What does nature sound, smell, and feel like?



# Infants

Our youngest scholars are growing and learning so much in 2025!

You will receive your child's **individual curriculum** so you can try the activities they are doing in the classroom at home. Throughout the month, teachers will provide activities and record your baby's responses.

**Infant Reminders:**

- EEC requires all children to have something on their feet. Please make sure your baby has socks, booties, or shoes to wear in the classrooms.
- Please make sure your child has a daily, labeled, supply of sippy cups or bottles for every feeding. These will be sent home daily for cleaning.

## Classroom Requests

1. Please ensure your children have extra, seasonally appropriate clothing in their cubby.
2. Please come prepared with shoes for outdoor play.
3. Please wash your child's hands upon entering the classroom.
4. Please arrive no later than 9:30 am. Breakfast is served from 8:15-9:15.



## Social/Emotional Development

The **UPK classrooms** will soon begin using Housman Institute's *ECSELEnt Adventures* Supplemental Curriculum. This engaging circle time program uses storytelling and guided discussions to help children explore emotions and build key skills in emotional intelligence, self-regulation, problem-solving, and conflict resolution—connected to their real-life experiences.

Our **toddler and infant classrooms** will continue to focus on recognizing emotions and nurturing empathy as part of their ongoing social-emotional development.

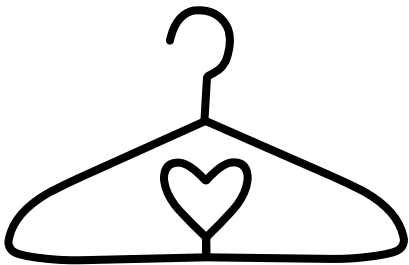
## Social Work Corner

Hi everyone! Ellis social work team here!

We hope you're enjoying the warmer weather and getting excited for the months ahead. Thank you to everyone that participated in the Family Movie Night on Friday March 28th, it was a big hit! We are looking forward to having more in the future. Please let us know if you have any requests or feedback.

Here are some fun upcoming Family Engagement events! Stay tuned for another family connection opportunity at Franklin Park Zoo! Dates coming soon.

### Ellis Clothing Swap



#### South End:

April 29th, 2025- April 30th, 2025

8:30-10:00am & 4:00-5:45pm

Lower Level of 66 Berkeley Street

**JP: May 6th 2025**

Time TBD



Back by popular demand, our Ellis Clothing Swap. Find new or gently used clothing, shoes, jackets, and boots for your growing child. We are now collecting clothing items in the front lobbies of 58 66, and JP. Entrance to event is not reliant on bringing clothing- but what a perfect excuse to do some spring cleaning and reduce waste.

### Play with Me!

April 25th, 2025

5:00-6:00pm

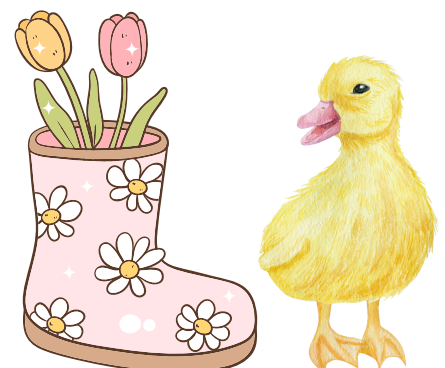
66 Music and Movement Studio

**Play with Me!** is an unstructured play group for you and your little ones to explore and play together. Come connect with other Ellis caregivers and the Social Work Team, but most importantly learn and connect with your children through play.

As always, please reach out or find us. We'd love to see you.

### Social Work Team

**Sami, Liz, Cherish and Emma**

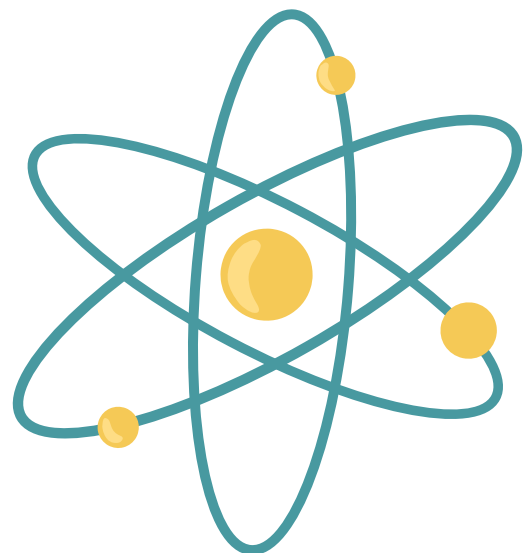
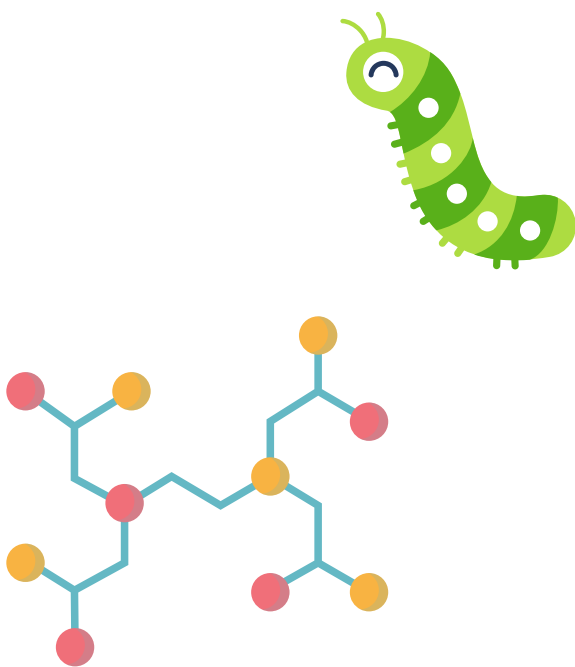


## STEM Corner

My name is Ana and I am Ellis' STEM Exploration Educator. Welcome to this month's STEM Corner where you can find a snapshot of what toddlers and preschoolers will be learning in their STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) class!

In April, the Bears, Cubs, Breakers, Oak, Birch, Cedar, Butterflies, Caterpillars, Pollywogs, and Froggies classrooms will keep exploring the natural world around them! We will be building with and observing ice, exploring the different textures of trees and leaves, and experimenting with static electricity. The Red Sox, Maple, and Celtics classrooms will continue their unit on light and shadows by investigating how the sun's light gets to the earth and helping hibernating animals build their shelters. The Bruins and Patriots classrooms will finish their exploration of animals by filtering polluted water for ocean critters and creating spider webs. They will then move on to their Growing and Changing unit, where we will build fruit trees, explore what causes rain to fall, and revisit our in-house robot named Kibo.

As we enter Spring, asking your child questions about the changing world around them is a great way to encourage STEM at home! What new colors do you see- where do you see them? What sounds do you hear- what do you think is making them? What does the weather feel like- does it feel different from how it felt in the winter? What do you notice when we are outside? Your child can answer these questions by using their observational skills- not only will this inspire conversation, but also build your child's confidence as a young scientist!



Important info needed: **Boston Public Schools Registration**

As BPS assignments come out, please send us an update.

Current K1 Students- Please let Aiyauna and Yaskara know what school your child will be attending for K2 in the fall, as we need to report this info to BPS.

K0 and K1 Students for School Yr. 2025-2026 if your child was accepted into BPS, Charter, or attending another private school and not returning to Ellis for next school year please let me Claire know as soon as possible so we can assign students that are on our waitlist to attend Ellis.

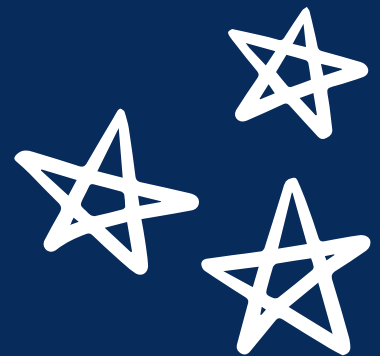
Also, if your child will not be attending Ellis for the summer, please let us know when their last day will be.

Children staying at Ellis for the summer are welcome to stay at Ellis till August 28th. BPS starts for K0, K1 and K2 on Sept. 8th.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions,

Claire

[cmcnally@ellisearlylearning.org](mailto:cmcnally@ellisearlylearning.org)



[South End April Menu](#)

[South End April Vegan/Vegetarian/Allergy Menu](#)

[JP April Menu](#)

[JP April Vegan/Vegetarian/Allergy Menu](#)



## Week of the Young Child- April 5-11

Join us as we celebrate the Week of the Young Child! This special week shines a spotlight on the needs of young children and their families, and honors the amazing programs and services that support them every day.

Here's how we'll be celebrating:

🎵 Monday – Musical Monday

We'll explore the joy of music with songs, instruments, and rhythm-filled activities!

🍏 Tuesday – Tasty Tuesday

A fun, delicious day focused on healthy eating and cooking with children.

👥 Wednesday – Working Together Wednesday

Our Preschool Rooms will join with programs across the city for a lively Flash Mob celebration of community and collaboration!

🎨 Thursday – Artsy Thursday

Children will explore a variety of art materials and express their imagination.

👪 Friday – Family Friday

Celebrate families with us! Join us for a Family Walk from 4:00 to 5:00 PM — let's walk, talk, and enjoy time together.

### Dates to Remember

April 17- Grands Day JP

April 18- Grands Day South End

April 18 -Teacher Appreciation- Ellis Closes at 3PM

April 21- Patriot's Day Ellis Closed

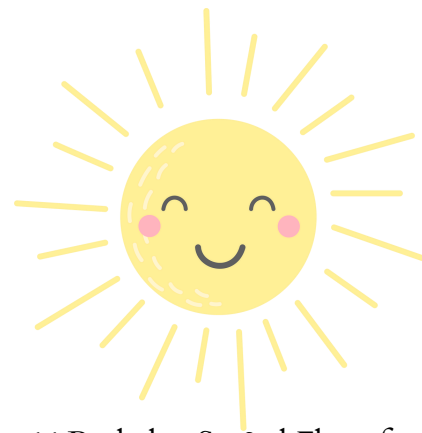
April 23- BPS Child Find Screening

April 25- 5-6 PM Parent & Child Workshop- Power of Play 66 Berkeley St. 3rd Floor for all programs

April 29th and 30th – Ellis Clothing Swap- South End

April 30-May 1- Ellis Clothing Swap- JP

May 1- Ellis Spring Social





## March Birthdays

Wyatt 4/12 Zy'meire 4/18  
 Dorothy 4/1 Joey 4/13 Silvia 4/19  
 Joshua 4/1 Solina 4/13 Amara 4/24  
 Teddy 4/1 August G. 4/14 Dean 4/24  
 Louis 4/2 Kirs'Siah 4/14 Apollo 4/27  
 Nathaniel 4/2 Kayden 4/15 Frantz 4/27  
 Layla B. 4/5 Wesley 4/15 Leo 4/27  
 Layla L 4/6 Keirlyn 4/16 Germina 4/28  
 Ani 4/10 Mattias 4/17 Olivia 4/28

## March Anniversaries

Ms. Andrea 4/18  
 Ms. Melida 4/25  
 Ms. Cherish 4/25  
 Ms. Shirley 4/26  
 Ms. Ivone 4/30

With a focus on equity and accessibility, Ellis does not permit outside food to be served at Ellis. Birthdays will be celebrated with joy and merriment.



## NEC Corner

Hello Ellis Families!

Please save the date for New England Conservatory's Preparatory School (NEC Prep) Open House on Saturday, April 12. We invite you to join this exciting family day of demo classes, performances and open orchestra rehearsals. We'll be featuring free early childhood activities for families throughout the day, including parent/child classes with ME, Mr. Phil! We hope you're able to join us on campus for a day of musical fun. If you would like to learn more about NEC Prep, please visit <https://necmusic.edu/expanded-education/nec-prep/>.

Musically yours,

“Mr. Phil” Berman

*New England Conservatory Early Childhood Pilot Program Coordinator & Lead Teacher*

## Staff Highlights

A Round of Applause for Our Incredible Team!

🎉 Congratulations to Cherish, our amazing South End Social Worker and Family Engagement Coordinator, for being awarded the 2025 “Exceptional Family Navigator” by Neighborhood Villages! Your unwavering dedication to supporting families and strengthening our community is truly inspiring. We're so proud of you!

🌟 Kudos to Exavier, Red Sox Teacher, for sharing his powerful apprenticeship journey with the House of Representatives during this month's State House Advocacy Event. Your passion for Early Childhood Education and the YMCA Apprenticeship Program left a lasting impact—thank you for representing our mission with such enthusiasm and heart. Great work, Exavier!

👏 And a huge shout-out to Yessika, who recently participated in a SNAP advocacy opportunity with Senator Markey, speaking out as both a mother and an educator. Your voice and lived experience are vital in shaping policies that support families and children. Thank you for your powerful advocacy!



Ellis Early Learning Families  
are invited to



# New England Conservatory's NEC Prep Spring Open House!

## Saturday, April 12, 2025

9:00 am-6:00 pm

255 St. Botolph St. Boston



9:00 am-12:00 pm:

**Special Early Childhood Programming**  
including Sample Music & Movement Classes  
with our very own Mr. Phil!



Plus an Instrument Petting Zoo and Musical Crafts!

Pop-Up Performances!

Musical excitement all day!



See orchestras up close  
in open rehearsals!



Scan for  
Open House  
Info!

For information on fall early childhood  
classes and financial aid opportunities,  
please contact Vanessa Trien, Director of  
Early Childhood,  
at [vanessa.trien@necmusic.edu](mailto:vanessa.trien@necmusic.edu).







# NEC Prep Spring Open House!

## Saturday, April 12, 2025



You are invited! Come join New England Conservatory's Preparatory School for a day of musical exploration! Demo classes, performances, open orchestra rehearsals & more. See below for a sample of the day's exciting programming!

<b>Come See!</b> Sample classes for ages 4-12		<b>Come Play!</b> Early Childhood Demo Classes, Instrument Petting Zoo & Crafts	
9:00-9:50	<b>Musical Explorers</b> A journey into music! (4-7)	9:00-12:00 (ongoing)	<b>Instrument Petting Zoo and Musical Crafts!</b> Meet violins, flutes, drums & more! Make a conductor's baton, penguin puppets & instruments! (all ages)
9:00-10:00	<b>Dalcroze Eurhythmics</b> Music through movement (6-12)	9:30-9:55	<b>Music &amp; Movement for Little Penguins</b> Music & movement demo class for littles & caregivers with Phil Berman (Mr. Phil) (0-3)
9:15-10:00	<b>Pre-Twinkle Violin</b> Sample a beginner violin group class! (5-6)	10:00-10:25	<b>Meet the Conductor, Be the Conductor!</b> Learn the art of conducting with NEC Prep's Director of Orchestras, Juliano Dutra Aniceto (all ages)
9:15-10:00	<b>Pre-Twinkle Cello</b> Sample a beginner cello group class (5-6)	10:30-10:55	<b>Music &amp; Movement for Little Penguins</b> Music & movement demo class for littles & caregivers with Phil Berman (Mr. Phil) (0-3)
11:00-12:00	<b>Dalcroze Eurhythmics</b> Music through movement (8-10)	11:00-11:25	<b>Twinklegarten / Suzuki Early Childhood Education</b> Music & movement demo class by Suzuki faculty Rachel Fabulich (0-5)
11:15-12:00	<b>Suzuki Brass André Ensemble</b> Sample a group brass class! (4-10)	11:30-12:00	<b>Music &amp; Movement for Little Penguins / Musical Explorers</b> Music & movement demo class with Vanessa Trien (0-6)
		12:00-12:30	<b>Dalcroze Eurhythmics</b> Experience music through movement in this demo class with Arthur Simoes (6-9)

Events will take place at NEC's Student Life and Performance Center, 255 St. Botolph St. Boston.  
For more info about NEC Prep's Open House, scan this QR code.  
To learn more about Early Childhood classes at NEC Prep, please contact  
Vanessa Trien, Director of Early Childhood, at [vanessa.trien@necmusic.edu](mailto:vanessa.trien@necmusic.edu).



## Family Resources

**Positive Behavior Support (PBS) at Home Series** by Liz Muscolino, M.Ed., EdS UPK Behavioral Health Services Liaison

### **What Is Positive Behavior Support (PBS) and why should I care?**

Positive Behavior support, or PBS, is an approach to interacting with children that has been shown to improve child behaviors and adult feelings of well-being. All behavior is communication. When we acknowledge our child's behavior, even behaviors like tantruming, as communication, we can move away from snap judgements and knee-jerk reactions and start to use every situation, no matter how unpleasant, as an opportunity to support a "child's capacity to love, trust, explore and learn". Although most parents (91% from a large, diverse sample) find parenting to be a source of great joy, they also report having many questions about child-rearing practices. PBS, Responsive Caregiving, and Positive Parenting can offer some answers on the journey of parenthood. Each month in this year's family newsletter, we will share, review, and provide examples of one of the nine key elements of Positive Parenting.

Watch this 5-minute video <https://vimeo.com/136542836> from Zero-To-Three about Positive Parenting.

The full original article can be found here - <https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/nine-elements-that-power-positive-parenting/>.

### **Notice and celebrate your child's strengths, abilities, and capacity to learn and develop**

Element description: This element of Positive Parenting is all about taking moments to notice who your child really is and celebrate whatever you find. Is your child someone who boldly explores new places and gets into everything? Is your child someone who likes to stay close to familiar people until he gets comfortable? There are lots of qualities that may be easy to celebrate. It may be easy to celebrate that your child is curious with toys or sensitive to the feelings of others. There are also lots of qualities that may be difficult to find a positive perspective on. No matter what qualities we see when we make observations about our children, we can find something positive to celebrate. Celebrating who our children are can be a great opportunity to stretch our creative muscles.

Ideas for using this in everyday moments: Notice that your child bosses other children around? A positive perspective may be that they are a natural leader. Notice that your child cries a lot? A positive perspective may be that they are really expressing how they feel! Notice that your child touches everything? A positive perspective may be that she is curious about how things work.

**Additional Resources:** If you want to learn more about noticing children's behavior and celebrating what you find, check out this free 30-minute webinar from Conscious Discipline on perception and attention - Tools for Your Parenting Toolbox <https://consciousdiscipline.com/e-learning/webinars/tools-for-your-parenting-tool-box/>.

This school year, Ellis is continuing its partnership with The Housman Institute, an early childhood education training, professional development, curriculum, and research organization that promotes the development of emotional intelligence from birth.

In this partnership, our staff will be a part of the research-based begin to ECSEL (Emotional, Cognitive, and Social Early Learning) Educator Training Program. Teachers and administrators will take courses and work with Housman Institute Coaches to teach children how to effectively identify, understand, express, and regulate their big emotions.



The program teaches educators and children to:

- Understand the cause and effect of emotions
- Develop empathy and prosocial skills
- Gain problem-solving and conflict resolution skills to support healthy development, emotional well-being, and academic success

You, as your child's first teacher, will be working together with their classroom teachers to ensure collaborative communication continues in the best interest of your child's ongoing growth and development.



Throughout the year, our team will complete ECSEL courses and receive ongoing support and feedback from ECSEL coaches. We will utilize ECSEL language, tools, and techniques in our classrooms with your children. We will continue to provide families with updates and additional information in the coming weeks.

We are so excited to see the impact that this program will have on children, classrooms, staff, families, and on the Ellis community!

