

April 2023



SAINT CATHERINE CENTER FOR *Special Needs*

Coming Out of Our Shells

In partnership with a local organization, Rent The Chicken, Sr. Marilyn's classroom hosted a month long, hands-on science project for the entire school. Several fertilized eggs were provided along with an incubator and all the equipment necessary to hatch and care for live chicks in the classroom.

Over the course of the month, classes drew pictures and learned about the lifecycle to prepare for the chicks' arrival. After the first week in the incubator, the chicks were monitored through a process called "candling," where a bright light is held up to the egg showed the development of the embryo. Students could see the beginning of development in the eggs with the light revealing veins and a dark mass moving within the shell.

After 22 days, the students arrived to school and were met with the surprise of all the chicks hatched and out of their shells. They remained in the incubator for 24 hours to dry off and stay warm. When the baby chicks were ready, the classes gathered to set up an enclosure with wooden shavings, food, and water for the hatchlings. There was also a special heater provided for the chicks to rest and stay warm. Over the following week, classrooms cared for the hatchlings by feeding them, replacing the water and cleaning the cage.

Each student had a chance to hold or pet one of the baby chicks. "Over the course of the month it was wonderful to see the students come out of their shells by caring for and checking in on the chicks. They were able to make a connection to the lifecycle process by not only seeing it but touching and really being a part of caring for hatchlings," said Eric Spencer, Principal.





Building Friendships through Sharing

At Saint Catherine Center, everything we do is rooted in love and caring for others. "In a nurturing community, sharing is an essential social skill to build healthy, strong relationships and contribute to the well-being and happiness of everyone," explains Richard Silva, Team 1 leader in the Adult Program. Sharing ties into every aspect of our mission from growing interpersonal relationships, to respecting each person, and creating a sense of belonging, hope and joy.

One afternoon during recess, **Fabricio**, **Vinny** and **Philip** were playing soccer together and kicking the ball to each other when they notice **Izzy** watching from the corner of the gym. They all stopped playing and Vinny picked up the ball and brought it over to Izzy to include him in the game. Fabricio supportively held Izzy's hand as Vinny pointed and directed him to the ball. Philip patiently encouraged "kick it to me, Izzy." Including others exemplifies thinking outside of oneself and is one of the many ways we practice showing love and kindness.

Everywhere **Luke** goes, his favorite books are close by. While sitting in class and reading along, Luke stops, gets up from his desk and walks over to **Melissa** to share one of his favorite stories with her. Initiating social contact is a new skill that Luke is developing through sharing his love of his books.

Acts of kindness no matter what size are always extraordinary because they create bonding that leaves lasting friendships. Showing we care through small acts of kindness is what friendship is all about at Saint Catherine Center. From a friendly smile to a heartwarming hug, caring for each other is at the forefront of our mission and carried out in ways both big and small every day.



Save the Date

Sip & Shop

Join us with hostesses Laura Grozier (Staff), Kathy Olsen (Board Member), Karen Palilla and Lori Whitney (Parents) for sips and shopping in support of Saint Catherine Center for Special Needs.

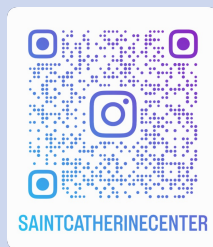


WENDESDAY, MAY 3rd
4:00- 7:00PM

J.McLAUGHLIN
1020 Post Road Darien, CT

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