

OTR NEWSLETTER

March 2026



March is full of fun, learning, and seasonal excitement! We'll kick off the month celebrating Dr. Seuss Week with silly stories, rhyming fun, and imaginative activities inspired by our favorite books. As we explore Fruits, Vegetables, and Nutrition, children will learn about healthy choices and how food helps our bodies grow strong. We'll also enjoy a bit of magic with Little Leprechauns and St. Patrick's Day activities filled with rainbows, gold, and playful mischief. As spring arrives, we'll discover the wonders of the season through lessons on life cycles, changing weather, and new beginnings. To wrap up the month, we'll hop into learning about bunnies and Easter with hands-on crafts and themed activities that celebrate the joy of springtime!

Reminders

Please make sure to check your child(ren) in and out each day with Brightwheel. Thank you for your help with this!

Upcoming Events

- Pancake Day: March 4
- Cheese Doodle Day: March 5
- Wear Purple Day: March 26
- Easter Bunny Visits Hamden:
March 30
- National Crayon Day: March 31
- Easter Bunny Visits Cheshire:
April 2

OTR celebrations

March 2026



Cheshire Birthdays

Miss Elliana 3/7
Henry 3/11
Miss Torri 3/11
Olivia P. 3/15
Riley S. 3/23

Hamden Birthdays

Cormac 3/8
Miss Annliz 3/10
Aleigha 3/17
Coi-Aminah 3/31

Work Anniversaries

Miss Jasmyn celebrating 4 years at our Cheshire center on 3/7
Miss Tammy celebrating 8 years at our Cheshire center on 3/8

CHESHIRE HAPPENINGS

March 2026



Infants

Our infants are busy exploring their surroundings through hands-on sensory experiences that support their natural curiosity and development.

They are also beginning to practice simple sign language, including “more,” “all done,” “mom,” and “dad,” helping them build early communication skills and express their needs in meaningful ways.

Waddlers

March is an exciting month in our Waddler classroom filled with hands-on fun and learning! We will celebrate Dr. Seuss by reading silly favorites like One Fish, Two Fish and enjoying a colorful “One Fish, Two Fish” themed activity to build early counting and color recognition skills. As we explore healthy habits, children will participate in a fun Fruit Hopscotch game to get their bodies moving while learning about nutritious foods, and create a sweet handprint carrot patch craft. For St. Patrick’s Day, we’ll make an adorable paper plate leprechaun and enjoy a festive green Jello sensory activity. As spring arrives, we’ll learn about life cycles by creating a chicken hatching craft and talking about baby animals. We’ll wrap up the month with a fun Easter egg hunt to celebrate all the excitement that spring brings

Toddler 1

We’ll kick off the month by reading beloved stories by Dr. Seuss during circle time, encouraging language development and early literacy skills. During our nutrition week, students will discuss fruits and vegetables and participate in sorting games to build early math and classification skills.

In the third week, children will get creative as they design and make their own leprechaun hats while learning about St. Patrick’s Day traditions. As we welcome spring, students will strengthen their fine motor skills by painting bright and cheerful spring chickens. During the final week of March, children will use markers to color pasta, then incorporate it with bunnies and eggs in a sensory bin for imaginative play and tactile exploration. It’s going to be a busy and exciting month!

Toddler 2

We’ll begin the month celebrating Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss with a themed sensory bin that encourages exploration and imaginative play.

During Fruits and Veggies Week, children will participate in a colorful sorting activity using a variety of vegetables to build early math, color recognition, and categorization skills. In the third week, we’ll celebrate with a festive St. Patrick’s Day party filled with fun activities and classroom excitement.

As we welcome spring, students will create adorable chicken crafts using feathers, strengthening their fine motor skills and creativity. To wrap up the month, children will make a fun Peeps stamp craft, exploring patterns and painting in a playful, hands-on way. It’s going to be a cheerful and creative March!

CHESHIRE HAPPENINGS

March 2026



Toddler 3

We'll start the month by bringing the whimsical world of The Lorax to life, making a Truffula Tree out of pool noodles and exploring the sensory magic of Oobleck.

During Nutrition Week, children will practice healthy habits by helping make a simple, delicious snack together. For St. Patrick's Week, students will use problem-solving and creativity to build a leprechaun trap and participate in a gold scavenger hunt around the classroom.

As spring blooms, we'll create a grass house using real grass, combining sensory exploration with a lesson on growth and nature. To close out March, children will enjoy an Easter egg hunt and a bunny color-matching activity, reinforcing colors, fine motor skills, and festive fun.

Preschool

March in Preschool is full of imagination, creativity, and active learning! We'll kick off the month with Truffula Tree art, slime, and fun Dr. Seuss-inspired games that spark creativity and early literacy skills.

During Fruits and Veggies Week, children will explore healthy habits through fitness-focused dramatic play while learning about nutrition. For St. Patrick's Week, students will build leprechaun traps and enjoy a colorful rainbow sensory activity that encourages exploration and fine motor skills.

As spring arrives, children will participate in a nature-themed scavenger hunt, then wrap up the month with Bunny and Egg art and a festive Easter egg hunt, combining creativity, hands-on learning, and seasonal fun!

Pre-K

We'll begin by diving into the world of Dr. Seuss, learning about rhyming and making our own Thing 1 and Thing 2 characters to spark imagination and literacy skills.

During Fruits and Veggies Week, children will make a fresh salad while learning where fruits and vegetables come from, promoting healthy habits and early science understanding. For St. Patrick's Week, students will get crafty by making a leprechaun trap and building their own leprechaun, practicing problem-solving and fine motor skills.

As spring arrives, we'll explore the life cycle of chickens and the changing seasons through a hands-on chicken craft. To close out the month, children will build a bunny and create festive Easter shakers, combining creativity, music, and seasonal fun!

CHESHIRE SPOTLIGHTS

March 2026

The Skartsilas Family

The Skartsilas family loves celebrating the holidays together, with their favorite being Christmas—they especially enjoy seeing Christmas lights and hosting festive gatherings for their big blended family each year. Some of their favorite family activities include going for walks along the beach boardwalk and watching football together.

When it comes to food, pizza is a family favorite, especially New Haven-style pizza! One of their most cherished memories is riding The Polar Express on the Essex train with the whole family.

They share their home with Cody, a lovable bulldog-beagle mix who will turn 13 in April.

Kostas keeps him young and playful!

The Skartsilas family is a vibrant blend of Greek and African American heritage, and they look forward to visiting Greece soon to spend more time with extended family. They are also big Green Bay Packers fans, which, along with their blended family traditions, makes them truly unique. Fun fact: Mom and Dad got engaged at Lambeau Field in Wisconsin!

Some of their favorite family activities include watching Aladdin, exploring the Science Center in Hartford, visiting Trader Joe's, and spending time anywhere with grandparents.



Miss Jaylin

Miss Jaylin is our amazing Toddler 2 Assistant Teacher at Cheshire! She truly embodies all of our core values and brings warmth, patience, and creativity to the classroom every day.

Miss Jaylin does an excellent job implementing our enrichment program in the afternoons, and she especially loves doing art with the children, always coming up with creative and engaging ideas. She is always willing to lend a helping hand, no matter the task, and her loving and kind nature makes her an incredible part of our team.

We are so grateful for Miss Jaylin's dedication, hard work, and the positive impact she has on our students each day!

Hamden HAPPENINGS

March 2026



Infants

Our infants are busy exploring their surroundings through hands-on sensory experiences that support their natural curiosity and development.

They are also beginning to practice simple sign language, including “more,” “all done,” “mom,” and “dad,” helping them build early communication skills and express their needs in meaningful ways.

Waddler 1

March in Waddler 1 is full of fun, hands-on learning and creative activities! We’ll start the month with The Cat in the Hat-inspired activities and art, encouraging imagination and early literacy skills. During Nutrition Week, children will make handprint apples while learning about healthy foods.

For St. Patrick’s Week, students will get crafty by creating their own leprechaun hats. As spring arrives, children will paint and assemble paper plate chickens, exploring fine motor skills and creativity. We’ll wrap up the month with soft and fluffy cotton ball bunnies, perfect for a festive and tactile spring activity!

Waddler 2

March in Waddler 2 is full of creativity, sensory fun, and seasonal learning! We’ll start the month with handprint Thing 1 and Thing 2 crafts and fork-painted Lorax art, bringing Dr. Seuss’s stories to life.

During Fruits and Veggies Week, children will make a vegetable garden craft and a paper avocado craft to explore healthy foods and early science concepts. For St. Patrick’s Week, we’ll create a pot of gold handprint craft to celebrate the holiday.

As spring arrives, students will craft baby chicks in eggs and handprint chicks, then explore Bunny footprints and make Easter cards to wrap up the month with festive, hands-on fun!

Toddler 1

We’ll start the month with a bubble wrap activity to explore textures and a paper plate salad craft, followed by a blind taste test to encourage trying new fruits and vegetables.

For St. Patrick’s Week, children will create leprechauns using fork painting, combining creativity with fine motor skill practice. As spring arrives, we’ll enjoy a lively Spring Freeze Dance to get moving, then make bunnies using dot markers and finish the month with a Bunny Color Hop activity, combining colors, movement, and festive fun!

Hamden HAPPENINGS

March 2026



Toddler 2

March in Toddler 2 is full of creative, hands-on activities and seasonal fun! We'll start the month with a Put Me in the Zoo craft using bingo dotters to explore colors and patterns, followed by a paper garden craft to celebrate healthy foods and springtime growth.

For St. Patrick's Week, children will make leprechaun handprints, combining creativity with fine motor skill practice. During spring, we'll create chicks using fork painting, then move on to bunnies with a paper strip craft and tissue paper bunny crafts, giving children plenty of opportunities for tactile exploration and festive fun!

Toddler 3

We'll kick off the month with The Cat in the Hat art and matching games, encouraging early literacy, color recognition, and pattern skills.

During Fruits and Veggies Week, children will explore healthy foods by making their own fruit trays. For St. Patrick's Week, students will create leprechaun beards and enjoy a colorful rainbow activity to build fine motor skills and creativity.

As spring arrives, children will engage in sensory chicken feather play and a fun chicken waddle race, then finish the month with cotton ball bunnies and a Bunny Hop race, combining movement, imagination, and festive fun!

Preschool/Pre-K

March in Preschool and Pre-K is full of creativity, literacy, and hands-on learning! We'll begin with rhyming word activities and designing our own silly hats inspired by Dr. Seuss, encouraging language development and imaginative expression.

During Fruits and Veggies Week, children will engage in pretend play at a grocery store and create a rainbow food collage to learn about healthy foods. For St. Patrick's Week, students will explore marble painting shamrocks and handprint rainbows, combining fine motor skills with festive creativity.

As spring unfolds, children will make a weather collage and experiment with painting using ice cubes. For Easter, we'll focus on sight word egg hunts, shaving cream egg activities, reading Easter stories, and exploring Easter-related vocabulary, blending literacy, sensory play, and seasonal fun!

Hamden SPOTLIGHTS

March 2026

The Arrington Family

The Arrington family loves Christmas and the joy of celebrating the holiday together. Some of their favorite family activities include going on day trips and attending church together.

When it comes to food, the family enjoys waffles and ziti, and one of their most cherished memories is taking their first flight together as a family. They are a unique and vibrant blended family, and two family members are talented dancers!

The Arrington's are African American, and some of their favorite family pastimes include watching the movie Frozen and traveling to Georgia.



Miss Camille

Miss Camille is one of our amazing certified closers at Hamden! She does a fantastic job running the center in the late afternoons, always making sure everything runs smoothly and that her co-workers are supported and able to leave on time.

With over three years with OTR, Miss Camille knows all of our kids and families, and she consistently demonstrates our core values of family and kindness. She is always willing to help wherever needed, and her dedication and care make her an invaluable part of our team. Thank you, Miss Camille, for all that you do!

NOURISHING MOMENTS

March 2026



Ingredients (serves 4-6)

- 1 pre-made pizza crust (or homemade if preferred)
- 1/2 cup pizza sauce
- 1 1/2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- Rainbow vegetable toppings:
 - Red: cherry tomatoes or red bell peppers
 - Orange: sliced carrots or orange bell peppers
 - Yellow: yellow bell peppers or corn
 - Green: spinach, broccoli, or green bell peppers
 - Blue/Purple: purple onions, purple cabbage, or eggplant

Optional extras:

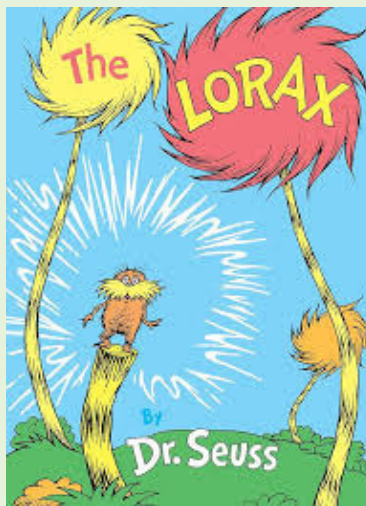
- Italian seasoning or dried oregano
- Olive oil for brushing the crust

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. Prepare the crust: Place your pizza crust on a baking sheet or pizza stone. Optionally brush the edges with olive oil.
3. Add the sauce: Spread pizza sauce evenly over the crust, leaving a small border for the crust.
4. Add the cheese: Sprinkle shredded mozzarella evenly over the sauce.
5. Arrange the veggies: Create a rainbow pattern with your chosen vegetables—start with red on one side and work through orange, yellow, green, and purple. Encourage kids to help place the veggies in color order!
6. Season: Sprinkle with Italian seasoning or oregano if desired.
7. Bake: Place the pizza in the oven for 12–15 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and bubbly and the crust is golden brown.
8. Cool & slice: Let the pizza cool for a few minutes before slicing and serving.

LITERacy RainBOW

March 2026



🌿 March Family Fun with The Lorax!

This month, we're exploring the whimsical world of *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss! Families can enjoy reading together and using the story to spark creativity and learning.

At Home Activities:

- **Truffula Tree Art:** Use paper, tissue, or even pool noodles to make your own colorful Truffula Trees. Encourage your child to add details like tufts and "tree trunks."
- **Oobleck Sensory Play:** Mix cornstarch and water to create a fun, squishy "Oobleck" to explore textures and science.
- **Nature Walk:** Go outside and spot trees, leaves, and flowers. Talk about ways to care for nature, just like the Lorax!
- **Story Discussion:** Ask your child, "Who speaks for the trees?" and "What can we do to help the environment?" to encourage thoughtful conversation.

Why We Love The Lorax:

- Teaches kids about caring for the planet.
- Sparks imagination with bright, whimsical characters.
- Encourages conversation and creativity through hands-on activities.

Reading *The Lorax* together is a fun way to connect, learn, and celebrate the magic of March and springtime!

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

March 2026

March Family Fun: Spring Nature Scavenger Hunt!



Celebrate the arrival of spring with a fun family nature scavenger hunt! Head outdoors together and explore the sights, sounds, and textures of the season.

How to Play:

- **Make a simple checklist of items to find, such as: a budding flower, a green leaf, a smooth rock, a stick shaped like a letter, or signs of animals like birds or squirrels.**
- **Bring a basket or bag to safely collect treasures like leaves or rocks.**
- **Encourage kids to draw or color anything they find interesting.**
- **Ask questions about what you see and talk about how plants and animals change in spring.**

Fun Twist: Turn it into a Rainbow Scavenger Hunt by trying to find items in red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple, connecting the activity to St. Patrick's Day and Fruits & Veggies Week! 🌈

This is a simple, hands-on way for families to explore nature, spend time together, and celebrate March and the start of spring!

OTR BLOG

March 2026



Parents know their children better than anyone else. The favorite snack, the bedtime stall tactics, and the laughter that fills the house. But in the classroom, teachers see another side. When children step into a world of peers, structure, and independence, their personalities unfold in new and surprising ways.

Teachers spend their days quietly observing, noticing how children solve problems, interact with others, and respond to change. They see the patterns that reveal growth, resilience, and hidden strengths. These aren't things parents overlook; they're simply moments that show up in different settings. Here are ten of those small but meaningful things teachers often notice:

1. The Difference Between Shyness and Observation

2. Empathy in Action

3. Handling Frustration and Bouncing Back

4. The Quiet Leader

5. Focus in a World Full of Distractions

6. How Movement Fuels Learning

7. Comfort with Transitions and Change

8. Managing Big Emotions in Little Bodies

9. The Hidden Side of Creativity

10. Independence and Responsibility

Teachers see the story behind every small moment. The spark of empathy, the pride in independence, the quiet confidence that comes from trying something new. Those details are what shape who a child becomes.

When parents and teachers share what they're noticing, children get the best of both worlds, the warmth of home and the wisdom of the classroom. Growth doesn't always happen in big leaps; often, it's hidden in the little things that add up to something wonderful.

That's what teachers see every day. The quiet pride that comes from learning to do hard things, and the joy of watching it click.

OTR Referral

March 2026



AT OVER THE RAINBOW Learning center we LOVE AND APPRECIATE each and every one of our families. We are HONORED you CHOOSE to recommend our center to your family and friends day after day. AS a way to say "THANK YOU" we are OFFERING a referral program to reward our EXISTING STUDENTS and families. For every FULL-TIME new family referral, who registers in our Learning center and is enrolled for 90 days, you WILL receive a free week's TUITION APPLIED TO your account. Referred families MUST TELL US THAT they were referred and BY WHOM DURING their tour.

