

Attraction

The Good News Magazine since 1979

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Critchlow Adkins Celebrates Waterfowl

As Easton prepares for the 50th annual Waterfowl Festival, Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers (CACC) is also celebrating its 50th anniversary right alongside them. For 50 years, we have seen the Waterfowl Festival capture the imagination of our children and inspire them to learn about the wildlife that surrounds us here on the beautiful Eastern Shore.

Critchlow Adkins strives to provide enriching learning experiences for our children, whether they are in preschool programs, before- and after-school care, or summer camps. STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) activities are designed to incorporate critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity through play. In honor of the 50th anniversary of the Waterfowl Festival, CACC-enrolled children recently enjoyed participating in Waterfowl-related STEAM activities. The activities are shared here so that all families can do them at home together.

Whirly Twirly Flying Birds

The younger children at the CACC sites had a ton of fun participating in this first activity. With "Whirly Twirly Flying Birds," children will learn about the two things that birds need to make themselves fly: lift and thrust. Supplies needed: 11" balloons, Clear tape,

Feathers, Clothespins, Sharpie Marker. Blow up the balloon, twist the end, and close it off with a clothespin. Then, your child can use the Sharpie to draw a face for their bird, and select two feathers for each wing, which they will tape on either side of the balloon. Now comes the fun part - just unclip the balloon and toss it into the air to see how it flies.

There may be some trial and error involved to get the "bird" to fly just right. This is a wonderful opportunity to ask questions that will get your child thinking like an engineer.



Making a cool Whirly Twirly Flying Bird.

Which works best? How many feathers does it take to make the bird too heavy to fly? What type of release gives the bird the most lift?

This project was very popular, and it incorporates science, engineering, art

and, most importantly, fun. Children will want to fly his or her Whirly Twirly Flying Bird over and over again.

Make Your Own Duck Call

This is another simple, fun, and educational project for younger children. All you need is a plastic drinking straw and some scissors. With "Make Your Own Duck Call," your child will learn about how sound comes from vibrations. The vibrations that their breath creates on the ends of the straw will make a duck-like sound. Here's how it works: Have your child use his/her fingers to flatten one end of the straw - the flatter the better. Then, cut the flat end of the straw into a point. Take another moment to flatten it out again, and you are all set. Now have your child take a deep breath and blow into the straw. It should make a strange, quacking sound.

This is another great opportunity to incorporate engineering and critical thought. Have your child cut the straw to different sizes, or even add another straw to the end to make it longer and note how the sound changes. Here are some questions you can ask to engage your child in the experiment: Which size of straw sounds most like a duck? Which length of straw is the easiest to get a sound out of? Which is the most difficult? Does the diameter of the straw affect the sound it makes? Happy duck calling!

Goose Flight Patterns and Navigation

This final STEAM activity was created for school aged children by Program Director, Amy Michels. This activity is designed to teach kids about air pressure and navigation. Have your child read the book, *Toulouse, the Story of a Canada Goose*, by Priscilla Cummings. Then, have your child place a piece of paper on a table in front of

them and blow on it, and ask them to describe what happens. Explain that the paper rises because of the difference in air pressure above and below the paper, and that birds use their wings to move through this air pressure.

Next, talk about how geese fly south from Canada later in the year to escape the cold winters up north. Pull up a map on your computer and have your child point out the flight path that the geese might have to take to get from Canada to the Eastern Shore.

Have a discussion with your child about all of the things that the geese need to be careful to avoid on their journey so that they can arrive safely (airplanes, power lines, etc.) - and identify challenges they might encounter that could lower their visibility and make it difficult to see these obstacles (snowstorms, nighttime, etc.). Then, ask your child to design and draw a way to help birds see better so that they can complete their journey safely. If you have art supplies at home, they can even use them to create a prototype of their invention. Then, have them describe their invention to you.

CACC hopes that these projects will enhance your child's experience of this year's Waterfowl Festival and give them a greater understanding of some of the inhabitants of our local environment.

Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers' mission is to provide quality, financially accessible childcare for children and their families in a nurturing, diverse, safe, and enriching environment. To learn more about CACC, enroll your child in these services, or to make a donation, visit cacckids.org or call 410-822-8061. These and other activities can be found at leftbraincraftbrain.com or sciencebob.com.

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