

# Firefly Scientists' Garden



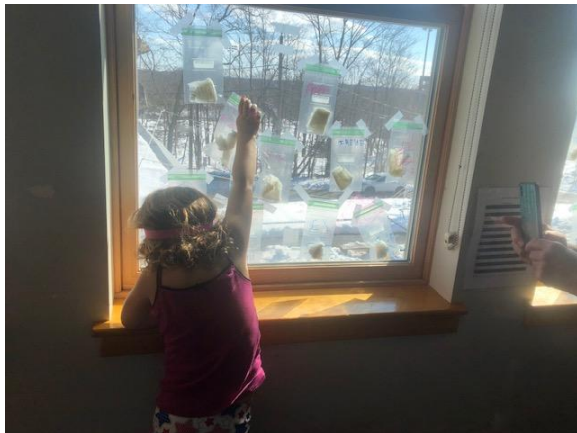
Environmental Education at The Lemberg Children's Center

## MARCH IN THE GARDEN

Spring's gentle hugs are just around the corner, and a sleeping garden is beginning to rouse from its rest. As the day's temperatures rise, so do our spirits for the spring. We are on the lookout for the first signs; the vibrant green of grass, the bursting buds of bulbs, and the colorful flowers.

### Exploring Seeds

As we look forward to the warmer months, we continue our exploration into the life cycle of plants - starting with the seed!



*Making sure the tiny seeds get enough sun!*

Together, we learned about how each seed contains a tiny plant inside. When the seed has access to sunshine, soil, water, and the right temperature, it can send roots down and send shoots with leaves up. We discussed how different creatures eat the fruit that contains

seeds and spread them through their waste. We also talked about how the wind can blow seeds, like those of a dandelion, to different locations.

Investigating the variety of seeds, we examined tiny kale seeds, rough Swiss Chard seeds, and round cilantro seeds using descriptive words to share our observations. We chose which seed we wanted and wrapped them in wet paper towels inside of baggies. We then taped the bags to our classroom window, allowing for the seeds to get some sun. We waited patiently to see them grow!



*"They're so small!"*

### Seeds and Sprouts

After a week of waiting, our window sprouts grew! We continued learning about the life

# Firefly Scientists' Garden



Environmental Education at The Lemberg Children's Center

cycle of plants, focusing on what roots are, and how roots sprout from seeds. We learned how roots help plants stay secure in the ground, absorb nutrients from soil, suck up water, and store energy for future use. We discussed the many different types of roots like those that grow downwards in a thick primary root or those that have many trailing, thin roots.



*"Look how cute they are!"*

After listening and engaging with a story that showed various types of roots, including those we eat like carrots, we transplanted the previous week's sprouted seeds. Together, we put soil into outdoor window planters, sowed our tiny seedlings, and watered the plants. We are excited to see our new plants grow as it continues to warm up.



*Watering our newly planted sprouts*

## Signs of Spring

As the days grew longer and temperatures rose, the garden started to show the tell-tale signs of spring. Together, we read about the wonders of nature, of finding the wild. We then ventured outside to the Firefly garden to find flower buds, birds, insects, and more. In groups, we shared scavenger hunt sheets and used our observation skills to locate everything, exclaiming with joy whenever a flower or bug was to be seen.

# Firefly Scientists' Garden



Environmental Education at The Lemberg Children's Center



*Listening to a story before venturing outside*

We learned how the seasons change and bring different phenomena outside. During spring, every being that was asleep for the winter wakes up and plants start to grow again.



*We found a tiny wildflower!*

## Planting Peas

As we get closer and closer to the last frost of the season, we can begin planting hardier veggies. After reviewing the different parts of plants such as roots, stems, and leaves, we did some weeding and planted some sugar snap pea seeds in the preschool playground beds.



*We looked for worms in the dirt as we planted, too!*

We poked holes into the soil, tucked in the seeds, and talked about how we will be able to watch the sprouts begin to push through the soil over the next few weeks. One student even remarked to their teacher "I'm so happy that it's raining so the seeds we planted in the garden yesterday will get water to grow!"

# Firefly Scientists' Garden



Environmental Education at The Lemberg Children's Center



*Weeding before we plant some peas*

## Terrariums

This month we also learned about ecosystems and water. Through making their own soda bottle terrariums, the Voyagers and Navigators discussed what an ecosystem is, and the things needed to sustain one. We learned about the water cycle, how water recycles through evaporation, transpiration, condensation, and precipitation. Within our miniature worlds we learned how rocks, moss and charcoal can provide a natural filtration system for the water.



*Everyone gathered around to learn about terrarium layers*

The children then filled water bottles with layers of gravel, charcoal, moss and soil. Then they planted small cilantro seeds in the soil layer and placed their terrariums in the greenhouse to watch them grow!

## Toddlers in the Garden

Especially on the warmest days of the months, the Explorers and Adventurers have also enjoyed some time up in the garden. Every week they diligently help feed the worms, and we were even able to have a picnic lunch, so we ate right along with the worms! We are so excited to be able to continue spending more and more time outside, watching the plants grow.

# Firefly Scientists' Garden



Environmental Education at The Lemberg Children's Center



*Enjoying the sunshine during lunch*

## Family Garden Workdays



*Hard at work transferring soil*

With the beginning of the growing season, we are excited to bring back Family Garden Workdays on Saturdays from 9:30 to 11:30 in the morning. We had our first one on Saturday, March 26th! We built a new raised bed next to the swings on the preschool playground, and

put some elbow grease towards cleaning up the playground. The parents were a huge help leveling the ground, assembling the parts of the bed, and filling it with compost. Children were also hard at work shoveling dirt into wheelbarrows and buckets! When the bed was finished, we planted a few wildflower seeds, and will check back for growth at the next garden day.



*Gathering around the bed to plant seeds*

Thank you so much to all of the families that participated; it was a joy not only to share this valuable gardening work, but also to get back to spending time together. The next workdays are as follows: April 23rd, May 14th, and June 4th. If you would like to participate in any of these or have any questions, feel free to contact Sylvia ([skohnlevitt@brandeis.edu](mailto:skohnlevitt@brandeis.edu)), the Environmental Education Associate Director.

# Firefly Scientists' Garden



Environmental Education at The Lemberg Children's Center

## Brandeis Collaborations

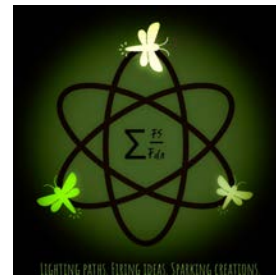
We had the pleasure of collaborating with Brandeis's chapter of the Boston-Area Jewish Education Program for a Purim Pollinator celebration this month. With students dressed as bees and butterflies for their celebration of this holiday, Lemberg staff had the opportunity to join in and teach students about the process of pollination, how valuable pollinators are for the growth of plants, and how we can support them by planting native wildflowers through activities such as planting seed balls. On our [Environmental Education page on Lemberg's Cloud](#), we have a link with instructions on how to create your own seed balls, if you would like to join in!



*Our interns created a beautiful display at the event*

In the month of April, we are looking forward to more collaborations with Brandeis volunteers at the Stanley Elementary School, where we will be continuing to aid in garden upkeep and growing food with students and their families!

## Thank you to our 2022 donors!



**FS Foundation**



**The Feinberg Family**