

ECC Times

February/March 2007

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER AT THE ROCHESTER SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

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February/March 2007

Dear Parents,

It looks like Spring is finally trying to break through! With the recent cold and snow, I don't know about you, but I'm more than ready!

We have quite a bit happening here in ECC as well as in the rest of the school. Please be sure to read the Dates to Remember at the bottom of this newsletter. It should help to keep things straight for you.

Ron Rood, our ASL Teacher has news to share.....

As you probably already know, March is Deaf Awareness Month. There will be a Deaf Studies Fair on March 14th with displays created by RSD students in the LRC. You're welcome to come and take a look! Other related activities include our high school students attending Marie Jean Phillip's ASL poetry competition at Northeast University in Boston during the March 30th weekend. What a wonderful opportunity for these students! This kind of an event is something our young children can look forward to in the future.

A point to pass on by Ron....Did you know that Thomas Edison was Deaf?!

We look forward to again adding children here to our ECC program. Not only do we have children moving from only home-visits to center-based programming, but we have children increasing the number of days they are attending our early childhood center (from 3 days/week to 5 days). In addition, we have some brand new toddlers and pre-schoolers to add to the mix! Our building is busy!! Busy and fun!

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Rochester School for the Deaf 1545 St. Paul Street, Rochester, NY 14621

*The Preeminent Provider of Educational, Developmental and Evaluation Services to Deaf
and Hard-of-Hearing Children and Their Families*

To learn more, please contact us today at 585-336-5807 (Voice) or 585-336-5808 (TTY) or visit our website at www.RSDeaf.org



Mary Jo Birecree, one of our preschool teachers, also has news.....

Miss Birecree's class recently focused on a theme related to Fairy Tales. Some of the fairy tales that were focused on included Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Jack and the Beanstalk, Little Red Riding Hood, The Three Billy Goats Gruff, and the Three Little Pigs. The children participated in many activities related to this theme. Some of the activities were: cooking (bread, cakes, porridge, etc.), making puppets of the different characters, sequencing and re-telling the stories using pictures, and acting out the stories. During ASL time, Ron Rood came into the room and helped us to act out the stories in ASL. He videotaped some of these plays and we plan to show them during the Deaf Studies Fair in March. The class clearly moved along in their development as a result of this "work". They increased their ability to more clearly retell the tales, to note cause and effect, to participate in problem solving when needed and to work together as a team. We hope you'll enjoy our tape!

Again, please note the Dates to Remember below and we hope to see you around campus. Unfortunately we had to cancel our ASL Teacher presentation and our parent training for the Shared Reading Program, but have already trained the tutors who will be visiting your homes. Please look for a flyer home once a re-scheduled date for the ASL Teacher presentation and the Shared Reading parent training has been confirmed. We're anxious (as I bet you are) to share what's happening with ASL in ECC classrooms and to really get moving on the wonderful Shared Reading literacy program.

Dates To Remember:

March:

- 14th-16th.....Deaf Studies Fair
- 16thECC Parent Meeting –
come discover the best toys to help your children develop their skills.
- 22nd-24th..... Academic Bowl at RSD
- 23rd.....Conference Day, No School
- 26th-30th.....RSD Book Fair
- 29thBook Fair Family Night

April:

- 6th Good Friday, school closed
- 9th-13th.....Spring Recess, school closed



Building Respect



Show your preschooler how to show appreciation, respect

A key part of having respect for others, is realizing that they are not there to serve you. If your child is used to getting everything he wants, when he wants it, he is headed for trouble in school and in life. A respectful child appreciates what others do for him and treats others well.

Foster an appreciative, respectful child by:

- * **Demonstrating.** Your child will do what he observes you doing. So show him your appreciation when he's been helpful. Let him overhear you acknowledging others for making an effort or doing a job well.
- * **Making "please" and "thank you" second nature.** Do not respond to, "Where's my snack?" until you hear, "May I have a snack, please?" Insist that your child say "thank you" when someone helps him and sends a note when he gets a gift. At this age he can tell you what to say and you can write it for him.
- * **Taking it easy** on the material goods. Should you buy treats every time you go through the supermarket checkout? Piling on "things" creates a demanding child with a huge sense of entitlement. If you want to reward your child, spend time with him. This teaches him to appreciate people for themselves, not for what they can do for him.

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Building Self-Esteem



Help your child be a confident, mastery-oriented learner

Is your child a master at learning? Or does he feel helpless when learning something new? Some research says children are either "mastery-oriented" or "helpless."

Mastery-oriented children are self-confident. They believe in their abilities and don't worry about being judged.

Helpless children are afraid of looking bad. They're easily frustrated and give up quickly.

When mastery children fail, they want to learn more or work harder. Helpless children believe they can't do it.

To promote mastery in your child:

- * **Help him feel secure.** Let him know you're behind him every step of the way.
- * **Give your child the support** he needs. Ensure he has the tools to succeed in learning new skills.
- * **Let your child know** it's okay to fail. Explain that failures are lessons in how to succeed next time.
- * **Let your child see** you tackling jobs—and sometimes failing—and trying again.
- * **Encourage your child** to try again when he fails. Help him figure out what to do differently.
- * **Note when your child** gets totally frustrated with a task. Steer him toward tasks where he can succeed.

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Building Responsibility



Foster a helpful, responsible spirit in your preschooler

Laying the groundwork for responsibility is so important in preschoolers because it may be the easiest time of all to teach good habits. Young children may not always know how to go about it, but they usually want to please their parents and other adults. They love to *help*—even if what they are doing doesn't seem so helpful to you! Helping makes preschoolers feel needed and important.

Here are some ways to foster that helpful spirit in your child:

- * **Use the word “help”** when you are asking your child to do something. For example, say, “I really need your help with this.” Or, “Can you help the family by picking up your toys in the den?” Now your child feels as though he is making an important and valuable contribution. He's much more likely to follow through this way than he would if he thought you were just giving him an order.
- * **Notice what your child does.** Young children do helpful things every day, but spotting them sometimes requires paying very close attention. Does your child ever pick up something you drop? Open or close a door for another person? Draw a picture for a loved one without being asked? These are all helpful, responsible behaviors. When you notice your child doing something helpful, say, “Thank you! It was helpful when you...”
- * **Work with your child.** It is likely that there are some things your child will want to help with that are not appropriate for his age. These may include cooking or working with certain tools. Try to find a part of the task he *can* help with, alongside you. He could tear lettuce for salad and stir food in a bowl. He could pound a nail (with you guiding his hand) and push a small wheelbarrow.

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Building Self-Esteem



Take actions that will make your preschooler feel loved, valued

Your child enjoys hearing words of praise and love from you. But often it is what you *do*, rather than what you *say*, that makes your child feel best about himself.

Here are some things you can do at home to help your child feel valued:

- * **Display your child's work.** Most preschoolers create lots of art. Designate a spot in your house to hang your child's masterpieces. It could be a special bulletin board or the refrigerator door. Displaying your child's favorite rock or other treasure for a few days also makes him feel as though his interests are important.
- * **Take pictures of your child,** and have others take pictures of the two of you together. Make sure your child has one of them in his room.
- * **Tie gifts** directly to your child's interests. Do not give a gift that suggests he needs to make a change in what he enjoys.
- * **Never forget the gift of time.** Find at least a few minutes each day where your child can sit on your lap and enjoy knowing that you are concentrating only on him.

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Questions & Answers



I haven't always been consistent about getting my daughter to preschool. For example, I have let her stay home when she has been engrossed in her toys or a TV show. I never thought much about it, but recently with the weather getting a bit warmer, she has asked to stay home more so she can play outside. She goes to kindergarten next fall, and I am afraid that I have put a bad habit into motion. What can I do to get my child to want to go to school?

Unfortunately, you are right. Letting your daughter skip preschool, when she is not sick, is not a good message to send. It's best for your child to start kindergarten with the mindset that she'll go to school each day.

In kindergarten, you can expect a much stricter attitude about attendance than you may have seen in preschool. The school will expect an enrolled child to be there, except for illness or a pressing family matter. Your child's absences will be noted and you will probably get a call from the school office if you have not sent in an excuse.

But in the end, absences from school do not cheat the school. They cheat the child. Your child can't learn if she's not there to get instruction.

Please start today to:

- * **Tell your child** you are excited about what she learns at school.
- * **Tell her she will have to go** to school unless she is sick—really sick, not pretend sick.
- * **Aim for perfect attendance**, unless your child is sick, for the rest of the school year.

Good luck! Habits can be hard to break, but ending this one is truly in the best interest of your child.

—Maria Koklanaris, The Parent Institute. Reprinted with permission from the March 2007 issue of Parents make the difference!® (Early Childhood Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2007 The Parent Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc.