

ECC Times

June 2006

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER AT THE ROCHESTER SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

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Dear Parents and Families,

I hope your Memorial Weekend was a good one and your summer off to a good start. ECC had its first annual Memorial Day parade with everyone dressed in red, white and blue and the kids riding away on decorated toy cars, trucks and wagons. What an event! May was a busy month here in ECC and June promises to be even busier! Some upcoming events for June include:

- Donuts with Daddy on Thursday, June 8th
- FIRST field trip to the Rochester Museum and Science Center on Friday, June 16th
- Kindergarten graduation also on June 16th
- ECC's end of the year picnic at Perinton Park on Wednesday, June 21st
- Water Fun day here in ECC on Thursday, June 22nd
- Last day of school for students on Friday, June 23rd.

I'm hoping that as many of you as possible can make it to our Fathers get together on the 8th. Since we had the Mother's Day Tea, we thought it only fair to include an event for our dads. Kindergarten graduation is another event that you are all welcome to attend and promises to be worth your while.

The warmer weather here in Rochester brings with it more outside events for our ECC children. These include field trips as well as just the opportunity to have more outside activities here at school.

In may the T/Th FIRST crew headed to Springdale Farm to see the animals up close and personal. They became familiar with farm animals for a few weeks, playing with their toy farm, matching pictures of animals and reading books about them before the visit. They enjoyed this wonderful learning experience.

(continued on page 2)

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Ms. Shahin's class now has chicken eggs in their incubator that are due to hatch June 5. The students have been learning much about the life cycle and I am amazed by how the Smart board technology enhances these lessons.

The Lyle Crocodile Birthday Party hosted by the same class went off without a hitch. The children all read a story, sang happy birthday and ate cupcakes in honor of author Bernard Waber.

On Friday May 12th, we held our first Mother's Day Tea and it was absolutely wonderful! The children, moms and even a dad or two truly enjoyed themselves, as did the ECC staff. So nice to have such a high level of involvement!

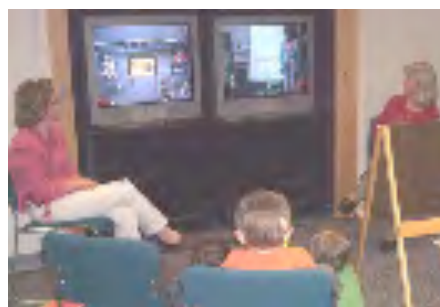
That same afternoon, Ms. Birecree's class was involved with their first videoconference of the year. They connected with another kindergarten class from the Greece School District and it was a great learning experience for all. Please see the picture of this event and of the Lyle party included in this newsletter.

You'll find a copy of Parent and Child Magazine for your enjoyment. I noticed some good articles in this edition including one on family fitness and health and another on the complexities of learning how to read. Other articles included in this newsletter discuss ways of preparing children for Kindergarten, how to boost the brain power of four year olds, "EQ" vs. "IQ", and raising young children to become more independent. Other readings I've elected to include warn parents of excessive TV watching by children, an article outlining summer reading tips and another with summer safety tips.

I've enjoyed this school year and hope you and your child(ren) have also benefited from the hard work of the skilled and talented ECC staff. Enjoy the summer and don't forget that summer school begins on Monday, July 10th.

Sincerely,
Marilyn Curley, Director
Early Childhood Programs

The potential possibilities of any child are the most intriguing and stimulating in all creation. Ray L. Wilbur



Building Social Skills



Nurture emotional intelligence in your child

Some childhood development experts believe that a child's "EQ" (emotional intelligence) is more important than his "IQ." Preschoolers with EQ do better in school—and throughout life.

Emotional intelligence includes self-control and optimism. Listening skills and persistence are also part of a child's EQ. A child with a high EQ is aware of feelings—his own and those of others.

Develop your child's EQ by:

- * **Developing your child's talents.** Look for signs of what he truly enjoys. Identify his natural abilities.
- * **Setting limits** on your child's behavior. Don't give in to his every wish. Avoid harsh discipline, but don't be indifferent.
- * **Letting your child know** you understand and respect his feelings.
- * **Being your child's cheerleader.** Give large doses of approval and encouragement.
- * **Being a good role model.** Let him catch you being optimistic in a difficult situation. Express sympathy over another's misfortune.
- * **Helping your child solve** conflicts. Encourage him to see problems through the eyes of others—and to understand his feelings.

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Building Responsibility



Help your preschooler become independent, more responsible

Establishing a greater degree of independence is an important task for your child in the preschool years. She is moving from the baby and toddler years, when you had to do nearly everything for her, to the school years, when she will be called upon to do many things for herself.

It is an exciting time as your child becomes more independent, but it is also a difficult time. You and your child will celebrate all her new accomplishments, yet it is natural for both of you to feel some sadness. It is bittersweet to realize that although she may always be "your baby," your child will never be a baby again.

Help guide your child to greater independence by:

- * **Encouraging her** each time she does something for herself, such as getting dressed. Say, "I bet you're feeling proud that you got dressed all by yourself."
- * **Breaking more difficult tasks** into parts, instead of rushing in to do them for your child. For example: "That's a big puzzle. Why not find all the edge pieces first? (Show your child how each edge piece has at least one straight side.) Then maybe we can fill in the rest together."
- * **Showing your child** that her needs, wants and opinions are important to you. Ask questions, such as: Which book is your favorite? Would you like to choose what we have for dinner on Sunday? When Mrs. Smith says you can go to centers at preschool, which center do you pick? Why do you like that one?

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Developmental Milestones



How can parents prepare children for kindergarten?

Learning letters and numbers is important. But in a national survey, kindergarten teachers identified other things they believe make a child kindergarten-ready.

A majority said they want children to be well-nourished, rested and willing to take turns. They want students to be able to communicate what they need in words and be curious about new activities.

Kindergartners also need to be able to survive away from loved ones, cope with strangers and crowds, take criticism, work on their own and sit still. They need to follow directions and play well with others, too.

Doing things like these this summer will help:

- * **Take your child on a bus trip** or to the public swimming pool. She'll see that a crowd of strangers can be exciting.
- * **Encourage your child** to concentrate with building blocks, drawing and play dough.
- * **Take your child** to the grocery store. Have her count the change from the cashier.
- * **Play word games** with your child. Ask her to come up with words that rhyme with "cat."
- * **Visit a museum** with your child. View different collections. Encourage her to start collecting something.
- * **Schedule a visit** to the kindergarten school building, if there's not an orientation program. Let your child see the classroom, the bathroom and the playground.

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Building Thinking Skills



Everyday activities boost your four-year-old's brain power

It's hard for parents to escape them—the expensive talking toys, computer games or musical CDs that promise to help your child master reading, become a math whiz or just “get smarter.” They do look tempting! Still, you should know that research shows your child's brain develops best through simple activities you are probably already doing at home.

They include:

- * **Talking** with your child.
- * **Playing with toys** such as blocks, puzzles, dolls and puppets. When your child builds something or makes up a story, he strengthens his brain.
- * **Reading a book** your child likes, even if it's the same one over and over.
- * **Helping your child deal** with disappointments. Your child will learn best after he gets a handle on his emotions. Remember, this is an ongoing process.
- * **Getting exercise.** Use the warm summer months ahead to get out there and move with your child! Extra helpful are activities such as running and swimming, because opposite sides of the body move at the same time.

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