



# ECC Times

October/November 2007

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER AT THE ROCHESTER SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

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“Your imagination is your preview of life’s coming attractions.” –Albert Einstein

### Imagination and Play:

Two extremely important concepts for childhood development

October and November are great months to foster both. From holiday celebrations (Columbus Day, Halloween, Veteran’s Day, and Thanksgiving) to the changing seasons and our slide into winter, imagination seems to be playing a larger and larger role in our children’s play this time of year. It’s wonderful to witness.

Experiences related to nature and falling leaves, apple picking and pumpkin decorating, Native Americans and Pilgrims, weather changes and weather events are all well underway for the children. From field trips, to imaginative play, to getting ready for our Adventures in Education visitor, George Kourounis, both staff members and children have been active and involved. Lots of opportunities are being established to stimulate your children in their learning and to promote their overall growth.


The focus has also been on networking: building more positive and stronger connections between RSD and families, as well as encouraging ties between our ECC families. It was exciting to see the energy and camaraderie so readily apparent at our “Fall Fling” on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and during our Friday morning parent meetings. These connections are great to see and more abundant than ever. My hope is that what’s begun will only get better. I’m looking forward to the Adventures in Education presentation on October 18<sup>th</sup> and to our Parent Night on Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup>.

(Continued on page 2)

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Please take a look at the Parent & Child magazine included with this newsletter. "Halloween Tips and Treats" may help at this time of year. Also I've selected a variety of articles to share with you. The first article outlines the merits of taking walks with your child (and includes helpful ideas along the way!). The second is about helping your child handle disappointments, the third highlights ways of boosting your child's ability to learn, and the fourth relates to math. The next article gives strategies for helping children develop strong memory skills and the last deals with ways to avoid power struggles. You should find at least some of the above references helpful as you support your child's growth and development.

Here are some dates to remember:

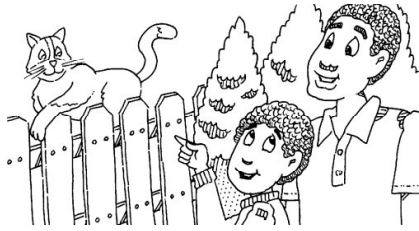
Friday October 12<sup>th</sup> ECC morning parent meeting  
Tuesday, October 16<sup>th</sup> - T/TH FIRST class field trip (Whittier Farm)  
Thursday, October 18<sup>th</sup> - Adventures in Education presentation by George Kourounis  
Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> - M/W/F FIRST class and preschool classes field trip to Gro-Moore Farms  
Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup> - RSD Parent Night  
October 31<sup>st</sup> - Halloween celebration here in ECC  
Tuesday, November 6<sup>th</sup> - Election Day  
Monday, November 12<sup>th</sup> - Veterans' Day observed (RSD closed)  
Thursday and Friday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> - Thanksgiving (RSD closed)

Happy fall!

Sincerely,  
Marilyn



*Tyler became a Big Brother!! Gail & Scott are the proud parents to Chloe Christine, who was born October 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:04 a.m. and weighed 6lbs 11 oz. and was 19in. long. Congratulations to the entire Pittinaro family!*



### ***Make walking a regular way for your preschooler to learn***

Parents often rack their brains for new ideas to help their kids learn and grow. Many of these cost money.

Rarely do they think of simply taking their child for a walk—which doesn't cost anything at all!

Walking is encouraged by the Healthier US Initiative. It will not only help your child stay physically fit, it can also boost his observation, math and communication skills.

To make walking interesting and fun, walk and:

- \* Count cats or dogs. Or count anything! Different kinds of cars. Fire hydrants. Swings.
- \* Search for 10 things you've "never seen before."
- \* Find things that need to be fixed. Overgrown weeds. A pothole. Trash. Broken windows or fences.
- \* Find what pleases you. Flowers. Baby in a stroller. Smiling neighbor.
- \* Notice what's changed since your last walk.
- \* See how many things you can find of a certain color—blue, red, etc.
- \* Identify shapes. What's round? Square? Oblong?
- \* Identify letters of the alphabet on signs. Or call out the first letter of things you pass. "M" for mailbox.
- \* Play "I spy." Look ahead of you and say, "I spy something ... (smooth, pink, etc.)." See if your child can locate it. Take turns spying and guessing.
- \* Be silly. Every 30 steps or so, do something for your child to imitate—hop, skip or dance.

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### ***Building Character***



### ***Help your preschooler learn how to handle life's disappointments***

No life is completely free of disappointment and this is a lesson your child will have to learn. Far better that he learn it from you now, than in a crueller way later on. How? By realizing you do not have to—nor should you—gratify your child's every wish.

Your child will learn to handle disappointment if you:

- \* Limit the "wants." Your primary responsibility as a parent is to tend to your child's needs. These include physical needs—food, clothing and shelter—as well as emotional needs—love, caring and understanding. Your child will try to shift your attention to his wants at any opportunity. But remember, it's okay to say, "That looks like a really cool building-block set. But you just had your birthday and we won't be buying more toys now."
- \* Stand firm. When you have a good reason for saying no, don't give in. Make this clear to your child. "I will not change my mind. I know you want the block set, but the answer is still no."
- \* Have empathy. "I know you want to stay up and watch the movie. But tonight is a school night and your bedtime is 8 p.m. In our house, movies are for weekends."

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## Parent Quiz



### ***Are you boosting your preschooler's ability to learn?***

Young children naturally want to learn. But how much they learn depends a lot on their parents.

Take this quiz to see if you're doing the kinds of things that will stimulate your child's learning. Answer yes or no to each of the statements below:

- \_\_\_1. I build my child's thinking skills by asking her to help me solve problems. I ask her questions, such as, "What's the best way to ...?"
- \_\_\_2. I encourage my child to use all her senses: to look, listen, feel, taste and smell.
- \_\_\_3. I know children learn from playing together, so I ensure that my child has an opportunity to play with other children often.
- \_\_\_4. I encourage my child to use a table or desk when she is working. This helps her see and really focus on what she's doing.
- \_\_\_5. I don't let my child "burn out." After a few minutes of learning something new, I see that she takes a break.

How well are you doing?

Each yes answer means you're promoting your child's development and stimulating learning. For no answers, try that idea from the quiz.

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## Building Math Skills



### **Use math to boost y our child's language and thinking skills**

Research shows that kids exposed to math concepts in their early years do better in math in elementary school. They also do better in reading!

When you "talk math" with your child, you help her think about what math concepts mean.

To help your child connect to her world through math concepts:

- \*Help her "see" the math concepts in books you read together. Three round cookies. The 20-foot tall monster. The smaller dog.
- \*Encourage sharing. To share blocks, "deal out" a number of blocks to each child. Or set a timer. Each child will play with a toy for a certain number of minutes.
- \*Count everything. Steps. Books. Items in a bag or snack. Number of times she can jump rope or bounce a ball.
- \*Use spatial language when cleaning up. Put that ... next to, under, inside or on top of.
- \*Ask your child to sort and classify items by shape, color, size or type.
- \*Help your child find shapes around her. The rectangle in a door, window or table. The circle in her plate or a picture.

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## Building Attention Span



### Help your child develop strong memory skills

Only about five percent of children can recall specific words and pictures after seeing them. But research confirms that memory skills can be developed—especially before age six.

Helping your child develop his visual memory increases his ability to think, concentrate and be creative. It also helps him study and learn. About 80 percent of everything a child learns is through his sight.

To increase your child's visual memory:

1. Select a detailed picture from one of your child's picture books.
2. Briefly show the picture to your child.
3. Ask simple questions to see what your child can remember. "What color was the cat?" "How many people did you see?"

Make the game challenging by decreasing the amount of time your child looks at a picture.

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## Discipline



### Avoid power struggles when disciplining your preschooler

One of the developmental "jobs" of preschoolers is to hone their personal power. They're figuring out how to get what they want. And they're seeking more control and independence.

In the process, they resist their parents' requests. They test rules. They squabble and talk back.

Your job as a preschooler's parent is to teach the proper use of power. You must avoid power struggles while getting your child to cooperate.

Doing these things can help:

- \* Give your child some power. When possible, give him a choice. "Would you like a turkey sandwich or a peanut butter sandwich?"
- \* Acknowledge your child's feelings. "I know it's frustrating to sit so long."
- \* Make it fun. Let him pretend to be Superman changing clothes.
- \* Make it a competition. See if your child can race you or "beat the timer" to get something done.
- \* State rules positively. Say, "Ask for what you want," instead of, "Don't grab."
- \* Say, "Take turns" instead of asking your child to share. Sharing, to a child, means to "give it up."
- \* Enforce rules consistently. Otherwise, you teach your child to ignore what you say.

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