

ECC Times

January 2011

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER AT THE ROCHESTER SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

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Dear Families,

Happy New Year! It's hard to believe 2011 has arrived. I hope this year is the best one yet for all of you! I also hope your holidays were happy ones.

This month is a busy one here in ECC. We continue to add children to our classes as well as to our home visit schedules. Additionally this month we have several children increasing the time they are with us; from half days to full days or from three days to five days per week. Our program now serves 32 children, with more in process. We welcome all of our new additions and those who have increased their time with us!

The end of the first semester of school is rapidly approaching and I want to make sure you are aware of some important dates in our calendar:

January 17th – Martin Luther King Jr. Day (RSD closed)

January 19th – 7–9 pm UNYFEAT presentation, "Using the iPad and iTouch with Individuals with Autism: Exploring the Apps"

January 20th – The "Sandbox" ECC event in Fairport from 6-8 pm

January 28th – End of 2nd marking period (Progress Reports will be mailed shortly after this date)

February 7th – Evening PSA meeting (all parents are encouraged to attend these meetings held at 6:00 pm in our LRC)

February 21st – President's Day (RSD closed)

February 21st – February 25th – Mid-Winter Recess – No School for Students

At the very beginning of March we will have our RSD IEP Writing Day. Please note that Preschool and Elementary classes are cancelled on Thursday, March 3rd. There is no school on that day for our preschoolers. Most importantly this is the time of year to begin planning your child's future education plan. Teachers need your input as they begin drafting IEP's (Individual Education Plan) for our 3, 4 and 5 year olds to share with the school district. Please make sure you are involved. Your child's teacher will contact you for this input. You are welcome to come in for a meeting or you can provide your comments via VP, phone, note or email. The school district will notify you (and us) of the time and place for your child's CPSE (Committee on Preschool Special Education) or CSE (Committee on Special Education) meeting. CPSE's are meetings held for preschoolers and CSE meetings are held for school-age children (those entering kindergarten the next school year).

(Continued on Page 2)

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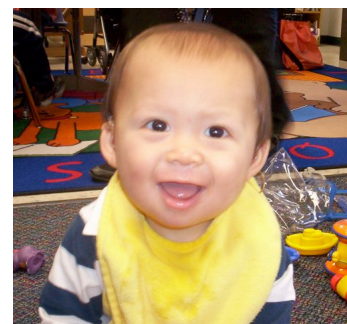
To learn more, please contact us today at 585-336-5807 (Voice) or 585-336-5808 (TTY) or visit our website at www.RSDDeaf.org

I am including several articles from “The Parent Institute”. The first encourages you to provide new experiences for your child. The second addresses ways of motivating your child. The third article describes what to look for in different levels of play and the fourth explores early literacy activities. Two other articles I felt to be valuable from the publication include one related to teaching the concept of size and another about encouraging your preschooler to help out around the house (good luck with that one!). The last two articles describe ways of fostering independence and of seeking ways of spending more time with your child in 2011. In addition to these articles I found another in the “Child Care Council” publication that looks at the amount of sleep our preschoolers get, how much they need, and how to better match the two. One other resource you will want to access that provides practical suggestions for parents is <http://trevorcairney.blogspot.com/2010/11/emergent-comprehension-in-children.html>. And lastly don't forget a most valuable resource, ASDC (American Society for Deaf Children). Papers were sent home before the holiday regarding membership to ASDC. This membership is free to RSD families and I hope you will consider joining. We are sending letters home again with this newsletter. I hope you will find these resources helpful as you raise your wonderful children.

I want to thank you for letting me have a hand in this, the raising of your children, although I know my part is small. I have truly enjoyed getting to know each and every child over the past several years and consider it a privilege to have helped guide the education of our FIRST and preschool children. I will be retiring at the end of this month, but will keep RSD, and especially our Early Childhood Center, near and dear to my heart. I wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Marilyn





Learn something new with your preschooler today

Having new experiences is an important part of your child's journey as he grows up. Many of these experiences will be more meaningful if your child can share them with you. You will have a lot of fun, and you will teach your child this important lesson: No matter how old you are, you should never stop learning.

Here are some ideas to try:

- * Take a parent-child class together, such as a sports class or arts class. Your local paper or community center may be a good place to start to find appropriate, inexpensive (or even free) classes.
- * Try a new recipe. Let your child help you measure ingredients and prepare the dish. Be sure to have your child help you set the table, too.
- * Look in the local newspaper or online to find a fun place you have never been. Schedule a trip to explore it with your child.
- * Go to the library together. Select books by at least three new authors that you have never heard of or whose books you have never read to your child. Ask the children's librarian for suggestions. Read one to your child each night this week.
- * Pick out a food you have never tasted at the grocery store or a restaurant. Encourage your child to do the same. Share with each other. Take a bite of his dish and encourage him to try yours, too.



Motivating Your Child Teach your child to feel rewarded with a sense of accomplishment

As a parent, you probably enjoy telling your child she has done well. But remember that for your child to be a motivated learner, her sense of having done well cannot come from you. She has to experience it from within.

Try these ways to encourage your child's gratification and motivation from her own actions:

- * Give your child opportunities for creative play. You want her to think: "What happens when I ..." and then to see the results of what she has done. Working with blocks and puzzles helps her take stock of progress and results.
- * Work with your child on a project, such as cooking dinner. Give her a part to do on her own, such as tearing lettuce for salad. But also encourage her to watch and help you.
- * Don't rush your child. You want your child to stick with a task for gradually longer periods, so try not tear her away after only a minute or two.
- * Allow your child to do as much as possible by herself. Do not rush in to help her the first time she asks. Offer a suggestion, but let her do the work.
- * Strike a balance. Not everything should be easy for your child. For example, if pull-on pants are easy for your child, get her some pants with a snap. You want her to be challenged, but not frustrated.

Development Milestones



Expect significant advances in play as your preschooler grows

Between the ages of three and five is a time of major changes in your child's social and emotional development.

At three your child:

- * May engage mostly in parallel play (playing alongside, but not really with, another child).
- * Be very possessive and have trouble sharing.
- * Start to play house and other imaginative games.

At four, your child:

- * Moves into playing mostly with others.
- * Learns to share and take turns, with success on many days but less success on others.
- * Learns to be a real friend.

At five, your child:

- * Has friends, and perhaps a best friend.
- * Learns to play games, including some sports, with others.
- * May surprise you with the level of detail and thought in creative play.

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Encouraging Writing



Find creative ways to have fun forming letters with your child

Some children are ready to write with pencils before kindergarten. Others are not. But both groups can still benefit from practicing writing with other instruments. If you're wondering what letters to practice, the letters in your child's first name are likely the best place to start.

Try some of these fun ideas:

- * Cook pieces of spaghetti until they are soft. Once they are cool, trim them and show your child how to form letters with them.
- * Have crayons and markers available so your child can color and draw as well as write. Start with thick crayons and markers, but move to the regular size as soon as your child can hold them well.
- * Write in glue on bright paper. Shake glitter or sprinkles on top. Don't use sprinkles if your child is prone to putting things in his mouth.
- * Allow your child to spend a few minutes outside with sidewalk chalk. Most children love to decorate the driveway or sidewalk. As they do, they are getting excellent practice for their fine motor skills, the skills involving the small muscles in the hand and the ones they use to write.

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Developing Concepts



Teach your preschooler the concept of size

Your preschooler is probably learning about colors, shapes and numbers. But what about sizes?

Encourage him to notice and compare things around him. Use words like bigger, smaller, shorter and longer. You might:

- * Read the fable "The Lion and the Mouse." Discuss the characters' sizes. How big are their ears? Their paws? Their voices? Then compare other animals you see, such as a squirrel and a dog. Which one is smaller?
- * Make pancakes of all sizes. Put them in order from smallest to largest. Which one does your child want to eat? The smallest pancake or the biggest one of all?
- * Compare lengths, such as hair lengths and length of time. For example, "My hair is 12 inches, and yours is 10 inches. Yours is two inches shorter than mine!" Or "Let's read two stories and see which one is longer."

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Find ways to let your young child help around the house



Among the best ways to teach your child responsibility is to give him chores at home. Having chores teaches your child that maintaining a home is a family effort and he is an important part of the family. This lesson will pay dividends when he is at school, and again later in the working world.

You may be surprised at how many things your child can do to be helpful, and how much he wants to do them.

Here are some chores you can consider if your child is at least three years old:

- * Set and clear the table. Have him start with the forks, spoons and napkins. Gradually expand the job to include plates and cups.
- * Feed dry food to family pets. Give pets fresh water.
- * Put clean clothes in drawers. Put dirty clothes in a laundry basket. Carry a lightweight basket filled with laundry.
- * Match up socks.
- * Do simple cooking jobs with you, such as stirring ingredients together and pouring liquids.
- * Bring in mail or newspapers unless this requires going out on the street.
- * Clean. Let him use simple tools such as a feather duster or a lightweight handheld vacuum. Give him a soft rag and let him gently wipe tables and low shelves.
- * Pick up toys. Have him pick them up on a daily basis before bedtime.

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Building Self-Esteem



Foster a sense of independence & confidence in your preschooler

Having healthy self-esteem means you consider yourself a person who can do things. To foster this sense of independence and confidence in your young child:

- * Let her be involved. Too many parents say yes when a child wants a new toy, but no when she tries to help her family. For example, if you are doing laundry, and your child asks, "Can I do that?" you can answer, "Sure, please start handing me everything that is blue." Lesson: I am competent.
- * Make her wait. Your child deserves much attention--but not all the attention. Your child should frequently hear, "I am helping Jimmy right now. Your turn will come later." Or, "I need to get ready now. You will be fine with your blocks while I do this." Lesson: I am big enough and secure enough to wait.
- * Let her entertain herself. Spend time with your child, but don't try to keep her constantly fascinated. Offer things to do--books, crayons, blocks--and encourage her to do them on her own. Notice her efforts. Lesson: I can make myself happy and busy.

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Five ways to spend more time with your child in 2011

What your child wants most from you is for you to spend time with him. No matter how much time you spend with your child now, consider making a new year's resolution to spend even more. Here are five great ways to get started:

1. Focus on quantity as well as quality. Thirty minutes of playing on the floor with your child is wonderful. But taking him on your Saturday afternoon errands and talking with him the whole time is even better. (Make sure he is well-rested and fed!)
2. Eat meals together as a family. Research shows that more family bonding happens around the table than anywhere else.
3. Involve your child in family life. Let your child help you prepare meals. Ask him to do simple chores, such as dusting. He can also work outdoors and pick up sticks from your yard or sidewalk.
4. Exercise together. Move with your child daily. Walk, bike, skate--even climbing stairs counts.
5. Engage in your child's interests. If, like many young children, he is on a sports team, think about coaching. Try to attend all of his games. If he likes dinosaurs, check out a book about dinosaurs from the library and read it together. Watch his favorite television show with him and then ask him to tell you why he likes it.

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