

ECC Times

March/April 2010

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER AT THE ROCHESTER SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

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Dear Parents,

March has been a great month here in ECC and you'll see on the next pages some wonderful pictures that depict a few of the activities your children were part of to promote learning.

We now have 33 children enrolled in our program and the staff has been working hard to provide the best program possible for each of them. We continue to follow the Ski*Hi Curriculum (for home visits) and the Creative Curriculum (visit teachingstrategies.com for an overview). We continue to work with Martha French and the Kendall Conversational Proficiency Levels, or "P-Levels" to ensure that your child grows at a good rate in his or her use of language to communicate. In Addition, we just had a visit from Suzanne Scott, Cochlear Implant/Bilingual Specialist for the Lauret Clerc National Deaf Education Center at Gallaudet University to facilitate bilingual programming. Specifically we are looking at ways of implementing bilingual programming in each of our classrooms and how and when English and ASL are used.

Although the actual celebration for "Week of the Young Child" supported by the Rochester Association for the Education of Young Children (RAEYC) this year is planned for the week just before we are out on spring break, ECC teachers will be planning activities throughout the month of April to celebrate our young children. You have received information about our Kick-Off Breakfast on April 9th from 8:30-9:30 a.m. Please plan to attend. In addition to breakfast, many of our children will be performing for you. Also at 9:30, I will be holding an information session about our program and the ways we are incorporating bilingualism into the program. Please look for the flyers.

In addition to celebrating our young children, this time of year is especially busy with important CPSE (Committee on Preschool Special Education) and CSE (Committee on Special Education) meetings. We're looking forward to seeing you at those meetings and before if possible to go through the draft IEP's (Individual Education Plans) that we are proposing for your children. Teachers have contacted you and I'm hoping that we can bring in as many parents as possible for these important conversations. With this newsletter you will find articles from the "Parent Institute" related to practical suggestions for home. Three articles relate to ways of developing thinking, reading and writing skills with your children. One presents helpful ideas to reduce TV time and engage your children in both indoor and outdoor activities and the last article has ways to preserve our wonderful planet. With warmer weather on its way getting outside is always welcome!

(Continued on page 2)

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As a reminder, the following are days when your child will have no school:

April 2nd – Good Friday

April 19th – 23rd –Spring Break

And Up and Coming Special Activities include:

April 9th – Kick off Breakfast & Bilingual Information Session

Soon to be scheduled:

- a. Shared Reading Program (SRP) Training
- b. Bilingual Information Session

Please consider signing up for SRP if you haven't already. A flyer for the next parent training at the end of April will be sent home shortly.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Enjoy March, the outdoors, and our great Rochester springtime!

Sincerely,
Marilyn



Dalia with Mr. Peabody



Trying out their new mittens and hats!



Zander's 2nd Birthday!



Having fun with "dress-up in the classroom.



Sharing at morning meeting.



Getting ready to go outdoors.



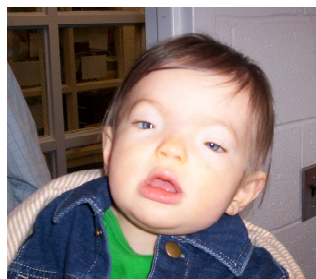
Doing our part 5210 Healthy Heroes!



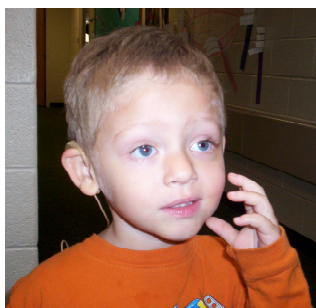
Working out with new equipment.

Welcome to our new students:

Jonathan Keyser (picture not available)



Jadan Kaplan
FIRST Program-Home Visits



Jordan Antonio
FIRST Program



Marvin Russ
Preschool B-Miss Luke's Class



A'miracle "AJ" Clark
Preschool C2/Miss Birecree's Class



Developing Thinking Skills

Create books to build children's thinking skills

Reading and writing are excellent ways to build thinking skills, and creating books with your child involves both. To make this fun:

- * Ask your child what he'd like to write about. Then staple several pieces of paper together. Add a title and your child's name. To be extra creative, cut the book in the shape of the topic, such as a banana for a book about fruit.
- * Have your child dictate a short story. Write it neatly, with no more than a few words or sentences per page. Leave plenty of room for him to add drawings. Then read the book aloud once.
- * Let your child be the illustrator. Stay nearby in case he asks you to reread a page. When he's finished, have him read you the book (or read it to him if he'd prefer). Take pride in his work, and enjoy his reaction to being an author and illustrator.

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Parent Quiz

Are you building your preschooler's love of reading?

Helping preschoolers enjoy books prepares them to enjoy reading. Answer yes or no to the questions below to see if you're making reading fun for your preschooler:

- ___1. Do you let your child help pick which books to read, even if he requests certain favorites over and over?
- ___2. Do you take frequent trips to the library and give your child plenty of time to browse and attend kids' activities?
- ___3. Do you find books about your child's interests--whether it's dinosaurs, trucks or princesses?
- ___4. Do you create pleasant reading routines, including relaxing with books before nap time or bedtime?
- ___5. Do you read with enthusiasm to make books "come alive" for your child?

How well are you doing?

Each yes answer means you're helping your child develop a love of reading. For each no answer, try that idea from the quiz.

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Reading Readiness

Use creative ways to help your preschooler recognize letters

Recognizing letters is an important step toward reading. Thankfully, it's also fun! To teach your child about letters creatively:

- * Make them out of food. Give your child kid-friendly, tasty supplies to create letters, such as circle-shaped crackers and small, straight pretzels. Allow him to break up foods to form letters, too.
- * Light up letters. Use a flashlight to make letters on a ceiling or wall. Can your child follow the beam and figure out which ones you're writing? Give him a turn making letters, too.
- * Start with parts. Draw a shape or line for your child, such as a circle or diagonal line. Let him add to it, eventually making a letter, such as "T" or "N." (You can help with hints.) Then switch roles, letting him draw the first shape.

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Spending Time Together

Spend quality time with your preschooler, family outdoors

In today's high-tech world, it's important to connect with your preschooler without distractions. But that's difficult when kids between eight and 18 spend an average of six and a half hours a day watching TV, playing video games or using a computer, according to research.

A simple solution is to go outside! Plan fun activities, such as bird watching, picnicking or gardening.

To make outdoor activities more appealing to your preschooler, be:

- * Enthusiastic. This time together should be fun, not a chore! A happy, humorous attitude makes a big difference.
- * Eager to learn. You don't have to be an expert on birds to enjoy watching them. It's exciting to make discoveries with your child.
- * Reminiscent. What outdoor activities did you love as a child? Tell your child all about them. Do any appeal to her?
- * Understanding. Take into consideration your child's likes and dislikes when planning activities. Ask for her ideas.
- * Flexible. If your family is new to being "outdoorsy," the first few tries may be disappointing. Don't give up! Brainstorm about activities everyone will enjoy.

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Encourage your preschooler to take responsibility for Earth

Earth Day is April 22. And while protecting the Earth is a job for every day, you can use this special day to begin or reinforce the habit.

Many activities that help the Earth are simple, free and take only a minute or two. And they are very suitable for young children.

Here are some ideas:

- * Turn off the lights and TV when you leave a room and encourage your child to do the same.
- * Keep a cup on the bathroom sink. Teach your child to fill it with water before he brushes his teeth. After he brushes, he can use the water in the cup to rinse out his mouth. Now there's no need to leave the water running during tooth-brushing.
- * Consider drinking tap water instead of buying bottled water. Unless there is an emergency (such as a flood) or other unusual situation, tap water in the United States and Canada is safe.
- * Recycle. Have your preschooler help you place recyclables into their own bins.
- * Plant something with your child. You can use seeds. Plant outdoors if you have a yard. If not, plant in a container. If you have the time, space and money to do so, consider planting a tree.
- * Participate in a clean-up day. Many communities plan these to celebrate Earth Day. If you can't find one near you, rally neighbors to clean up a section of your own neighborhood or block.

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