

Redeemer Preschool

Newsletter - January 2009

www.redeemerkids.com



IMPORTANT DATES

Parenting Today Workshop

Wednesday, February 11
Limit Setting
6:45—8:00 p.m.

Presidents Day

Monday, February 16
Preschool CLOSED

Staff Development Day

Tuesday, February 17
Preschool CLOSED

Glenwood Mid Winter Break

February 16—20

Pajama Night

Friday, February 20
(by Karen & Stefan)

Parent Workday

Saturday, February 28
9:00 a.m. to noon



Parenting Today Workshop

In partnership with Redeemer Church and San Francisco Psychotherapy Research Group (SFPRG), we are happy to present the following parenting workshops from January 2009 to May 2009.

January 14—Mary Sparks Ph.D.

A sometimes Surprising Notion: Your Child Worries About You
February 11—Barbara Sapienza, Ph.D.

Limit Setting: Difficult but Important

March 11—Karen Weinberger, L.C.S.W.

Why Guilt Free Parenting is Good for Our Children

April 8—Bill Dickman, M.D.

Helping Kids Forego Oppositional and Defiant Behavior

May 13—Steve Foreman, M.D.

Why Kids Do the Very Thing that Drives Parents Crazy

Location: Church of the Redeemer

Time: 6:45 p.m.—Refreshment

7:00—8:00 p.m.—Workshop

Animal Program

In addition to our popular fish tank, we will be adding two lop rabbits to our animal program. A fenced rabbit hutch will be built in the school garden. We are also getting two egg incubators. After the chicken and ducks are hatched, they will be returned to the farm. Our children can learn so many things by exposing to animals.

- Caring for a pet teaches responsibility and empathy;
- Children can learn about the life cycle first hand;
- Animals get preschoolers excited about learning;
- Pets can add joy and release stresses in the classroom.



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Gearing Up for NAEYC Accreditation



We have been working towards accreditation with the National Association of Education for Young Children (NAEYC) for quite some time. Now we feel our program structure, learning environment, quality of education, staff qualification, as well as parent partnership can readily meet the national standards and criteria. A formal self assessment will be submitted to NAYEC in July. We anticipate to receive accreditation by the end of 2009, following a site visit. Besides our commitment to best practice,

NAEYC Accreditation is the mark of quality that families are looking for. To achieve NAEYC Accreditation, early childhood education programs need to be measured against rigorous national standards on early education. Today, over 8,000 NAEYC accredited early childhood education programs serve families around the nation. In 2007, NAEYC renewed their standards of high-quality early childhood education that include:

- Positive and responsive relationships for children and adults;
- A curriculum that fosters all areas of child development;
- Use of age-appropriate and effective teaching approaches;
- Ongoing assessments of child progress and action plans;
- A healthy and safe physical environment for children and adults;
- Qualified staff and support for professional growth;
- Collaborative relationships with families and the community;
- Good nutrition and health education for children;
- Strong program management policies that result in high quality

Parent Association

Chairperson

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ROOM PARENTS

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Jodylee Meenaghan

Monika Hight

YELLOW DUCKS

Jill Sheehan

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PURPLE DRAGONS

Melanie Northcutt

Jeanine Shepler

RED DRAGONS

Deena Bellman

Elise Brinck

Physical Movement—A Gateway to Learning

Physical movement continues to have an important role in learning and brain development as your child grows. Physical activities such as play produces neurotransmitters (natural chemicals in the brain) that help develop the neural pathways in the brain. Play is also important for social and behavioral development. At Redeemer, we allow ample outdoor playtime for our children.

Dress your child appropriate for school activities and please always bring a jacket to school as our weather changes everyday.



Bringing Block Play into the Home by Jacki Tarantino

A small child gingerly stacks the colored blocks. Each time as he places a block on his tower a smile of satisfaction appears on his face. As the tower gets taller he starts to giggle. Slowly and deliberately he stretches to place the last block atop his creation. He steps back to admire his achievement and with a mischievous eye he swiftly bats the tower and the blocks tumble into a heap in front of him. He breaks into a fit of laughter and shouts, "I do again".

Block play serves so many purposes in the development of children. We start to introduce blocks in infancy. Children start out with small soft blocks and then we add cardboard blocks, and finally wooden blocks. Blocks can be made from cardboard boxes. Stuff boxes with crumpled newspaper and seal with masking tape. Paint, wrap, color, decorate and finish off with a layer of polyurethane. Homemade blocks can be made from lengths of untreated timber, cut the required length and carefully sanded. You can also buy small unit block sets that are quite portable at toy stores. To enhance dramatic play



and add hours of fun to block play parents should supplement the blocks with additional props such as large and small vehicles, people, animals, buildings, road signs, cardboard and any other props the

children might suggest. You can often combine action figures and props from a train set or add children's small stuff animals to the props.

Space is often a problem when trying to create a block play environment within the home. A large mat or a small carpet may serve as the building area. This will set boundaries for the block play. You can store the blocks and props in plastic storage boxes, as this will help the chil-



dren in cleaning up when block play is over. Making the equipment portable will help with storage and moving the blocks outside in good weather.

What are the benefits of block play for young children? Although bringing joy to children

should be enough reason for block play in the home, there are many other educational reasons for extending this important piece of the preschool day into the home.

Block play provides experiences, which support children's learning in many areas:

- **Science**—gravity, stability, balance, weight, trial and error, and discovery.
- **Mathematics**—shape, space, number, fractions, symmetry, size, classification, measurement, volume, area, depth, width, and height.
- **Physical Skills**—hand/eye coordination, manipulation, and muscle development.
- **Language Labeling**—directions, questions, planning, stories, and exchange of ideas.
- **Art**—patterns, symmetry and balance.
- **Social and Emotional**—confidence, self-esteem, respect for other's work, cooperation, autonomy and initiation.

Many educators feel that indeed block play encompasses the above qualities. For kinesthetic learners using blocks to express ideas is so important. Having the opportunities to count as one builds, to tell a story as they add people and props to a structure, and share with a friend what they have built together are a constant reminder that blocks are a text book in early childhood. We can only strengthen our children's knowledge by bring some of their favorite activities into the home.