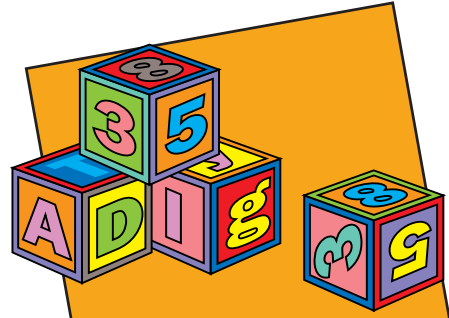


PRESCHOOL PRESS



A Publication of the Anchorage School District STeP Center
and the Early Childhood and Elementary Special Education Department

February 2004; Volume 2, Issue 5

CHANGES FOR THE PRESS

The Preschool Press has a whole new look and some great new contributing editors! Veteran preschool teachers from the Anchorage School District have joined the Press staff for the remainder of the year. Each will submit an article on the monthly topic ~ thus providing parents and preschool providers in Anchorage will a multitude of ideas for preschool academic, social and motor activities.



The Press will continue to include articles about local events and activities of interest to preschool aged children, their educators and their families.

Our "Community Focus" continuing article will expand and we will continue to include information such as "Important Numbers to Remember".

Welcome to authors Catherine Heady, Libby Pederson and Ev Irving!

ABOUT THE PRESCHOOL PRESS

This publication is designed for preschool families in the Anchorage School District - it is delivered via email early third Thursday of the month - to order, email fraczek_eudora@asdk12.org or call 742-3872.

IN THIS ISSUE

In this issue of the Preschool Press, you will find articles for parents and preschool children on the following topics:

- Changes for the Press
- Wacky Ways to Survive Winter
- All Kinds of Sensory and Imaginary Play
- Homemade Playdough and More! *
- Community Focus - AlaskaKidsGuide.Com
- Important Numbers to Remember

WACKY WAYS TO SURVIVE WINTER

By Mrs. Ev Irving-Bowman Preschool Sp Ed Autism teacher

What's a family to do? It's in the single digits on the thermometer, so here's some wacky ideas to keep your family active indoors. Pick a "focus" or a "theme" and build ideas around it.

Let's say you pick "WATER". Try adding some yellow food coloring to the bath with rubber duckie. Bubble blowing is great too. Get a shoebox size plastic container and give your plastic toys and baby dolls a bath. Use straws to blow ping-pong balls across the container. Plan a field trip to the public pool, or even the fire station to see the big water hoses. Visit the chocolate waterfall at AK Wildberry. You can visit the Russian Jack indoor garden and see water fountains and enjoy a "summer walk" indoors. Scotch tape a toy to the tub or shower and use shaving foam to hide it. Then let the kids use squirt guns to uncover the "surprise"!



ALL KINDS OF SENSORY AND IMAGINARY PLAY

By Catherine Heady, Turnagain Elem.

Ahhh, winter in Alaska with the little ones at home. January through April can be a challenging time for all of us. The days are getting longer but as winter snows melt and eventually flood our streets and lawns, what do we do with our children crying for entertainment?

Children of all ages love to get their hands into sand, cornmeal, oatmeal, 'playdough', rice, beans and such. Get plastic storage tubs and place these inexpensive items in them on a low shelf. Let the children help you sweep or vacuum up the debris when they are done playing. If you get small brooms and dustpans, children are happy to clean up!

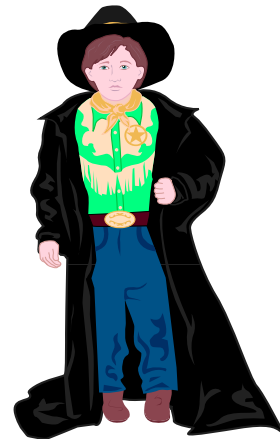
Another way to make it through the doldrums of late winter and early spring is by camping out in the living room! Wait until a Friday or Saturday night and set up a tent in your own living room with sleeping bags or drag out a mattress. Pop popcorn and watch a family movie through the tent door. Old surfing movies (lots of sun and water) or Elvis movies are perfect. Bring a good book or two to read by flashlight before you turn in for the night. When the lights are out, tell some family stories and pass along some family history. You'll have some fodder for wonderful dream adventures!

HOMEMADE PLAYDOUGH AND MORE!

By Libby Pederson, Mt. Iliamna

It's that time of year when it is too cold outside for children to be playing. Being inside doesn't mean that you can't have any fun. Being indoors for long periods of time is hard on you and also your child. Sometimes with a little creativity your children will be having the time of their lives. Some fun indoor activities that you can do at home with your little ones are:

- *Playing dress up in your old clothes.
- *Have your son or daughter help make cookies, it might be messy but you and your child will have fun.
- *Draw pictures to make a book. Have your child tell the story while you write it down.
- *Make homemade play dough. If you don't like the mess put wax paper on the table and a towel under your child for easy clean up. Home made play dough is much easier to clean than store bought.



Recipe for play dough

Mix in a medium pot:

1 cup white flour

1/4 cup salt

1 tsp. Cream of tartar

Combine and add:

1 cup water

2 tsp. Vegetable food coloring

1 Tbsp. Oil (baby oil makes it smell great)

Couple drops of food coloring for the color.

Cook over medium heat and stir (3-5 mins). It will look like a "globby" mess and you'll be sure it's not turning out...but it will. When it forms a ball in the center of the pot, take it out and knead it on a lightly floured surface. Store it in an airtight container or plastic bag.

These are some ideas to help make times inside with your child a little more fun and less stressful.

**COMMUNITY FOCUS -
ALASKAKIDSGUIDE.COM**

This new website and accompanying electronic newsletter can be a great resource for parents. The website, located at: <http://www.alaskakidsguide.com/index.htm>, includes an "on the Go Calendar" or a quick "Highlights" section for parents looking for a speedy review. The "Around the Town" section includes information about Libraries and Homework Help, Sports, Zoos, Museums, Parks, Dance and Tumbling, Music and Theater... and more. This website is

also building sections entitled "Parent Resources", "Business Directory" and "Cool Sites for Kids".

To sign up for the weekly newsletter, email Lisa Mitten at Editor@AlaskaKidsGuide.Com.

FOR YOUR
Kids

**TREASURE CHEST OF
IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

Child Check 337-9505
Southcentral Hotline 563-3200
Denali Kidcare 269-6529
WIC 343-4668
Poison Control 800-222-1222
Childcare Connection 278-2273

