

PRESCHOOL PRESS



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

September 2005:
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STeP Center News

The STeP Center (Student Teacher Parent Center) is still located in the same place at the Boniface Education Center, but we have a fresh coat of paint. The Boniface Center has undergone major remodeling to accommodate special programs the Anchorage School District (ASD) consolidated to this location.

The STeP Center is a part of the ASD Special Education Department that offers a nexus between families and educators of common concerns. The STeP Center is specifically charged with providing information resources to Students, Teachers and Parents. Utilizing an extensive lending library and large website (<http://www.asdk12.org/dept/step/>), the STeP Center personnel provide a service oriented approach to problem solving and location of resources.

The STeP Center is responsible for publishing the Preschool Press. This year it will be distributed the third week of each month. If you would rather receive this newsletter via email, please call us at 742-3874 or email: loutrel_barbara@asdk12.org



CHECK US OUT!

**Please come to the Boniface
Education Center Open House.**

**When: Friday, September 30, 2005
3:00 pm until 6:00pm**

**Where: Boniface Center
5530 E. Northern Lights, #8**



Special thanks to Mary Hertert of Color Creek Fiber Art for allowing us to display some of her beautiful silk wall hangings as well as her 3-D fabric sculptures.

In THIS ISSUE

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

*STeP Center News *Open House

*Early Intervention Services

*Preschool Safety Tips: How to Avoid Choking

*Moving On

*Learning Can Be Fun: Play Dough

*Parent/Teacher Institute

Early Intervention Services We've Moved

The Early Childhood and Elementary Special Education Department opened new offices for preschool child find assessment, and the community based services staff. Early Intervention Services is located at 3020 Minnesota Dr.



Parents with concerns about their child's development should call 742-2655 to schedule a screening appointment. Families with questions regarding preschool evaluation should call 742-2657.

Preschool Safety Tips for Parents: How to Avoid Choking

If you are the parent or caregiver of an infant or child under 4 years old, follow these tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Red Cross, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to reduce the chances of choking.

AT MEALTIME:

- Insist that your children eat at the table, or at least sitting down. Watch young children while they eat. Encourage them to eat slowly and chew their food well.
- * Cut up foods that are firm and round and can get stuck in your child's airway such as
 - Hotdogs-always cut them length-wise and then into small pieces
 - Grapes-cut them into quarters
 - Raw vegetables-cut them into small strips or pieces that are not round
- * Other foods that can pose a choking hazard include:
 - Hard or sticky candy, like whole peppermints or caramels
 - Nuts and seeds (don't give peanuts to children under age 7)
 - Popcorn
 - Spoonfuls of peanut butter



Moving On

Toddlers/Preschoolers love to explore spaces and climb over, through, and into things.

What you'll need

- * Stuffed animal or toy
- * Large cardboard boxes
- * Pillows
- * A large sheet
- * A soft ball
- * A large plastic laundry basket
- * Elastic
- * Bells



What to do

- * Pillow jump. Give your preschooler some pillows to jump into. They usually figure out how to do this one on their own!
- * Box car. Give your toddler a large box to push around the room. He may want to take his stuffed animal or toy for a ride in it. If the box isn't too high--you'll most likely find your toddler in there, too!
- * Basketball. Sit about 3 feet away from your child and hold out a large plastic laundry basket. Let him try throwing a ball into the basket.
- * Table tent. Cover a table with a sheet that's big enough to reach the ground on all sides. This makes a great playhouse that's particularly good for a rainy day. Watch out for bumped heads!
- * Jingle bells. Sew bells onto elastic that will fit comfortably around your child's ankles. Then watch (and listen to) the fun while he moves about or jumps up and down.

These skills help children gain control over their large muscles. They also help children learn important concepts such as up, down, inside, outside, over, and under.



Learning Can Be Fun: Play Dough



Young children love to play with dough. And no wonder! They can squish and pound it and form it into fascinating shapes. Here's a recipe to make at home.

What you'll need

- * 2 cups flour
- * 1 cup salt
- * 4 teaspoons cream of tartar
- * 2 cups water
- * 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- * Food coloring
- * Food extracts (almond, vanilla, lemon, or peppermint)
- * 1 medium saucepan
- * Things to stick in the dough (popsicle sticks, straws)
- * Things to pound with (like a toy mallet)
- * Things to make impressions with (jar lids, cookie cutters, or bottle caps)

What to do

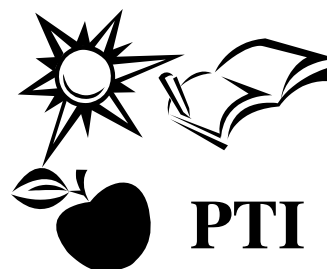
- * Add the food coloring to the water. Then mix all of the ingredients together in a pan.
- * Cook over medium heat, stirring until it forms a soft ball.
- * Let the mixture cool. Knead slightly. Add food extracts to different chunks of the dough if you want different smells.
- * Give some to your toddler or preschooler, so he can pound it, stick things in it, make impressions in it, and create all kinds of things.

Play dough is a great way to develop hand muscles and be creative. And cooking together, with all the measuring, is the perfect way to begin learning mathematics. Letting your child handle some dough while it is still slightly warm and some when it has cooled off is a terrific way to teach him about temperatures. Play dough can be made ahead of time and stored in an air-tight bag or container.

Parent-Teacher Institute: Supporting Your Child:
Special Child, Special Needs
October 15, 2005 8:30am to 1:00pm
Wendler Middle School
Free to the Public

Parent-Teacher Institutes are a disability outreach and informational series of workshops for everyone: parents, teachers, students, caregivers, etc. Learn about all kinds of disability issues. Some topics for this PTI are:

- Families of Children with Disabilities
- Insights into Brain Based Disorders (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders)
- Positive Behavioral Supports
- Out of Bed and Off to School
- Overview of Assistive Technology
- Dyslexia
- Working with Difficult Children
- Self Advocacy



Free childcare for participants by calling 742-3874.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR TODAY AND PLAN TO JOIN US FOR EVERY PARENT/TEACHER INSTITUTE THIS YEAR:

October 15, 2005

November 5, 2005

January 28, 2006

March 11, 2006

April 29, 2006

Supporting Your Child: Special Child - Special Needs

Understanding the Special Child: Sensory Issues

Surviving Tough Times: Why Doesn't My Child Fit?

Looking Forward: Academic Success for All Kids

What Comes Next: What Does My Child's Future Look Like?

* 1 UAA Graduate Credit available for attending each PTI with additional research at the STeP Center.

Want to save a tree?

Ask for this newsletter to be sent electronically via email.

742-3874 or email:

loutrel_Barbara@asdk12.org

