

Pottstown Early Action for Kindergarten Readiness

Mission: Every child in Pottstown will enter Kindergarten ready to learn and achieve

PEAK Classroom Connections

PEAK Classroom Connections: Creating a professional learning community for the early learning teachers in Pottstown to share ideas, improve instructional practices and implement researched-based best practices in the delivery of quality early learning experiences

Happy September

PA's State Budget Impasse

As most of you are aware, the state of PA has not passed a complete budget for the 09/10 fiscal year that began on July 1, 2009.

As of right now the budget impasse has affected many of the social services that are vital to the running of our community. No money is being passed from the state to such programs as Child Care Subsidy (CCIS), PreK Counts, Keystone STARS as well as numerous other programs.

What can you do? There are rallies being held around the region, contact your legislator and stay informed. Please visit www.papromiseforchildren.org to find contact information for your legislator, stay up to date with information and find out how you can provide support.



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PEAK Web Site

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Back To School Ideas

One Hundred Day Caterpillar

Make a caterpillar head and then let one student put up a number each day. You can even do a pattern for the older children or make the 5's and 10's a different color. Make a special 100 circle.

*Hint! This will cover over 2 walls so put it up high on your wall.

Our Town Blocks

Take photographs of the post office, police station, school, and other stores and places in your community. Tape them to unit blocks so children can use them in the block center to build and drive around with little cars.

Dollar Tree . COM (who knew?)

Did you know you could buy items in block at dollartree.com? There is a section for teachers. All items are \$1.00

Line Up Symbols

Place window cling pictures on the floor. Assign a different child to each symbol. When it's time to line up they'll know just where to stand (no more sticky feet when you want to peel

Where Is _____?

Use the tune from "Where Is Thumbkin?" to reinforce colors, shapes, numerals, letters, etc. For example, children could each have a set of cards with the shapes drawn on them. They would hold up the appropriate shape as you sing:

Where is square?

Where is square?

Here I am.

Here I am.

How are you today, square?

Very well, I thank you.

Back in the box.

Back in the box.

Hand Shapes

Using their hands to make shapes will really help kinesthetic learners. Say each shape and then challenge children to create them with their fingers.

Brain Spray

Fill an empty spray bottle with water and glitter. Pretend to spray this in the air when you want children to pay close attention and learn a new concept.

More Back to School Ideas for your Classroom

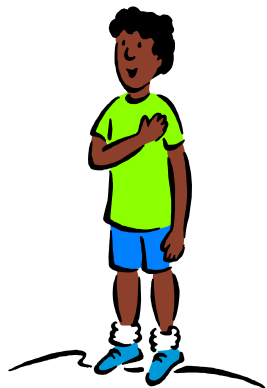
Marshmallow Feet

To remind children how to walk in the hall make marshmallow feet for snack. Give them a graham cracker to munch out the shape of a foot. Then give them 5 miniature marshmallows for toes. Talk about how we walk like marshmallows in the hallway and then eat your foot! Yum!

Class Pledge

Make a class flag from the children's handprints, and then teach children this pledge:

I pledge to myself on this day
To try to be kind in every way.
To every person big or small
I will help them if they fall.
I will love myself and others, too.
That's the best
that I can do!



If You Can Hear Me...

To calm children begin softly saying, "If you can hear me, touch your nose. If you can hear me, touch your ear...." Continue until all the kids are listening. Finally, end with, "If you can hear me directions for what you want them to do."

Clothespin Pictures

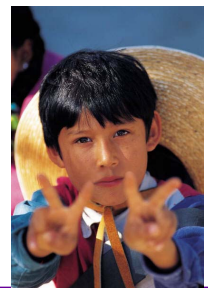
Attach children's pictures to spring clothespins. Use for name songs, games, transitions, etc

Photo Memory Game

Make copies of children's photos and glue to cardboard squares to make a memory game. You could have them match up like photos or have them match up photos and names.

Peace and Quiet

The teacher says, "Peace" and makes the peace sign. The children respond with, "And Quiet!" and put their finger on their lips while the other hand makes the peace sign.



Stress Management Benefits of Laughter:

Laughter is an all-time favorite stress management strategy because it's free, convenient and beneficial in so many ways. Research has shown health benefits of laughter ranging from strengthening the immune system to reducing food cravings and increasing one's threshold for pain. Follow these strategies to add more laughter to your life:

T.V. and Movies – There's no shortage of laughter opportunities from entertainment at the theater, in video stores as well as T.V. comedies.

Laugh with Friends – Going to a movie or comedy club with friends is a great way to get more laughter in your life. Having friends over for a party or game night is a great setup for laughter and other great feelings.

Find Humor in Your Life – Instead of complaining about life's frustrations, try to laugh about them. Try being more lighthearted and silly, giving yourself and those around you more to laugh about. Approach life in a more easy-going way and you'll find you're less stressed about negative events, and you'll achieve the health benefits of laughter.

'Fake it Til You Make it' – Just as studies show the positive effects of smiling occur whether the smile is fake or real, fake laughter also provides the benefits mentioned above. Smile more and fake laughter; you'll feel better and the fake merriment may lead you to real smiles and real laughter.

Contributed by Kathy Perry, PEAK ECHC

www.stress.about.com

Parents as Partners

Strengthen Parenting. Childcare sites are a natural place for parents to turn for parenting information and support. Parents know that teachers work every day to help children develop and learn – making you knowledgeable experts. Consider implementing the following simple strategies in your classroom:

- **Provide "just-in-time" support** – information that is convenient, easy, and there when the parent needs it
- Use children's day-to-day classroom experiences as an opportunity to raise and discuss parenting and child development issues with parents
- Invite parents to visit and observe their children in the classroom
- **Educate parents about positive discipline techniques** – provide information on age-appropriate discipline and reasonable expectations, and encourage parents to discuss discipline challenges they may have at home

Continually remind parents of the support and services that the PEAK Family Engagement Specialist has to offer

- Contributed by Whitney Tyng, PEAK Family Engagement Specialist