



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



PEAK Updates

Breakfast Club: Parents at each site will be invited to join Lori Davidson for a quick bite and parent exchange at the PEAK Breakfast Club. This will be a chance for parents to ask any questions, pick up information, or just grab a quick cup of coffee. Lori will be visiting each site once per month in March, April and May. Look for information at your site and encourage parents to attend.

Early Childhood Health Specialist: PEAK will welcome a new Early Childhood Health Specialist in April. Her name is Kathy Perry and we are excited to have her on board!

Hearing, Vision and Speech Screenings: These screenings will be conducted at each site through April for all students 3 and older.

April, 2008

DROP PEAK A LINE

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Upcoming Events

4/8/08 5-6 PM One Book Training- Administration Building

Get useful ideas for using *Up, Down and Around* in your classroom this month

4/12/08 DVAEYC Conference field trip

4/12/08 Early Childhood Educator's Night out at the Phillies

4/10/08 Month Of the Young Child event at YMCA

4/22/08 5-7 PM Literacy Training

5/10/08 ECE Action Day- Harrisburg

PARENT MEETINGS

As the end of the year approaches so does the parent teacher conference. Here are some tips for making your parent meetings more successful for both you and your parents.

Research shows that children are more likely to succeed academically, and less likely to present behavior problems, if their families are involved in their education.

Attendance:

Most parents' time is a precious commodity. We all know the frustration of offering meetings and conferences only to have a few parents attend. Remember that successful conferences and meetings are not measured by the number in attendance but rather the interactions that occur. If you are

able to have a positive impact on one family- you have been successful.

Creating a comfortable atmosphere:

Parents come to school with their own anxieties, fears and baggage. Some may feel leery of authority, have had their own bad experiences with school, or just plain feel self-conscious and uncomfortable. It's important to create a comfortable atmosphere for the parents which conveys the message that we're all here for your child.

Valuing each families cultural differences:

Make sure that as you are trying to connect with families that you of-

fer a variety of meeting times that will meet the needs of the individual families. Also, make sure to offer literature in the parents' home language if available.

Communication is a two way street:

In addition to all of the information you have to share with parents about their child make sure you ask them lots of questions too. Let them tell you about their hopes for their child, what they have seen as the child's successes and challenges. Also ask for any input into the program and make sure to address these changes to the best of your ability.

**Always begin and end on a posi-



SPRING THINGS



Caterpillars

Let's go to sleep (Wiggle fingers.)
The little caterpillars said.
So they curled up (Cross fingers and
In a chrysalis bed. close hands as if praying.)

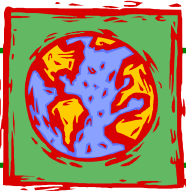
They will awaken (Open fingers slowly.)
By and by,
And each one will be (Clasp thumbs and
A lovely butterfly! wiggle fingers like wings.)

Life Cycle Project

Ask children to bring in a stick from home or go on a hunt to find them around your center. Explain that it should be as long as their foot. Have them glue a piece of rice on the left end of their stick to repre-

sent the caterpillar's "egg." Next, glue on a cork-screw pasta for the "caterpillar." Glue a seashell pasta on next for the "chrysalis." Finally, glue a bowtie pasta on the red end of the stick for the "butterfly." Encourage children to describe the life cycle of the butterfly using their stick.

You can make your own puppet for *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Glue wiggle eyes on a bright green sock and then use felt to make all of the foods in the story. Each food has a slit cut out of the middle. As the story is read, wear the sock caterpillar on your hand and the children feed the food to the caterpillar by putting it over the sock. The caterpillar and food then go into a plastic bag and magically appear as a felt butterfly. (Tuck the butterfly into the palm of your hand inside the sock before you start). Children will enjoy recreating this activity on their own once you have shared it with them.



Earth Day- April 22

Herb Pots:

Herbs are fast growing plants that are also edible and lend themselves to tasting activities once you have completed the initial growing activities. You can plant basil, oregano, chives or any other herb you want to try.

Recycling Sorting Game

Have children sort paper products, plastic and aluminum into separate recycling bins.

Baggie Garden

Wet a paper towel, and drop it along with six white beans into a Ziploc bag. Seal the baggie (leaving air in the bag) and put it in your window. Your children will love watching the beans grow.

Our Earth

Cut a large Earth out. Outline the continents on the paper. Let your children as a class paint the earth. Use a globe to look at the different colors that they see and what they represent. Encourage them to use green, & brown paint in the continents and blue for the water.

LITTLE EARTHS

Coffee filters and blue and green colored water (with food color) and eyedroppers

Fill a muffin tin with blue water and green colored water. The children use the eyedropper to pick up the water and place it on the coffee filter.

RECYCLE SONG

(sung to Twinkle, Twinkle)

We recycle what we use

Separate things and you should too

Glass and paper, plastic, tin

Go in your Recycling Bin!

We must start now, we can't wait

Quick, or it will be too late.

Related books:

Too Much Garbage Author: F. Testa

City Green Author: Dyanne Disalvo-Ryan



Environmental Print



Reading print from the world around us is one of the beginning stages of literacy development. The letters, numbers, shapes, and colors found in logos for products and stores such as McDonald's, Wal-Mart, Coke, and Campbell's soup all provide opportunities for emerging readers to interact with print and the written word in their own environment. We see Environmental Print everywhere, we see logos and signs in our daily lives but as adults we don't consider it real "reading". However, Environmental Print is the first print a child learns to "read". Environmental Print can be incorporated easily into every area of the early childhood classroom

What's for Lunch Book Have the students bring labels, bags, or other environmental print from their favorite lunch foods to create a class book. Add the following text below to each picture, "_____ (child's name) eats _____ (name of item) for lunch" To spice this activity up you could put the pages inside a real lunch box.

Word Wall Put EP on your word wall. It is even more meaningful if you have the students bring in the EP to put up on the wall themselves

Sorting Students can bring in all sorts of EP and you can have them sort them by category (food, toy, store, signs etc)

Safety Take pictures of different signs that children need to understand to keep them safe (stop signs, exit signs, do not enter, caution, railroad crossing, etc) Talk with the children about the meaning of each sign. Then use the pictures to create a memory game for children to play on their own.

You can download and print environmental print from this website:

http://www.hubbardscupboard.org/i_can_read_.html

Eat breakfast, it's the most important meal of the day

Contributed by Sandy Leh

Many of us hear this often and reply, "I know, but I'm not hungry when I wake up" or "I just don't have the time". Are you one that gets up in the morning, rushes to get ready for work and goes out the door without breakfast? Maybe you're one that grabs a piece of toast, a bagel with cream cheese, a muffin, or a breakfast bar to take with you.



Unfortunately, when it comes to being healthy, none of these scenarios are a great way to start your day. Having a healthy breakfast is a dilemma that many of us face each day.

Just like a car engine, your body needs fuel every morning to get it going so you can "hit the road". If you start the day on an empty stomach, by the time you get into the swing of work, your blood sugar levels are dropping dangerously low. This results in needing an instant sugar fix and you grab a high sugar food such as a pastry or donut.

The typical American breakfast is packed with sugar, high starch, and lots of fats.

High sugar or starch-filled: Pancakes, waffles, toast, donuts, pastries, muffins, cereals, breakfast bars. These foods, eaten alone, will quickly increase your blood sugar levels which your body will quickly adjust for and drop, and you'll be on a roller coaster blood sugar ride all day.

Fat-filled: Fried eggs, sausage, bacon, cream cheese, cheese omelets, hash browns

What does that leave us with? How do we find the time to prepare a healthy breakfast? There are lots of options. Below are just a few ideas, but I'm sure you can think of many more.

Get up 15 minutes earlier. It's nice to have a cup of coffee or tea with your breakfast, relaxing before the rush of the day starts. Some quick, easy breakfast ideas are:

Oatmeal, flaxseed, blueberries, and almonds - Add ground flaxseed, frozen berries, and sliced almonds to your oatmeal. These are 4 power foods, full of fiber, nutrients, and protein. A meal that's quick to prepare and very tasty.

Kashi Golean Crunch - A cereal high in protein and fiber, low in sugar. Add low-fat milk or add it to plain yogurt along with some berries. Many other granolas are very high in fat and sugar.

Grapefruit with whole wheat toast & almond butter - Add a little sugar on top of the grapefruit. The almond butter is healthier than peanut butter, with lots of protein to fill you up.

Fresh fruit salad - Add a little bit of lime or lemon juice.

Eggs with peppers - Scramble with a little olive oil, bell peppers, or broccoli, onions, black pepper.

Cottage cheese & fruit - get low-fat cottage cheese and add fresh fruit or mix in apple butter.

Prepare the breakfast the night before. Take it with you on the road or eat it as soon as you get to work

Left-overs are not just for dinner anymore! - Who says that breakfast needs to be traditional American fare? A variety of meats, tomatoes, cheese, yogurt, and rolls are the typical breakfast foods in Europe and other countries. Yesterday's leftovers from lunch or dinner may provide a nutritious breakfast. Take a sandwich with you for the road!

Banana dog - peanut butter, banana, raisins in a long whole grain bun

Breakfast taco - shredded cheese on a tortilla, fold in half and microwave. Top with salsa.

