



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

Month Of the Young Child

What a busy and exciting April we had! The Month of the Young Child brought many guest readers into our classrooms, including, Senator Rafferty, Representative Quigley, Mayor Thomas, as well as many parents and featured guests.

In addition the Week of the Young Child family event was a great success. Over 300 people participated in PEAK's annual event at the YMCA. Each PEAK partner set up a table and engaged the families in crafts and activities. The moon bounce, petting zoo and fire department were a big hit again this year. The Pottstown Police Department was there creating ID badges for the children as well. It was a fun afternoon for families and staff alike.

Congratulations Christine Dise

Christine has worked as a head teacher in the preschool department of the Pottstown YMCA since 1995. She was one of 50 recipients of the annual Terri Lynne Lokoff National Child Care Teacher Award. There were over 250 applicants for this annual award. Each winner received \$500 for themselves and \$500 to implement their grant idea in their classroom. Christine will be enhancing literacy in her classroom by purchasing story telling gloves, literacy games, question of the day charts, etc. For more information visit <http://www.tlccf.org/>

May, 2008

DROP PEAK A LINE

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REGGIO EMILIA- A DIFFERENT KIND OF CLASSROOM

What is Reggio Emilia?

Contrary to some people's belief it is not a person, but rather, a place in Italy that has a unique culture surrounding education, particularly that of Early Childhood Education. Reggio Emilia has grown to become a philosophy about educating young children that is employed around the world.

3 Teachers

In a Reggio classroom there are three teachers: the teacher, the children and the environment. By thinking about the environment as a teacher for the children we can begin to think about using it more effectively and creatively to entice children to learn and explore.

The Environment:

Thinking about the environment in the classroom should be enticing to

children and invite them to learn. Careful consideration should be given to items that are placed out, items should be strategically used to inspire creativity, joy and excitement from the children in your classroom. One way to do this is to think about the 5 senses and incorporating items into the classroom that can incite wonder and curiosity

Sight: Invite learning with collections of natural materials: shells, rocks, driftwood, mirrors with beads, real framed art, baskets for holding materials, plants and flowers, colored water in glass jars, optical illusions.

Sound:

Water is a very soothing sound for the classroom.

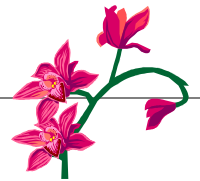


You can create a water feature in your classroom with rocks and running water, marbles in the water table with different sized tubes and plastic pipes, real musical instruments from around the world, bells, wind chimes, bubble wrap.

Touch:

Sensory experiences that engage children, and bring them extraordinary textures: real utensils when using playdough, marble tiles, wallpaper books, various textured materials (corduroy, flannel, silk, etc).

Smell: Include real items that have interesting smells in the classroom: flowers, herbs (basil, thyme, rosemary), put spices in your sensory table, coffee beans, extracts such as lemon, vanilla, or almond in the play dough, koolaid in the paint.



RHYMES AND FINGERPLAYS

Sunshine

The sun makes the outside a warm place to play
(arms above head in circle)
It makes the flowers grow each day
(holding up hands wiggling fingers)
The sun hides its face during the night
(cover face with hands)
But during the daytime it shines - oh so bright
(arms above head in circle)

Peanut Butter

A peanut sat on a railroad track,
His heart was all a flutter.
Then round the bend came a railroad train.
Toot! Toot! Peanut butter! Squish!

Mister Sun

Mister sun, sun, mister golden sun
Won't you please shine down on me?
Oh, Mister sun, sun mister golden sun
Hiding behind a tree.
These little children are asking you
To please come out so we can play with you
Oh, Mister sun, sun, mister
golden sun
Please shine down on me!



Outdoor Ideas

Outdoor Transparent Painting

Preschool children use both large and fine motor skills and teachers can introduce a new vocabulary word, transparent, during this creative early childhood activity.

Materials: Long strip of clear plastic (sheet), tempera paints (lots of colors), paint brushes, wire to hold up the plastic sheet, and a fence.

Description: Let the children help in attaching the plastic to the fence thereby encouraging participation and the use of large motor skills. Ask the children to paint the 'canvas' with any images they like, or you can provide ideas according to your theme. These murals are an amazing addition to any outside play area.

Outdoor Car Wash

Encourage social skills as preschool children participate in this warm weather water play activity.

Materials: Riding cars, sponges, and shallow dishes of soapy water.

Description: During outside time, set up an area where the children can pretend to be a car wash. Place many

shallow bowls containing soap and water outside and give each child a sponge. Promote sharing and cooperation as preschool children work together washing the cars. The children will absolutely love this idea. Before you know it they will be washing all of the outdoor toys and equipment.

Comments: It must be a nice day, warm weather and teacher supervision is absolutely a **MUST** at all times.

Sheet Painting

Young preschool children use fine motor and color recognition skills as they explore creativity during this early childhood outdoor activity.

Materials: Spray bottles, water, liquid tempera paint (variety of colors) and a old sheet.

Description: Fill a spray bottle with half water and half tempera paint. For creative outdoor fun, hang an old sheet on a fence or create a clothesline and have the children spray paint it.

Indoor Ideas

Summer Quiet Place

Provide a place for children to go to be alone or to read a book.

Materials: A small plastic pool, scissors, blue tissue paper, one or two small blow up rings used in swimming pools and a few good books.

Description: Put a small plastic swimming pool in a corner of the room.

Add several sheets of blue tissue paper and scissors.

The children will love

taking turns cutting the paper in small pieces. This will be your water. Add a couple of small swimming rings that you have filled with air. Add a child or two and a few books. No problem at clean up time. They love pick-

ing up the "spilled water".

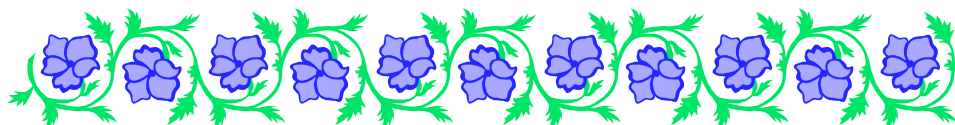
This is a good quiet center when talking about water, swimming, oceans and lakes.

Indoor Picnic

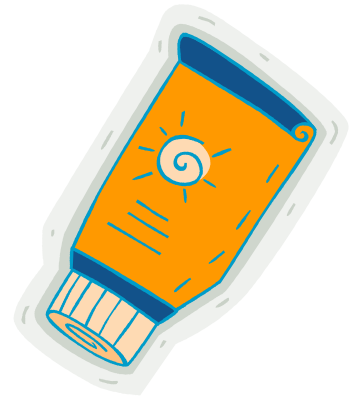
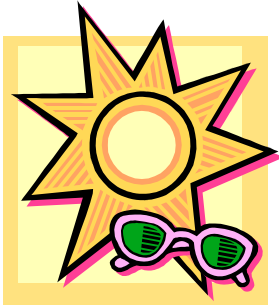
Set up your dramatic play center for a picnic.

Materials:

1. Picnic basket filled with picnic items such as ketchup, mustard, utensils, paper plates, napkins, pitcher, cups and, food items.
2. Blankets, fake ants, books to read on the picnic, spray bottles for "bug spray", use your imagination and the children's.



Taking Time For You



FUN IN THE SUN

Finally! The daylight hours are getting longer and you're spending more time outdoors and enjoying the beautiful spring weather. Whatever you're doing, you're going to encounter the sun and lots of it! We must remember to respect the sun if we want to be healthy and enjoy it.

The sun has plenty to offer us - warmth, light, and nourishment. When you spend time in the sun your body makes **Vitamin D** - an important part of normal growth that helps keep your bones strong. You can also get Vitamin D from certain types of fish (herring, salmon, sardines), egg yolks, and milk. The sun also helps our bodies make **Melatonin**, which helps us to sleep at night.

Our bodies are able to do these incredible things because the sun's light is **ultraviolet (UV)**, which can reach us even on cloudy days. Too much time spent in UV light without protection can irritate your skin, causing sunburn or increasing your risk for certain types of cancer.

You can protect yourself from too much sun and be creative! Sunscreen comes in a variety of strengths, can even be purple (Coppertone). You can personalize hats and sunglasses (look for a notice that the lenses protect from UV). Take extra care between 12:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., when the sun is strongest. Drink plenty of water to keep your skin healthy and keep you feeling your best!

BONUS: What is your SPF (Sun Protection Factor)? Everyone should start with a minimum SPF of 15. Log on to <http://www.bananaboat.com/sun/spfguide.aspx> to find out if you should be using more. Remember to reapply often!