

JUNEAU CO-OP
PRESCHOOL

newsletter

November 2014

Letter from the teachers

Hello Preschool Families,

By the time you read this we should have completed our annual leaf jump. Linda Torgerson started this tradition several years ago as a teacher at the Juneau Community Charter school. After retiring, she expanded it to include all the downtown elementary schools, preschool, and friends and neighbors as well. Many thanks to everyone who contributed leaves and to Linda whose energy continues to enrich us all.

This edition of the newsletter contains a new column. Parents sometimes have questions about how to handle something they've witnessed during a work day or concerns about doing things the "right" way. Usually there are not hard and fast rules, every child and situation are different but we'd like to share a bit of our thinking about young children in general and some of the philosophy behind what we do. Or, in many cases, what we don't do. We welcome your responses and thoughts. Please let one of us know if there's something you'd like us to address in a future newsletter.

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled for Tuesday, November 25th. We'll be posting sign-up sheets in the coat room and sending an email soon. These half-hour conferences are optional. We've set aside this day for them but you can arrange a conference with us for another time if the scheduled day doesn't work for you.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you can read about the upcoming movie fundraiser and pie sale. Remember that preschool will not be in session November 25th and 26th.

Happy Thanksgiving.

Mary, Rhonda and Melissa



Happy fish by Saana

Looking

backward

Bones and antlets

Body outline

Grainding grain

Leaf jump

forward

Conferences

Pie sale

Baking

Snow?

Upcoming events



Saturday Morning at the Movies:

November 22nd. 10:30 a.m.

Goldtown Nickelodeon

We are playing:

Felix the Cat

The Velveteen Rabbit

Winnie the Pooh: Seasons of Giving

And more...

We need volunteers to bake cookies and bring to the theater by 10am on Saturday.

Fish by Kade



Parent-Teacher Conferences:

November 25th. All day

1/2 hour spots from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

For those interested, you can use email, call preschool (586-2656), or talk to a teacher after preschool with your requested meeting time. A schedule will be posted and updated daily at preschool.

If you don't find a time listed that works for you, please arrange an alternative time. These conferences are completely optional and we are available to talk to you anytime during the year about your child or the preschool program.

Teacher Inservice Day

November 26th.

NO PRESCHOOL

Pie Sale:

November 25th & 26th

Foodland IGA Market

Holiday Break:

November 27 - 30

HAPPY THANKSGIVING



Ways you can help

Conflict resolution at JPC

Our preschool is a cooperative effort between teachers and a diverse group of parents, each coming in with their own parenting and discipline styles. This can make it tricky when navigating the conflicts that arise between preschoolers on a work day. One question that has come up this year is with regard to the practice of instructing children to say, “I’m sorry” and why it is not something we teachers ask the children to do as a resolution to conflict.

For starters, we do not make them say “I’m sorry” because we cannot actually make a child feel sorry. In fact, many of them do not fully understand what sorry means. Developmentally, young children are not yet able, or are at the very early stages of learning, to take the perspective of another. Part of our job at preschool is helping to foster their development of conscience. But without an understanding of or an interest in how one’s words or actions make another feel, the use of “I’m sorry” is simply the phrase that serves as a free pass for the who has caused injury, or the words an injured child needs to hear before they can feel that justice has been served. Both children may understand the ritual of “I’m sorry” without either identifying the cause and effect of the conflict or the means of discovering a meaningful resolution.

When an adult steps in during a dispute between children and “solves” it, it leaves the children without a need to understand their roles in the cause of the dispute or the opportunity to consider the other child’s feelings. They miss the opportunity to work on developing a sense of compassion or empathy. Further, children who regularly encounter adult arbitration

often resort to “tattle-tale” behavior. They have been taught to go to the grown-up when there is a problem, real or perceived, instead of working to solve it themselves.

So what can we do? Here are some possibilities:

- Help them to notice the results of their actions. “Look what happened when you hit Joe. You hurt his arm. See how he is crying?”
- Help them to take the other’s perspective. “I wouldn’t want anyone to do that to you.”
- If their actions are deliberate, ask for or suggest possible ways to make restitution. “What do you think you could do to make him feel better? How could you fix this? I’ll help you.”
- Try not to ask a child too many questions about motive, as it will tend to put them on the defensive and make it harder for them to think of anyone else’s feelings.

We also want to make an effort to restore our relationship with children following a consequence. For me, this brings to mind the book “Mr. Gumpy’s Outing” by John Burningham. In the story, Mr. Gumpy has a boat and everyone wants to come along for a

ride, but there are rules (no squabbling, hopping, flapping, etc.) so that everyone can be safe. Eventually, of course, they all break the rules, the boat tips over and they must swim to shore. But Mr. Gumpy simply has them walk home together because it is time for tea, and concludes by inviting them to “come for a ride again another day.” I find myself using that phrase, or variations of it, with children throughout the year. There are rules, and we are all learning how to navigate them as a community. As parents, teachers and children, I think we should all feel, and make others feel, welcome to come try again another day.



If you want more on this topic, you can [click here](#) and read the article, “Beyond ‘I’m Sorry’: The Educator’s Role in Preschoolers’ Emergence of Conscience”, by Charles A. Smith from the March 2013 issue of *Young Children Magazine*. A copy is also posted on the bulletin board at preschool.

Kid quotes

thank you gracias
merci danke kiitos

Many thanks this month to the following:

Riley Woodford (Haley's Dad) for sharing moose antlers with our classes.

Terry Schwarz (Eddy's Dad) for fixing the errant floor strip near the classroom sink and donating wood scraps for our wood assemblage project.

Linda Torgerson (alumni preschool teacher) and the students and teachers of the Juneau Community Charter School and Montessori Borealis schools for their contributions to the leaf jump.

DeAnna Ewing (Penelope's Mom) and **Peggy Poor** (Kade's Nana) for generously filling in when another parent was ill on a work day.

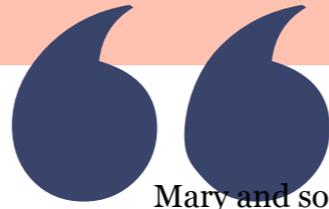
Deb Gillespie (Seamus' Mom) for a new vacuum donation and lending us scales to weigh our students.

Buck Willoughby (Paxton's Dad) for collecting leaves for the leaf jump.

Jessy Kidd (Cedar's Mom) for leaf donations and for spearheading the Small Hands orders.

Ben Patterson (Ginger's Dad) for all his help with the leaf jump.

Corey Wall (Lucy's Dad) for donating interesting architectural office cast offs.



Mary and some T/Th kids on the play yard looking at fallen leaves:

Mary: "Look at all these golden leaves from the cherry tree on the ground. Why do you think they fell?"

Crosby: "They just got cold. They're dead."

Saana: "Because they changed colors!"

Taylor: "They got too old. And I think a bear climbed that tree."

Cole: "It was just time for them to fall down."

Rhonda, Caleb and Lucy observing the museum construction site:

Rhonda: "Hey Lucy, are you watching the digger?"

Lucy: "No! I'm watching the eater." (Construction worker eating lunch)



Fish by Adam