



JUNEAU CO-OP
PRESCHOOL

newsletter

December 2014

thank you gracias

Many thanks this month to the following:

To all of you who baked pies, bought pies, ate pies and/or worked the pie sale table at FoodlandIGA

Kudos to **Sarah Portman** who spearheaded the pie sale and also for making a giant vat of homemade apple pie filling and crust mix available.

To all who provided treats for our preschool movie mornings.

To **Monica Robertson** (Oliver's mom), for her quiet, competent and loving presence in the T/Th class and for assisting the teachers with family holiday gifts.

merci danke kiitos
köszönöm

Letter from the teachers

Hello Preschool Families,

It is amazing that the Winter break is almost here! As temperatures drop and light dwindles, it has been nice to dive into several cozy baking projects with the preschoolers. All of their hard work grinding wheat berries, corn and spices yielded a flour/spice mixture we used to make several batches of play dough and cornmeal to make several loaves of yummy cornbread for snack. You will find our recipe for play dough elsewhere in this newsletter, as well as one for the Moon Sand the kids have recently in the sensory table. As one parent suggested, a small batch of either would make a nice holiday gift for the children on your list.

Speaking of baking, thank you to all who contributed pies to the pies sale and goodies to the Saturday movie events. While pies were being baked and sold, it was good to have the opportunity to meet with several of you and chat about your children during conferences. We will set aside time again in the spring for conferences, but please know that we are available to talk with you about your child at any point during the year.

Our rosters continue to grow and new families seem to be joining our ranks on a weekly basis. Please take time to introduce yourself and make them feel welcome. Among these new members are several subs who look forward to the chance to attend when there is an absence. Please remember to put your travel dates on the whiteboard in the coat room, and let us know if your child is ill and will be staying home. An email is fine if it is the day before, but a phone call is best if it is the morning of your preschool day.

Enjoy your holiday.

Mary, Rhonda and Melissa

Mail from Aimagae



The value of a pie, a cookie, or a cupcake



This is chocolate by Ginger

Hi Co-op Preschool parents.

This past fall our classes have not been full, which concerned the Preschool Board about the impact that would have on our budget. Fortunately Evelyn Bass (Maddie's mom, MWF) stepped up to the challenge as the head of fundraising. Thanks to Evelyn and her fundraising team, we've been able to meet or exceed our monthly budget goals. Bake sales have played a big part in that success.

Cookies and cupcakes made for our Saturday movie mornings have also been sold to hungry hordes of zombies or ski bums who have attended movies at the Goldtown Nickelodeon later in the day, giving us a nice bump in our Preschool budget. The Thanksgiving pie sale brought in an additional \$2,100. Since there are very few expenses associated with a bake sale, most of this money goes directly to the preschool.

Bake sales also work well because everyone can participate in their own way and on their own time, making coordination much easier and the fundraising process more democratic.

Here are a few tips I've learned about participating in bake sales over the years:

- It can be really fun to include your preschooler in the process... or not. When I need to get a pie done by Tuesday morning and I need it to look nice enough to sell to someone who is not a blood-relative, I've found that it's far less stressful to throw some filling into a shell quietly in the kitchen by myself without the risk of preschool-sized handprints smushing the surface.
- Keep it simple. Our goal in having bake sales is to reduce the amount of money and time parents personally have to put into preschool to keep it running. Spending a lot of cash on fancy high-end ingredients can up the price and perhaps defeat our goal of keeping your expenses down. Use boxed mixes, premade pie shells, and other shortcuts if you're short on time.
- Count the cash. While baking pies I loved thinking about pulling twenty-dollar bills out of the oven. (I'll admit this is totally dorky, and maybe I will be the only one to find it motivating because I'm the treasurer!)

In summary, thank you for your pies, cookies, and cup cakes. It's a little thing, but it has made a big difference to the Preschool. In the coming year, we will likely be asking for a few more baked goods - please keep them coming!

Emily JCP Treasurer and Caleb and Sunna's mom (MWF)

Recipes

Letters by Mira

Moon sand

8 : 1
Flour : Oil

I used baby oil, but other oils will work as well.

Play dough

In a medium saucepan mix together:

2 cup flour
1 cup salt
4 tsp. cream of tartar

In a large cup or bowl combine the following:

2 cup water
4 Tbs. oil
color if desired

Add liquid ingredients to dry ingredients and cook over medium heat stirring often until mixture begins to thicken and stick together.

When mixture resembles mashed potatoes cool briefly, then turn out on table or waxed paper.

Knead until smooth.



Ways you can help

Exclusionary behavior at JPC

can't come
my birthday
y!

You're not
my friend!

I don't want
her to play
with us.

It seems like you do
not want _____ to
play with you today.
I'm curious about
that.

"You're not my friend!" "I don't want her to play with us." "You can't come to my birthday party!" Overhearing such remarks at preschool rightly discomfits most adults. If your own child is either the recipient or the instigator of such remarks, discomfort is magnified. Some programs and schools have a *you can't say you can't play* policy wherein excluding another child from play is prohibited. The policy comes from Vivian Paley's 1992 book of the same name and in it she makes a case for not allowing children to develop *the habit of rejecting*.

Despite its attractiveness we've chosen not to implement the policy at preschool for many of the same reasons we don't insist that children say "I'm sorry.". For one thing, although we could require that everyone be allowed to play, it's nearly impossible to legislate true openness and kindness in peer relations. Forcing the issue may cause children to find more subtle ways of rejecting others, driving the behavior underground and under adult radar. Secondly, although it seems cruel, children often have logical reasons for rejecting others and forcing them to hide their feelings prevents both the rejector and the rejectee from learning anything valuable from the situation. Some of the reasons children might exclude others include protecting a new friendship, fear that the other child is not a safe playmate, or fear of losing control of the play. Preschoolers are highly motivated to engage in dramatic group play but it is also hard work for them. If they perceive that another child doesn't know the rules of the game and may disrupt the play, they will be reluctant to let that child in. Sometimes exclusionary behavior is about naked, unabashed power, especially the power to make another child feel bad. No matter how ugly it may be though it's important for adults to remember that exclusionary behavior is common at this age and not to label the children who engage in it as bullies lest they live up to the labels we give them. It also does not help the child who's been excluded to be cast as a victim lest he begin to see himself that way.

Not having a hard and fast rule about exclusion is not the same as letting kids work it out for themselves or ignoring it hoping it will go away. Although normal, it should never be minimized. It is one of the most difficult and important issues we deal with at preschool. The best response depends on the underlying motivation which is not always clear. So what can you say? Here are some possibilities:

"It seems like you do not want _____ to play with you today. I'm curious about that. If you tell me what you're worried about, I can help make sure it doesn't happen." This needs to be said without condemnation in a nonjudgmental way. Otherwise children may hide their true feelings. >>

Ways you can help

Exclusionary behavior at JPC

_____ is my best friend and you're not!

It's OK not to be their best friend but I still expect you to be friendly.

You can also help children restate their feelings in a kinder way than they may have done initially. For example, if a child says: “_____ is my best friend and you're not!”. You can say: “It's OK not to be their best friend but I still expect you to be friendly just like I want people to be friendly to you. Why don't you tell her you're playing with _____ right now but you might play with _____ later.”. This allows the child his/her feelings but also lets them know you expect kindness.

If a child says: “I'm only going to play with _____ because we're having a play date today.”, I might respond with: “Sounds like you'll have a chance to play alone with _____ later. Preschool is a place you can practice playing with more than one friend at a time.”. Remember though, that for young children who are just beginning to figure out the give and take of friendship, playing with more than one or two playmates is challenging.

If a few children have claimed the communal equipment for their play scenario and are not letting other children in, you can remind them that the equipment is for everyone and ask them all to come up with a role for the newcomers that will fit in with their game. For example, if princesses have claimed the climber, the children who want to enter could be messengers, cousins, visiting dignitaries, etc. If the princesses refuse to allow others in, they will need to relocate their kingdom to an area that is not communal property.

You can help an excluded child enter play by deliberately teaching them strategies: Instead of asking: “May I play?” which can result in denial, sit with the child and observe the play for a bit, commenting on what is happening. Help them come up with a role that will fit into the play scenario but not take it over. Go with them if it seems like they will need coaching.

Extremely cruel language or behavior needs to be stopped. Ask a teacher for help if you don't feel comfortable intervening.

Because every child and situation is different, there are no one-size-fits-all solutions to exclusionary behavior. If a situation comes up during your work day that you aren't sure how to deal with, ask one of us to help or talk with us about it after the school day.

We are always interested in your observations and perceptions since we can't be everywhere or see everything that happens at preschool. We need to utilize our best thinking about this issue to make preschool a place where all children feel safe and welcome. ▀

Upcoming events

Looking

Solstice

Lanterns

Holidays

Volcanoes

Baking

Pie Sale

Conferences

Sledding

forward prepared

12/15-16

Pajama day in the dark. Preschoolers are invited to wear their pajamas to preschool AND bring along flashlights, headlamps, glowsticks or anything else that will help them explore preschool in the dark. We will have lights off until 10:45, at which point we will collect all flashlights, etc. to hold until group time. Please be sure to label all lights, lamps and lanterns that you want to make their way back home.

12/18-19

Last day of preschool. Merry Christmas everyone and happy new year.

12/20

The final movie night of the year is being held at the Goldtown Nickelodeon on 12/20 from 10:30-1:30. As always, you are welcome to join at any time.

Maddie: "Pretend we're all the same age, OK?"

Ginger: "Yeah, we're 6!"

Maddie: "Yeah, and our mom died."

Ginger: "Yeah, and this skeleton (Mr. Bones) is our only friend. (Runs over to hold skeleton's hand) Okay?"

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Dead men don't talk tell tales by Eddie