

THE PRESCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Winter 2008

The Moral of Aesop's Fable...

Union Gives Strength

The preschool team continues a year of progressive programs and classroom accomplishments based on teamwork and unity. Preschoolers have enjoyed monthly curriculum themes such as Transportation through various modes, Around the World—Geography and Understanding Diversity, Animals in Winter and Hibernation, just to name a few. Speech/language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy and ABA Services use these themes throughout treatment sessions, reinforcing the teacher's curriculum through language, social, fine and gross motor activities.

Equals Make the Best Friends

Our intensive preschool children have flourished with the initiatives set forth in September of integrating typical peers throughout their school day in various settings. The camaraderie between our children from all different classrooms has been exceptional, and these interactive relationships have led us to develop expanded program models in our intensive classrooms. In January at Ayers, Marissa Page's classroom invited four typical peer model classmates to attend five mornings a week, 8:05-10:50, increasing the children's opportunity and development of social interactions and skills. In February at Cove, Michele Flanagan's classroom invited four typical peer models who currently attend regular morning sessions in the integrated classroom to stay for afternoon sessions in this classroom, 10:50-1:05, serving as social leaders. These opportunities are priceless for our preschool children.

Attempt Not the Impossible

It was through an incredible effort of teamwork and hard work that the preschool staff successfully completed the mandated DOE/OSEP Indicator #7 initiative for Fall, 2007. The extensive assessment development and vast amount of data collection from parents, day care providers and staff was completed promptly and comprehensively by all preschool staff members. We now look towards demonstrating our teamwork in the mandated follow-up collection and submission of data to the DOE/OSEP in May. Your time and commitment is greatly appreciated!

One Good Turn Deserves Another

The Special Education Department is exploring the purchase of AutismPRO, an innovative, intelligent software system that offers staff training, curriculum and intervention programs, and data compilation methods for children with ASD. This progressive technology provides a vast collection of multi-media resources in current evidence-based intervention practices. Updates on this will follow.

Little By Little Does the Trick

In an effort to continually assess current programming and alignment with state-of-the-art practices for children with ASD, the Beverly Public School System has hired two well-known Autism Consultants, David McGee and Trish Woolard, BCBA. These consultants will be working hand in hand with staff for ongoing program development.

Birds of a Feather Flock Together

The new series of Parent Workshops has been highly successful, both educational and informative. Parents of children in the intensive needs classrooms enjoyed learning Strategies on Social Skill Building and sharing personal stories through open dialogue with other parents in October. The December workshop on Holiday Toy Suggestions for Your Child's Age Appropriate Development proved to be very helpful for the buying/gift giving season. In January, Behavioral Specialist Margaret Beard presented The Importance of Discipline in the First Five Years to a large parent group who gained valuable knowledge in techniques for shaping positive behaviors in the early years. The topic of Analyzing Behaviors, Applying Interventions, and Collecting Data, helped parents of intensive needs children carry over these principles in the home setting in February. We look forward to future workshops this year, offering babysitting services during these workshops so all parents have the opportunity to attend.

Little Friends May Prove Great Friends

Preschool Screenings will be conducted on March 19, 2008, 8:30-12:30, at the Ayers Elementary School. Please note the location change. All intensive integrated classrooms will be cancelled for the day. We are predicting a full schedule of preschoolers to be screened.

In Time of Dire Need, Clever Thinking is Key

Preschool Staff Meetings, including teachers and therapists, are scheduled for the following Wednesdays, 10am-12pm:

February 27, Ayers

April 30, Cove

May 28, Cove

Whatever You Do, Do With All Your Might

Preschool teachers, kindergarten teachers and early childhood special education teachers are invited to a meeting on Monday, March 3rd, 2:40 p.m.-3:40 p.m. at the Memorial Building, Room 164, to discuss preschool special education students' transitions to kindergarten and program planning for School Year 2009.

Do Not Count Your Chickens Before They Are Hatched

April 30th staff meeting will include team discussion and preliminary determination of students who will be recommended for summer school and/or therapy services. Remember, criteria for summer services are based on those students who are at risk for substantial regression of skills.

To Do the Right Thing at the Right Season is a Great Art

The PAC of Beverly Public Schools is sponsoring a Book Fair on Saturday, March 22, 2008 at the Barnes & Nobles Book Store in Peabody from 1pm-5pm. This is an exciting event which will include face-painting, book readings, guest authors, and many more fun activities for children and adults. Twenty-five percent of proceeds will be donated to PAC to be used for educational supplies, books, and parent resource materials for the district. Please put the date on your calendars, spread the word and join in the fun!

Honesty is the Best Policy

Please contact Wendy Ryder at wryder@beverlyschools.org, 978-921-6100, ext. 716, if you would like to provide feedback or input into The Preschool Newsletter.

True Art is Thoughtful, Delights and Endures