



RecSchool Preschool Program

Gantz Barn, 2259 Home Road • 614-871-6330

Grove City Parks and Recreation, 3226 Kingston Ave., Grove City, Ohio 43123
Main Office: 614-277-3050 • GroveCityOhio.gov • @GroveCityOhio



Parent FEBRUARY News

VALENTINE'S DAY - CARD EXCHANGE

Wednesday, Feb. 13 Valentine Exchange, MW & MWF classes

Thursday, Feb. 14 Valentine Exchange, TR classes

- Each child will make a mailbag during class in early February.
- Children should bring a card for each classmate (14 children in upstairs classes, 22 children in downstairs classes.)
- Encourage your child to "sign" his/her name on each card to practice writing. Even the first letter counts!
- **Please DO NOT address cards to individual classmates** to allow children to pass out cards easily.
- Feel free to send a treat for classmates attached to your child's Valentines (no peanut products, please).
- Please send your child's cards to school in a labeled bag.



IN THE CLASSROOM: TAMING THE CLASS CLOWN

A parent (from another preschool program) recently shared with one of the staff that her child was in danger of being "kicked out" of that program because he was "bad," making other children laugh with his antics, being inattentive at Circle Time and interrupting other children's work. As adults, many of us remember that person in school: the class clown. He/she was funny and entertaining, but also a distraction in the learning atmosphere. Preschool-age children may bump into each other on purpose, use silly voices when greeting or speaking, giggle uncontrollably when friends make faces or get really wound up in a group.

Learning positive ways to get attention and recognize expected behaviors in different settings are important skills for children to develop in groups. Children may need help learning how to greet each other appropriately, entering play and accepting that sometimes they will not be the center of attention. Parents should be on alert for this behavior at home too. To help a child learn appropriate attention-getting skills, parents and teachers can:

- Identify why the child is acting a certain way. Is the child uncomfortable with greetings? Do siblings or other relatives greet the child with rough play? Does the child always want to be the center of attention?
- State how you want the child to behave. "Use your regular voice to talk," "You're not going to be silly at the dinner table, but you can always tell a story," or "You can just say hi to your friend."
- -Remind your child of expectations when you anticipate him/her acting out. "When we are at the restaurant with Grandma and Grandpa, you can tell them about our trip to the zoo, but remember that sometimes you will need to just sit quietly."
- Avoid laughing at inappropriate behavior that is meant to get people's attention, and enlist the help of relatives and friends. While at dinner in a restaurant, the same child who may get "kicked out of preschool" may run around the table trying to tickle others and chew with his mouth full while looking to see if he/she could make anyone laugh. Children try similar tactics in the classroom. When a child repeatedly "tripped," looking around to see if anyone was watching, the teacher said, "You can just stand up and walk." She then invited him to build with her so he had her attention, but in a constructive activity.
- Follow through with consequences. Remove the child from any situation that he/she is trying to control by being funny, without warning or threats. Simply say, "Come with me for a minute." Tell him/her, "When you are done being silly, we'll go back in."

Of course, there are times when children are truly comical, and it's impossible not to laugh. While witty people are a joy to be around, the class clown rarely works to his/her full potential. Our goals are to help children learn appropriate ways to get attention based on the situation and help children develop self-control so they recognize when they are going too far and can strike a healthy balance.



NATURE OR NURTURE? UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S TEMPERAMENT

Several years ago, during a parent/teacher conference, a parent commented, "My child has not stopped moving since he was born. He was a fidgety, fussy baby, walked at an early age, and basically does not stop moving from the time he wakes up until the moment he falls asleep." This parent was describing his activity level, one of the primary characteristics that make up each person's temperament. Most pediatricians agree temperament is innate, present at birth.

Other elements of temperament include:

- Approach and withdrawal: the way a child initially responds to a new situation.
- Adaptability: the degree of ease or difficulty with which a child adjusts to change or a new situation.
- Intensity: the energy level with which a child responds to a situation, whether positive or negative.
- Mood: the mood, positive or negative, or degree of pleasantness or unfriendliness in a child's words and behaviors.
- Attention span: the ability to concentrate or stay with a task, with or without distraction.
- Distractibility: the ease with which a child can be distracted from a task.
- Sensory threshold: the amount of stimulation required for a child to respond.

Early experiences may shape a child's interactions in the world, but by the time a child enters elementary school, temperament is defined and unlikely to change much. The American Academy of Pediatrics states, "By being aware of some of the characteristics of temperament, you can better understand your child, appreciate his/her uniqueness and deal with problems of poor "fit" that may lead to misunderstandings and conflicts."

For more information on temperament and child development, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics' family-friendly website, www.healthychildren.org.

RECSCHOOL REGISTRATION FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR

Registration information for the 2019-2020 school year has been distributed to all current RecSchool families. Please read all registration information carefully. RecSchool children and their siblings have priority over students new to the program. Registration for children currently in the program begins Monday, Feb. 4, 6-7 p.m. at Gantz Barn. If you know any families who may be interested in enrolling a child in RecSchool, please encourage them to call Michele at 614-871-6330 to be placed on the mailing list. Registration for children new to the program begins Monday, Feb. 11.

"IS MY CHILD READY FOR KINDERGARTEN?"

Recently a parent asked one of the staff if the teacher thought the child, who has a late summer birthday, will be ready for kindergarten in the fall. Teachers are continually observing and assessing children's abilities and, even without a formal assessment, have good instincts about readiness and placement. This is a perfect time to compare thoughts. While some aspects of development are easily observed by parents, others become obvious only in a group setting. If you are questioning your child's "downstairs" or kindergarten readiness, these questions may help guide your decision:

- Can the child focus on his/her own work without being distracted by the activities of others?
- Does my child "blend" socially with this peer group or does he/she struggle to keep up?
- Is he/she interested in early academics: alphabet awareness, counting and mental math?
- Has the child formed constructive, long-term friendships or does he/she feel and act "younger"?
- Is the child self-sufficient: able to complete work and care for his/her own needs with little adult support?
- Does he/she exhibit personal maturity including the ability to handle frustration, transitions and disappointments?

If you are considering delaying enrolling your child downstairs or in kindergarten, feel free to ask for the opinion of your child's teachers. Staff cannot make this decision for you, but we'll be happy to share classroom observations that may help you make an informed decision.



IMPORTANT DATES

Mon. Feb. 4	2019-2020 Registration Night for current students, 6-7 p.m., Gantz Barn
Tues., Feb. 5	March tuition due
Thurs. Feb. 7	2019-2020 registration opens for siblings of past students, 8:30 a.m.
Mon. Feb. 11	2019-2020 registration opens for families new to the program
Wed. Feb. 13	Valentine exchange during class, MW & MWF classes
Thurs. Feb. 14	Valentine exchange during class, TR classes
Thurs. Feb. 14	Scholastic Book Orders Due
Mon. Feb. 18 & Tues., Feb. 19	RecSchool Closed
Tues., Feb. 19- Thurs., Feb. 21	"Developmental Observations" Parent/Teacher Conferences
Tues., April 30	Slate Run Family Field Trip: all-day event, details to follow

Thanks to all the parents who filled out a mid-year evaluation; we read every word!

While the comments were overwhelmingly positive, there is always room for improvement. Your input will help guide changes to RecSchool practices as we plan for the 2019-2020 school year.