

St. Peter's Preschool Newsletter

September 2020

From the Director's Chair - by Rita Dai Wang

Congratulations on a terrific first week of school! I know it isn't quite the start of school we are all used to, but I think it has been successful all the same. Everywhere I looked these past few days, I saw happy kids playing and learning. Thank you for your patience, flexibility, and support of our new safety protocols!

Each month, I will send a newsletter home, wrapping up events that have happened, events to come in the next month, important information, etc. Please look over it carefully and know that I will send more information regarding dates to remember as the time nears.

Arrival/Pick up: Thank you for being flexible with the staggered arrival times. Completing the Daily Health Checks before arrival has helped the process run smoothly. I am impressed with how well your children are accepting the temperature checks and drop-off outside. Let's keep the staggered time for one more week (2's/3's at 9:30, 4's at 9:40, multiple siblings at either time). Fingers crossed we can do away with it soon!

One-Way Loop: Thank you for driving slowly into the parking lot and being mindful of other children/parents getting in and out of their cars. As you leave our school, please continue driving in the same direction out of the parking lot so we can maintain our one-way loop around the school.

2's Lunch Bunch: We will begin our optional Lunch Bunch for 2's on Tuesday, October 6. Lunch Bunch will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays for our 2 year old classmates from 12:00-12:30. You can sign up for one or two days each week. You can sign up for the entire year in advance, one month at a time, one week at a time, or on a drop-in basis. The cost is \$5 per session. Lunch (nut-free) is brought from home, but water and milk are provided at school. If you are interested, please let me know!

Pizza/Ice Cream Social: Unfortunately, this St. Peter's tradition has been canceled due to the pandemic, but we are exploring ways to safely hold smaller gatherings for each class to get to know each other. We are considering *Pizza and Popsicles in the Parking Lot* or *Pizza and Popsicle Picnic*. Let me know if you have thoughts on how we can build community while still staying safe. Thanks in advance!

Facebook Pages: Our private FB pages for each class are up and running! Please check them out for adorable pictures of your kids having fun learning. You are welcome to invite spouses, grandparents, or other family members, but please try to respect everyone's privacy by keeping it a small private group. Check out our general St. Peter's Preschool page for announcements and reminders applicable to the entire school.

As always, don't hesitate to see me if you have any questions or concerns.



Dates to Remember

- 9/7 Labor Day – no school
- 9/11 Luke Wessell's birthday
- 9/12 Frank Bender's birthday
- 9/14 Enid Splitter and Sydney Gemi's birthday
- 9/18 Charlie Busch's birthday
- 9/21 Lena Kahls' birthday
- 9/28 Emily Groomes' birthday
- 10/1 Clayton Radcliffe's birthday
- 10/6 Lunch Bunch begins



School Board

The St. Peter's Preschool School Board is looking for a parent volunteer from each class to join the Board. The Board is composed of the Rector of the church, the Preschool Director, a church vestry representative, the Preschool treasurer, and parents.

We will meet every other month in the evening via Zoom to discuss how school is progressing and to brainstorm ideas for the future of our school. Our first meeting will be in October. If you are interested in having your voice heard, please contact me.

READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Celebrate the beginning of the school year by reading some back to school books. See the link below for some good ideas.

<https://preschoolinspirations.com/back-to-school-books/>



One thing we do at school is teach children how to name their emotions and recognize what they look like. For example, "Your face is red, and you stomped your feet and crossed your arms. You look angry!" or "Your feet look like they're dancing, and you have a big grin on your face. Are you feeling excited?" With all of us wearing masks these days, it is more important than ever to teach children how to read people's faces, despite the most expressive part of our faces being covered up. This article describes good strategies you can try at home to make something that can seem intuitive to adults more explicit for young children.



Helping Children Understand Emotions When Wearing Masks

Young children look for emotional cues from caregivers to help interpret the environment and rely on their caregiver's facial expressions, tone of voice, and body posture to identify and understand emotions. Here are tips and ideas for helping children identify emotions when your face, your most expressive feature, is covered by a mask. Use these strategies to let children know that behind the mask, a kind and warm expression is still there!

1. Practice emotional expressions with a mask on in front of a mirror. Pay attention to facial cues that can be seen, body movements, and hand gestures.
2. Incorporate ASL when teaching emotions (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91foGHKuwL0>).
3. Direct children to look at your eyebrows, eyes, body movements, and gestures when talking about emotions. For example, "Look, I am happy. You can't see my mouth smile, but my cheeks lift up, my eyes crinkle, and my shoulders and arms look like this."
4. Increase the use of gestures throughout the day and when talking about emotions (e.g., shoulders shrugged for sad, arms out to indicate a happy mood).
5. Talk about your feelings as much as possible (e.g., "I am feeling happy that it is almost time to go outside and play."; "I am feeling sad that it is raining right now."; "I am feeling excited that we have a new toy in centers today.>").
6. If using an emotion check-in, encourage all adults in the classroom to participate and check-in when the children do (https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/FeelingFaces_chart_template.pdf).
7. When talking about emotions, hold up the corresponding emotion card or visual near your face. Consider wearing a lanyard with a visual of an emotion expressions (e.g., tired, happy, excited, sad, angry, mad, nervous).
8. Be sure to face children and remain nearby when talking to them while wearing a mask. Wearing a mask muffles the speaker's speech, which can make it more difficult to understand what is said.
9. Provide an activity for children to practice wearing a mask and making different faces while looking in a mirror or at each other. Point out how their face looks (e.g., eyes, eyebrows).
10. Allow children to use masks during play with stuffed animals to help familiarize them with seeing masks in their environment.

