

Preschool Newsletter. November 27th ~ December 1st



Ms Lyn had her baby!

Ms Lyn left the preschool early on Monday. Her son, Slayde, arrived the following evening. The children were excited to see his picture and we decided to make cards for Ms Lyn. The children collated their chosen color paper and dictated notes on the inside. Some children simple said, "I miss you" others offered words of congratulations. Sophia, who recently acquired a baby brother reminded Ms Lyn to take care of her baby and change his diaper! We hope to see Ms Lyn soon and will get the cards to her as soon as possible.



May I Take Your Order?

Over the last couple of weeks our dramatic play area has transformed into a restaurant. The children brainstormed all of the things we would need to include and we discussed the people involved. Next, we rearranged furniture and added props. We also got rid of all of our plastic play food opting for more open ended materials. The children have had a lot of practice playing with pretend food but these can be limiting. If you are given a toy made to look like a hotdog, it is hard to imagine it as anything else yet when you are given a plate full of corks, you can pretend they are anything! The more experience children are with dramatic play, the less realistic their props need to be and the more they engage in symbolic representation. Symbolic representation is a skill that begins early into toddlerhood and is the basis for math and literacy-both of which are symbol systems.



Dramatic play also assists in building self-regulation which is perhaps the most beneficial skill a child can learn before entering Kindergarten. During dramatic play, the child takes on a role.

The specific outfits or props help to determine that role and serve as a reminder for the child to stay in character. The chef cannot sit down at the table with the customers and the customer cannot get up and wash dishes. The host does not cook the food and the server only takes orders and delivers food. This is not easy but is part of the unspoken rules of a play scenario.



Children must exercise inhibitory control meaning they may have to resist doing something they want to do-serve the food- in order to stay in their play role-chef not server. They are intrinsically motivated to inhibit their desire to shift roles as the desire to keep playing takes precedence.



Embedding Literacy

Children are motivated to play in dramatic play scenarios such as the restaurant for extended periods of time. We can take advantage of this intrinsically motivated, self chosen activity and embed the environment with functional literacy. Functional literacy is giving the children a reason to read and write. For example in the restaurant we create menus, signs, and provide them with clipboards and writing utensils for taking orders or writing bills. The child thinks they are just playing and play indeed they are. However, they are also utilizing their emerging literacy skills. Research has shown that having a teacher or adult engage with the children and participate by modeling literacy behaviors and acting as a co-player, childrens Engagement in literacy behaviors increases dramatically. So if you see us in the restaurant please feel free to join in and know there is more to play than meets the eye.

