

Bright Horizons at Long Ridge

January 2015



READY for SCHOOL Parent News

What about READY for SCHOOL for Babies?

How early is too early to start thinking about getting children READY for SCHOOL? Should we be thinking about school readiness even with the youngest children? We should - but probably not in the way you might typically think. Here are a few tips:

A well-functioning brain is an organized network. The network is made up of brain cells (neurons) and the connections between neurons (synapses). Synapses link up to form neural pathways. During the first three years of life, most of the synapses are formed. Synapses that are activated frequently (as a baby or toddler is talked to, touched, interacted with) tend to become permanent. Those that aren't used, or are used infrequently, tend to be "pruned out." Interaction with caring adults in the first three years of life is critical for brain development and ultimately, for success in school. As learning to read grows from competency in language skills, and language skills start in infancy, the very beginnings of learning to read also start in infancy. Talking to children frequently is crucial. Research has shown that children of talkative mothers have larger vocabularies than children of less talkative mothers. But it is not just talking to children, but talking responsively which is important - a child coos or babbles and you coo or babble back as if you were having a conversation. The "give and take" of language is almost as important for babies to learn as the words themselves.

Learning language is facilitated by the universal way in which adults tend to speak to babies across cultures, sometimes called "Parentese." This type of speech, characterized by higher pitch, shorter phrases, slower speech, and repetition, assists children in learning language. This is different from what is commonly known as "baby talk." When adults use "parentese," they naturally adjust the quality of their speech to what babies are attuned to hear. Babies as young as three months also begin to attune themselves to the emotional intonations of the speech they hear.

Reading to children, even infants and toddlers, is the most important factor in children having later success as readers. Nursery rhymes and songs also help children remember words and learn the pattern and rhythm of language.

Television and computer programs, while they can offer a form of language stimulation, do not offer the skill of the caregiver in adapting his/her verbal interaction to the situation. Nothing replaces the interaction between the baby and caregiver in learning language.

To read more: Wolfe, P & Nevills, P. (2004). *Building the Reading Brain*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

Important Dates

The Center will be closed
Monday, January 19th
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Preschool and Kindergarten Prep
Showcase
Thursday, January 29th 6-7:00PM

Parent Survey Now Available—Your
Feedback is Important to Us!
To complete the survey, please visit
www.brighthorizons.com/parentsurvey.

Happy Birthday!

Nurseries

Haydn and Rowan D.-3rd
Rishi B.-8th
Quinn H.-9th
Amelia T.-19th



Toddlers

Zina A.-14th
Mathis L.-15th
Eric C.-24th

Teachers

Ms. Claudia-5th
Ms. Krislynn-14th
Ms Nadia -21st
Ms.Shatorra-24th
Ms. Svitlana- 26th

Connect with Bright Horizons



Classroom Highlights



Infants are learning and developing new skills by exploring the world around them. We provide different movement activities for the babies to reach, grasp, push, pull, roll, and crawl.

In **Language Works**, we enjoyed singing "Pat-a-Cake" and listened to "The Whole World" book on CD while we looked at the pictures.

In **Art Smart**, we painted and explored materials with varied textures, colors, and patterns.



Toddlers have been doing fun math, science and art activities while learning about winter. In **Math Counts**, our older toddlers worked on early math skills by making patterns with unifix cubes. In **Science Rocks**, they added food coloring to the ice and observed what happened to the ice when it was left in the sensory table throughout the day. In **Language Works**, they read "Dream Snow" by Eric Carl. The children were encouraged to point to the pictures and repeat the words, such as "snow", "blanket", "coat", "gloves", "warm", and "cold."

The preschoolers learned about the trees and forest animals. They experimented with winter colors by exploring different textures of yarn, fabric, pipe cleaners, and cotton balls to make 3-D evergreen collages. In **Language Works**, the children are identifying letters and letter sounds by spelling and reading simple sight words such as "cold", "ice", and "snow". We also encourage the children to write these words in their writing journals. In **Science Rocks**, we are talking about winter weather and experimenting with water, snow, and ice in the sensory table.



Art Studio

Preschoolers started working on long term cooperative mix-media project; toddlers are painting with cake tempera paint and using colors including black paint. They enjoy seeing the contrast between the light and dark colors.

READY for SCHOOL News

READY for SCHOOOL Parent News: Data Analysis and Probability for Preschoolers?

Data analysis and probability may seem like big topics for preschoolers. But, without calling it data analysis, most young children are constantly collecting data, thinking about it, and making predictions. With a little guidance from their teacher at the center and you, as their parent, children enjoy delving into data analysis.

The New Year is a great time to start collecting data and learning about probability. The winter season gives us some unique opportunities: predicting and charting snowfall or time of sunset; tracking the progress of a New Year's Resolution; or even creating a prediction time capsule for the year to be opened next January. There are many ways to make it fun and meaningful.

One part of *A Child's Job* is understanding how everything works. As children explore, they are gathering data about their world and its workings. In the center, some ways that teachers help guide children to organize and understand this data they collect follow:

Teachers and children create group graphs by charting how many children share a particular characteristic or favorite (i.e., how many with brown/blonde/red hair?). Topics could include favorite fruit, number of siblings in the family, etc.

Teachers may encourage children to gather additional data from home for graphing. "Homework" could be the child asking his/her parent(s), sibling(s), or neighbors what their favorite color is. The person writes their name on a sheet of paper and the child colors in a sample of their favorite color which is then graphed in the classroom.

A classroom may have a "Counter of the Day". An item is chosen each day to be counted (noses, earrings, pockets, etc.). Each child gets a cube block for each item they have (2 blocks for 2 earrings) and then all the blocks are collected and counted.

At home, there are additional ways that you can support data gathering, analysis and probability: Sorting and classifying objects is another aspect of data analysis. Being able to make decisions about how to group objects helps children organize their data. Children typically learn to sort first by one attribute (like sorting by color) and then move to multiple attributes (sorting by color and size, such as grouping all the big blue objects together). Eventually children can tell you why a set of objects is grouped a particular way even if they didn't do the sorting themselves.

Model the use of probability vocabulary including *impossible*, *maybe* and *certainly*. Ask probability questions such as "Which group do you think will be bigger, the group of children who have a cat or the group of children without cats?"

Data analysis and probability are not outside the realm of preschool and kindergarten children. The trick is asking the right questions on their level to open up a lifelong disposition towards curiosity and data gathering.

Reference: Copley, J. V. (2000). *The Young Child and Mathematics*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

See How We Prepare Children for Kindergarten—and Beyond!



Join us for Kindergarten Prep & Preschool Showcase this winter! This event is an opportunity for you and your child to explore our Kindergarten Prep & Preschool programs.

Your family will have the opportunity to visit the NEXT age group for your child, meet the teachers and see the classrooms in action in a fun, exciting way. Our teachers will share classroom activities, and offer tips for parents on how you can extend learning at home to inspire your child's curiosity.

Our Showcase event will offer you a chance to:

Learn more about how we *inspire* children to become enthusiastic learners.

Meet with our teachers and be *inspired* by their love of education.

Visit our classrooms and be a part of the learning at our *Inspiration Stations* with your child.

Connect with current and alumni families and learn about their *inspiring* journey with Bright Horizons.

Watch out for your personal family invite and bring a friend to share in the inspiration!

Parent Survey Now Available—Your Feedback is Important to Us!

Each year, Bright Horizons full-service centers and schools distribute a [Parent Satisfaction Survey](#). This is your opportunity to let us know if we are continuing to meet the needs of our families.

The annual survey will be available **January 2 through February 2, 2014**.

We are committed to providing the highest quality care for your family. We appreciate the feedback and use the parent survey results to create an action plan and make improvements based on your comments. Every opinion counts, so please take the time to complete one and help us improve our center.

To complete the survey, please visit www.brighthorizons.com/parentsurvey.

Please feel free to contact parentsurvey@brighthorizons.com with any questions or concerns.