

Schraffts News

September 2014



From the Director

**Experience *a day in the life of*
your child at**

Curriculum  Night

Tuesday, September, 23, 2014

5:00 pm – 6:00 pm

*Parents in all age groups are invited to join
us for an orientation*

into your child's year at Bright Horizons

During Curriculum Night, you will:

- Learn about your child's daily classroom schedule and activities
- See how the various pieces of our *The World at Their Fingertips*® curriculum are brought to life throughout the day
- Meet with your child's teachers to ask questions and discuss learning objectives for the upcoming year
- Learn more about how and why we host family conferences and schedule a personal parent conference with your child's teacher

Important Dates

September 1st: Center Closed

September 2nd: Mr. Ron @ 10am

September 10th: Pajama Day!

September 16: Family Matters Series
webinar (see page 4 for more information)

September 18th: Mr. Ron @ 3pm

September 23rd: Curriculum Night 5-7pm

September 26th: Big Joe @ 10am

Reasons to Celebrate

Josie S. 9/12

Kathryn P. 9/16

Happy Birthday!

Connect with Bright Horizons



Classroom Highlights



Infants

Some of our older infants sat together for snack time and had some delicious, fresh watermelon! By enjoying meal time and becoming receptive to a variety of flavors and textures, the children are beginning to learn about nutrition. Our Well Aware curriculum component encourages us to help children develop healthy life skills. Offering healthy foods at an early age helps children to develop good eating habits. Picking up the pieces of watermelon is a great fine motor exercise. The children use their pincer grip to select the piece they want to eat and get it into their mouth. The children did a great job and are really developing their self help skills!



Toddlers

The children in toddlers stayed cool by playing in the water on the playground! They helped to fill up the water tables, jump in the sprinkler, and use spray bottles. While filling and dumping cups in the water table, the children are beginning to experiment with space and volume. They used the funnels to pour water through and fill up the other containers. The teachers asked questions such as “Where do you think the water will go when we pour it into the funnel?”, and “How much water can you fit into that cup?”. What a great way to develop scientific thinking skills!

Preschool

The children in preschool used the wooden pieces from our Handwriting Without Tears kit to practice creating letters. They held their sticks up high to show us the letter “T”! When discussing how to write a letter, some of the preschoolers remembered that we start at the top! They are really retaining the information so well! Everyone practiced holding their pencil correctly and tracing the first letter of their name. These are some of the beginning steps to developing pre-writing skills!



Kindergarten Prep

The children in Kindergarten Prep spent some time doing art by the waterfront. The children used powdered tempera paint to create colorful designs on the white paper. Next, they took spray bottles full of water and began to spray the paint. By spraying the paper with water, the paint became wet and began to create different designs. Some of the colors ran together to make different colors. Spraying more in one area made the color lighter, while just spraying a little bit in another area left it fairly dark. What a great way to experience cause and effect while exercising our creativity!

READY for SCHOOL Parent News: Stages of Children's Writing

Learning to write is a significant developmental milestone in young children's lives. Writing and reading go hand in hand, and the development of one encourages the development of the other. Like so many other aspects of development, writing skills generally unfold in a predictable sequence. The typical stages that children's writing follows are listed below. The ages accompanying these stages are rough guidelines and vary widely.

1. **Making a mark:** (18 months to 2 ½ years) Through experimentation, children discover that the writing instrument they are holding (crayon, marker, pencil) can "make a mark." Initially, children discover this as they experiment with cause and effect relationships, but later, making marks becomes more purposeful. The "doing" of the mark is more important than the end product to toddlers and twos. This stage includes experimenting with all the different ways to make marks, including scribbling, jabbing, or marking back and forth. The sheer joy of making marks is the focus. Older infants or young toddlers may experiment with making a mark, but it becomes more deliberate in older toddlers and twos.
2. **Marks have a meaning:** (2 ½ to 4 years) Sometimes unintentionally, children look at the marks they have made and think they look like something. This is the very beginning of deliberate writing – marking for a purpose. Children will wonder, "How do I make that again?" Some marks might be designated as pictures, while others are designated as writing of some sort, i.e., "That says 'Michael'." The marks may all look the same to adults, but they mean something different to children. Gradually the marks children make for writing begin to look different from the marks used for drawing. At the same time, young children begin to understand that adults use written letters and words to communicate. Understanding that writing has meaning is a powerful motivator.
3. **Marks begin to resemble letters:** (3 ½ to 5 years) Children often start first drawing lines or lots of lines next to each other. Or they may draw lines of scribbling versus circular scribbling. Either way, it begins to more closely resemble letters or even cursive writing. Eventually children move to "mock letters" which resemble letters, but aren't exactly letters (i.e., an E with five horizontal line instead of three). This is typical around age 4. Mock letters typically contain many of the strokes in real letters – straight lines and curves.
4. **Writing more closely resembles standard letters:** (4 to 6 years) Children come to understand that there are a finite number of letters. Mock letters are used less frequently.
5. **Writing includes "mock words":** (4 ½ to 6 years) Children write standard letters in groupings that resemble words, but aren't actual words.
6. **Phonics-based spelling:** (5 to 6 years) Children attempt to write words the way they think they sound. This is typical for many kindergarten-age children.

A few ways to encourage children in their writing:

1. Keep a well-stocked writing center in your home with lots of different types of paper (lined and unlined, construction paper, small tablets, etc.) and writing tools (crayons, fat and thin pencils, pens, etc.). You can also add clip boards, erasers, rulers, sample letters to copy, etc. Add new materials occasionally to keep your child's interest.
2. Ask your child to tell you about her written work.
3. Encourage your child to tell stories. Either write down what he says or have him attempt to write it down with support as needed. Write grocery lists, invitations for play dates, or emails to relatives and friends.
4. Offer play dough, lacing cards, manipulatives and small blocks to help build the fine motor muscles necessary for writing.
5. Keep early writing experiences fun and playful. Make them meaningful and relevant whenever possible. For example, children generally gain more from writing a letter to grandma than from completing workbook pages.

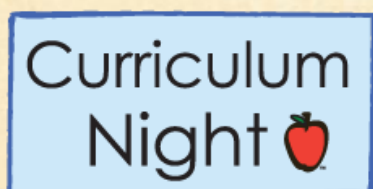
Schickedanz, J. A. & Casbergue, R. M. (2005). *Writing in Preschool: Learning to Orchestrate Meaning and Marks*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association

Bright Horizons News



Curriculum Night 2014: “A Day in the Life”

Experience a “Day in the Life” of your child at Curriculum Night 2014. Parents in all age groups are invited to join us for an orientation into your child’s upcoming year with Bright Horizons.



During the event you and your family will have the opportunity to: familiarize yourselves with your child’s classroom schedule and activities, see how the various pieces of *The World at Their Fingertips®* curriculum are brought to life each day, and meet with your child’s teachers to ask questions and discuss learning objectives for the upcoming year.

Share in your Bright Horizons experience and invite your friends and family to join you at Curriculum Night. Please see your Center Director or your child’s teacher if you have questions or would like more information about Curriculum Night.

REGISTER NOW: September installment of the Family Matters Webinar Series!

Family Matters

A Bright Horizons Webinar Series

Parenting: Being Proactive and Positive
Tuesday, September 16, 1:00 pm EST

www.brighthorizons.com/positive

Bright Horizons Family Solutions,® presenting in collaboration with guest speaker Amy McCreedy of [Positive Parenting Solutions](#), is bringing you the next installment of the Family Matters Webinar Series on positive school-age discipline.

Join us during this webinar to learn and explore proactive parenting techniques that will help to fulfill your child’s emotional need, foster good behavior, and eliminate the power struggle that often fuels bad behavior.