

Bright Horizons at Harrison Park News

Renee Thompson, *Director*

Jennifer Murphy, *Executive Director*

September 2014



From the Director

Bright Learner

The family-teacher partnership at Bright Horizons at Harrison Park helps children build a positive attitude toward themselves, toward language, literacy, and all other areas of the curriculum. Together, we can provide a stronger program for your child to foster a lifelong love of learning. The best teacher and family partnerships are based on frequent opportunities to share information. One of these opportunities is through parent-teacher conferences. This month we will be offering conferences for Infant, Toddler, & Early Preschool families. Preschool & Kindergarten Prep will hold conferences in November. Please sign up for a time to have an in-person or phone conference with your child's teacher. This is a prime opportunity to spend one-on-one time with your child's teacher to discuss where your child is developmentally and to set goals for the next six months. Sign up sheets are on the front table in Building I!



Congratulations to Abby Creel, Simon An & Sara Jones for receiving \$200 tuition credits through our Family Referral Program!

Important Dates

September 1: Center Closed

September 7: Grandparents Day

September 13: Cary Citizen Scavenger Hunt

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

September 23: Curriculum Night
5:00-6:30 pm (Dinner Provided)

Infant, Toddler & Early Preschool Parent/Teacher Conferences
September 10, 11, 16 & 17
Sign Up Sheet are on the Front Table

Staff Anniversaries

Melissa **9/7** **4 yrs**

Brynn **9/10** **5yrs**

Maureen "Mimi" **9/27** **13 yrs**



Connect with Bright Horizons



A Peek Into the Classroom



Preview of Harrison Park Curriculum Night

What will I learn at Curriculum Night?

You will be exposed to all areas of our curriculum through documentation and hands-on activities, Q&A with the teachers and daily routines.

Who will I get to meet?

Your child's team of teachers & fellow parents

Why is this important?

Curriculum Night will give you a detailed insight of what your child is able to experience on a daily basis.

When is Curriculum Night?

September 23; 5:00-6:30 (Dinner Provided)



A Day in the Classroom

For all age groups (Infants-School Age) learn through open choice free play, routine activities and projects, outdoor exploration, fine and gross motor games and daily conversations with adults and peers.

Open choice free play is child-directed and teacher enhanced. Teachers use this time to observe and ask open ended questions to ensure that children can take imagination to the next stages. They also give the children enough freedom for trial and error; but, help boost the "why" behind the puzzles, games and other intricate activities.

Activities and projects vary according to the classroom weekly lesson plan. Activities usually last one day; whereas projects tend to last for several days. Activities and projects are planned; but sometimes they can be spontaneous depending on the interest of the child and children of the classroom.

Outside is a prime time for children to explore nature and all it can teach you. Exposure to math and science is endless; it can be as simple as leaf matching and comparing lengths of sticks or bug discoveries and gardening.



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.

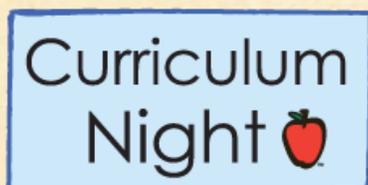
Schickedanz, J. A. & Casbergue, R. M. (2005). *Writing in Preschool: Learning to Orchestrate Meaning and Marks*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association

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.