

Kidopolis News

January 2015



Best Parenting Articles of 2014

Developing Critical Thinking Skills in Children

Want to help your kids build a foundation for critical thinking? Here are [tips on how to help children think critically](#) and become better problem solvers.

Toddlers and Twos: Parenting During the "No" Stage

As toddlers learn to speak, it's hard to avoid the "no" stage. Find tips for parenting through [two year old behaviors when "no" becomes their favorite word](#).

Preparing for the First Day of Child Care

The [first day of child care](#) is a big step for both parents and kids. Find parenting tips for preparing yourself and your children to make the transition easier.

The Role of Grandparents in a Child's Life

Parents can find helpful tips to understanding and navigating the important [role of grandparents in their child's life](#) with communication and respect.

Planning Your Child's Birthday without the Stress

Need kids birthday party ideas? Party planning doesn't have to be stressful. Follow these [tips to plan a fun, stress-free celebration](#) for your child.

Moving Up to Toddlers in Child Care

Just when you were feeling comfortable with your child's teachers in the infant room, you find out it is time to think about moving up to toddlers. Get these [tips to make the transition to the toddler program easier](#) for kids and parents.

Ideas to Improve the Morning Routine for Parents with Babies

For new parents with infants, getting ready in the morning can feel chaotic. [Improve your morning routine](#) with some ideas to get ready like a pro parent.

The Value of Children's Play for Development

Learn the [importance of children's play time](#) for your child's development like emotional growth as well as interacting with others to make new friends. Discover the stages of play that child go through as they grow.

Important Dates

Monday, January 19th –

Center Closed for MLK



Thursday, January 22nd –

Karen D., 14 years of Service



Monday, January 26th –

Miss Sabrina's Birthday



Tuesday, January 27th –

Laura K., 1 year of Service

Wednesday, January 28th –

Preschool/KPrep Showcase at 5:00 PM

As a new year is upon us and our children grow and age into their new classrooms, we have many children looking to join our program. If you are expecting any changes to your family or schedules in the next year, please know that there is a waitlist for our Infant and Toddler programs. Please contact Gladys if you have any questions, concerns, or to put your name on our list.

Connect with Bright Horizons



Classroom Highlights



Infants

Children are active learners who learn best from activities they plan and carry out themselves. From birth, they are communicators who need a world filled with books, language experiences, opportunities for a rich social life, and great conversation. The children were encouraged to communicate while playing with telephones. The teachers encouraged children to communicate during various activities throughout the day. This helps develop listening and social skills.



Toddlers/Twos

Kinetic sand is a new tactile compound that has an amazing new texture, ability to be shaped, twisted, sliced or even tossed. The Twos class has been using their hands and coordination skills to achieve what they set out to craft. This new product is soothing to work with and encourages children to use their fine motor skills. Improved small muscle control combined with more developed hand-eye coordination, makes it possible for children to exercise their newly found autonomy to dress themselves and use scissors, writing and art tools.

Preschool

Scientists gather information about how the world works by using certain basic processes: observing, classifying, experimenting, drawing conclusions, and communicating. Like scientists, preschoolers are also exploring the world and collecting information to figure out for themselves how things work. In Preschool, the children are using their STEM skills to make erupting, liquid-chalk for use during their outdoor play.



Kindergarten Prep

Science is the process through which we learn about the world. Children are natural scientists, impelled to dive into the primordial muck with all of their powers and make sense of it. The children in the Magazine Room extended their Science Rocks learning by hypothesizing whether items would sink or float. Their observations helped them conclude that heavy items, like oranges sink to the bottom, while lighter items, like legos, float.

READY for SCHOOL Parent News: Encouraging an Interest in Geography

Preschoolers are not too young to learn about geography. Like most areas, if you keep it fun and communicate your own interest in the topic, children will become excited and interested in learning more. As you may be talking about places children have not seen, any way you can keep it as concrete as possible will be helpful (i.e., use real objects and pictures whenever you can). Let your child's interests lead you. If you end up with a different topic than where you started, that is great! Here are some ideas:

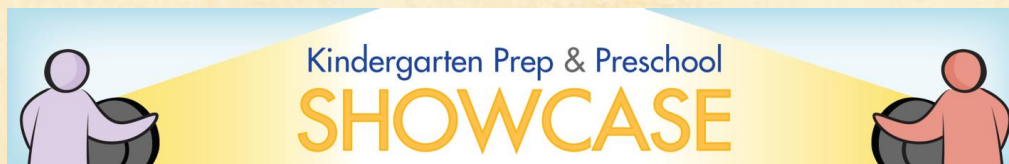
- An early stage in understanding geography is learning to use directional terminology. Regularly use directional words in talking to your child such as “next to,” “above,” “below,” “beside,” “right,” “left,” etc. Terms like “north,” “south,” “east,” and “west” may be a little too abstract for young children to comprehend.
- Let your child see you frequently using maps (even on your phone or electronic device) to decide your subway route or driving plans, to plan a vacation, etc.
- If you travel a lot as part of your work, have a map in your house and mark it with your child for each trip to show where you are traveling. Similarly, prior to your next family trip, mark the map when you travel together.
- On family trips, talk about how varying areas have different plants, animals, climates, terrain, etc. Talk about what is the same and different from where you live.
- When a book or TV program talks about a city, state or country your child is unfamiliar with, look it up on the map. Always have a map or atlas handy. You can also use the globe to find countries.
- Take a walk through your neighborhood or apartment building and create a map together with your child. Start with your house or apartment – talk about who lives next door and have your child draw that place if he is interested. Add favorite landmarks like playgrounds, a restaurant he likes to visit, his early care and education center, your workplace, or other places you visit frequently. Label the landmarks – you can write the letters and have your child copy them, or your child can use invented spelling to create the labels. Remember that the “doing” or the process of the activity is much more important than the accuracy and the final product.

There are many excellent children's atlases which use mostly pictures rather than words to describe areas of the world; we especially like *National Geographic Kids: The United States Atlas* or *Children's World Atlas* from DK Publishing. Consider purchasing one for a special birthday gift.

Bright Horizons News



See How We Prepare Children for Kindergarten – and Beyond!



Explore with us your child's NEXT classroom during our Kindergarten Prep and Preschool Showcase. This event offers families the opportunity to get a sneak peek to the next stage of education with Bright Horizons.

During the event, our teachers will be sharing classroom activities highlighting STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematic) learning, offering ways in which families can extend STEM learning at home with your child.

Our Kindergarten Prep and Preschool Showcase event offers a chance to:

- Experience your child's NEXT classroom
- Engage in activities focused on STEM learning
- Meet with our teachers and be inspired by their love of education
- Connect with other families in your Bright Horizons community

To learn more about the Kindergarten Prep and Preschool Showcase event at your center, talk to your center director, or child's teacher. We look forward to you joining us during this family event, be on the lookout for your personal family invitation!



Parent Survey Coming Out This Month!

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 5 through February 6, 2015**, and we will also send out an email during early January with the link to the survey.

The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete. Its purpose is to gauge our families' satisfaction and opinions on a variety of topics. Your responses directly benefit our center and provide us with feedback on how we can better serve you!

Please feel free to contact parentsurvey@brighthorizons.com with any questions or concerns. Thank you in advance!