

Kidopolis News

September 2014



Teacher Highlights

Brandi Kellum



Please join us in welcoming Miss Brandi to the Kidopolis family! Miss Brandi will work alongside Miss Sabrina in the Camp classroom. She comes to us from Fairfax, VA with a Bachelor's Degree in Special Education.

Amanda McKey



Please join us in welcoming Miss Amanda to the Kidopolis family! Miss Amanda will work alongside Miss Raquel in the LaSalle classroom. She comes to us from LSU with a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology.

Important Dates

September 16

Family Matters Series webinar

(see page 4 for more information)

September 22-26

Scholastic Book Fair

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who attended Curriculum Night 2014! We would like to ask you, our parents, to complete a short 2 minute survey on our Curriculum Night event. We are looking for feedback from both parents that attended as well as those that did not attend. We value your feedback and will use this information as we continue to plan events at our center in the future.

You can find the Curriculum Night 2014 Parent Survey [HERE](#).

Connect with Bright Horizons



Classroom Highlights



Infants

Children are active learners who learn best from activities they plan and carry out themselves. Playing with manipulatives involves children building on fitting things together. This play is important as it helps children develop their fine motor skills and eye hand co-ordination. Children become more confident and competent in using all the different tools and equipment they use in life. Our infants are exposed to many types of manipulative toys. In the picture, you can spot Henry working on a puzzle.



Toddlers/Twos

The visual arts are part of a child's world the minute they open their eyes. This is an integral part of how they learn about the world. Engagement in the arts allows children to make decisions, take action, learn about cause and effect and begin to understand their bodily powers. In addition to enhancing imagination and self-esteem, the arts enhance development of children's skills in literacy, science, math, social studies and social interactions, resulting in a growing sense of competence.

Preschool

The Wetland Wildlife Express program offers an up-close experience with our wetland's most important inhabitants. Students will learn about the wildlife that depends on the wetlands for their homes, meals and nurseries. This connection to wetland animals will help to foster future stewardship to protect Louisiana's most important resource-the wetlands. Notice how the children are able to interact, petting creatures found in the nearby wetlands of Louisiana!



Kindergarten Prep

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 Kindergarten Prep, the children are using their STEM skills to make erupting, liquid-chalk for use during their outdoor play.

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.

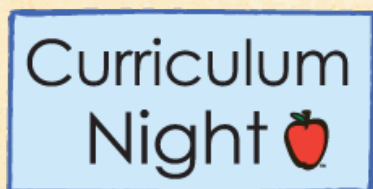
Schickedanz, J. A. & Casbergue, R. M. (2005). *Writing in Preschool: Learning to Orchestrate Meaning and Marks*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association

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!



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.