



Good Shepherd Lutheran Preschool

Home + School Connection Preschool Newsletter

January 2019

Volume 28, Issue 4



Block Play Builds Academic Skills

The Blocks Center is one of GSLP's most popular and educational classroom interest areas. The fun starts with wooden unit blocks—chunky squares, rectangles, and triangles, plus wedges, cylinders, and more children can use to build towns, zoos, and cross-classroom highway systems.

Kids learn math here through identifying shapes and using them to create patterns. Blocks invite counting practice—how many did we just stack to make this tower as tall as me? How many more rectangle blocks do you need to finish that freeway? Kids can also compare block lengths or tower heights to learn measurement. And of course, putting the blocks away again is the ultimate sorting task!

Math may be the most obvious area of focus for block play, but it's far from the only knowledge children construct here. Our students build literacy skills by creating or retelling stories with the toys in the Blocks Center. Road signs, cars and trucks, multicultural figures, and animal toys help constructions come to life. Books inspire building plans, and pencils and paper are available to label creations.

Kids sharpen science skills through observing what happens when they stack blocks or send a model car down a ramp. Kids also reenact scripts from everyday life, such as driving or working, to grow in social studies. Working cooperatively to build promotes social and emotional growth. Plus, constructing things builds creativity and problem solving, building higher-level thinking skills.

Open-ended toys like blocks are great for promoting learning at home! Consider investing in your own blocks to keep the learning going. Assorted small wooden blocks and soft foam blocks are affordable and easy to find, or for a bit more you can start building a collection of wooden unit blocks just like those at school. Amazon has unit blocks starter sets, and Lakeshore (lakeshorelearning.com) offers a variety of blocks and accessories to expand your collection.

Kindergarten Readiness Workshop

Pre-K teachers Bonnie West, Lori Forcey, Melissa Ganz, and Lindy Parrales will lead a Kindergarten Readiness Discussion on Fri., Jan. 18, at 12:30 PM in Shepherd's Hall.

Our teachers will discuss the variety of skills schools are looking for in incoming kindergarteners. They will also share suggestions for activities families can do at home to prepare children. Finally, staff will provide basic information on registering for kindergarten.

The discussion, in addition to conferences, may also help with deciding on placement for next year.

Children not in class may attend with caregivers.



GSLP is a mission of
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
www.goserve.net



Take a Mindful Moment Together

Research suggests that emotional intelligence is a strong predictor of later success in life. We also know that elementary schools consider strong social-emotional skills to be key to kindergarten readiness.

With this in mind, GSLP is working toward a greater focus on these foundational skills in understanding and processing emotions, demonstrating empathy and kindness, and building self-awareness and self-control.

One technique classes have worked to increase attentiveness is mindful breathing. Even our twos have learned this technique to help build calm and focus.

You can try mindful breathing at home with your child. Whenever you need “a moment” or want to encourage your child to focus, try this method: Put your hand up. Ring a bell once and wait for the sound to fade. When it does, put your hand on your belly and take three deep breaths together.

Fun Fact: January is named for Janus, the two-headed Roman god. One head looks back to the old year, while the other looks ahead to the new!

Resource Roundup

GSLP Weekly Emails

GSLP sends a weekly email newsletter to preschool families to keep them informed about family events, school news, and upcoming deadlines.

The weekly email is sent out on Mondays and gives an overview of the week ahead as well as the next several weeks. It kicks off with a message from Ms. Fischer, followed by several short articles.

At the bottom of every email, there is a list of important dates. Keep an eye on this list to know what's in store this month.

Please contact the office if you are not receiving our weekly emails.

Stay Safe in the GSLP Parking Lot

Young children are constantly coming and going in the GSLP parking lot. Always remember: Safety first! Here's how you can help protect our kids:

- **Drive slowly and carefully while in the driveway and parking lot.** Young children can dart out unexpectedly from between cars. In addition, church staff and visitors, including many senior citizens, must cross the driveway to reach their cars.
- **Always hold the hands of all children in your care when walking in the lot.** It's easier for drivers to see adults than small kids. Holding hands also keeps curious and active children from dashing into driving lanes.
- **Never let a child stand outside the car while you buckle or unbuckle another.** Have kids wait inside the car while you buckle each one into a safety seat. (To get help with installing safety seats, make an appointment at www.weblinksa2z.com/md_montgomery_public/)
- **Never leave kids in the car when coming into school!** Get to know the other parents in your child's class and add them to your authorized pick-up list. Create a “Pick-Up Pals” group text to let them know you need someone to sign out your child (a great strategy for avoiding late fees, too!). If an extra hand is unavailable, call the office if you need someone to walk a child out to your car. ***It is illegal to leave children under age 8 unattended in a vehicle, including sleeping babies.*** (For more information, visit www.peoples-law.org/unattended-children.)
- **Pay close attention to children when chatting in front of the school.** Kids can quickly wander into traffic while a care provider is distracted.



Family Fun in our Community

Beat cabin fever with these fun activities and places to visit this month:

Cabin John Ice Rink (www.montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/cabin-john-regional-park/cabin-john-ice-rink/): The Cabin John Ice Rink in Rockville offers a Parent and Tot Skate for children 4 and younger with caregivers every Wednesday and Friday from 11:15 AM to 12:15 PM. One adult and one tot can skate for \$4 (including skate rental); additional tots are \$4 each. The rink also offers a Family Skate on Sundays from 12:30 to 2:30 PM. Group classes are offered by the county for children 3 and up. Also check out Wheaton Ice Arena for more skating fun.

Black Hill Regional Park Visitor Center (www.montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/black-hill-nature-programs/): Black Hill Regional Park offers ongoing nature programs for young children and their parents, including Yoga in the Woods (yoga class exploring themes in nature) and Wild Child Hike. Check out their website for a calendar of upcoming events.

Gaithersburg Community Museum (www.gaithersburgmd.gov/about-us/city-facilities/gaithersburg-community-museum/): Exhibits at this museum, located in a historic train station in Olde Towne Gaithersburg, include the interactive One-Room School with games and lessons from decades ago and the Railroad Learning Center, which offers kids the chance to build their own railway. The museum also features a "rolling stock exhibit" of several historic trains. You can also stop in for StoryTime Station, a monthly event for children ages 3 to 6.

Gaithersburg-Washington Grove Volunteer Fire Department Fire Museum (www.gwgvfd.org/content/museum/): The Fire Museum features a refurbished 1980s fire truck that kids can climb into, as well as coats and helmets they can try on. Be sure to bring the camera!

Conferences FAQ

When are conferences?

Winter conferences will start on Jan. 29. Check your class bulletin board for exact dates and times.

What will we discuss?

Conferences are an opportunity to discuss how your child is progressing in all curriculum areas, including social-emotional, motor, and academic skills.

How can we prepare?

Teachers will send home a questionnaire that asks about your child's feelings about school, interests, and areas where your child may need assistance. Please return surveys by Jan. 17 or 18.

What will we see?

Teachers will review questionnaires, progress reports, photos of your child engaged in learning activities, and work samples demonstrating progress.

How do we sign up for a time?

Check your class bulletin board for sign-up sheets. Times go fast, so have a few backup choices.

What if listed times don't work?

Conferences are important, and it is impossible for teachers to show your children's growth through photos and work samples over the phone. It is expected that you will make time in your schedule for conferences.

Try It At Home!

Teddy Bear Biscuits

- 1 7.5-oz. tube butter-milk biscuit dough (with 10 biscuits)
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 2 tbsp. sugar mixed with ¼ tsp. cinnamon

Use one biscuit for the body. Cut another to make two arms and two legs, and another to make a head and two ears. Place pieces next to body to form a bear. Brush with egg. Sprinkle with cinnamon sugar. Bake at 425 degrees for 8-10 minutes.

Fluffy Snow Painting

Create pictures with puffy drifts of snow with this simple mixture.

- Shaving cream
- Elmer's glue
- Heavy paper (such as construction paper)

Mix approximately equal parts shaving cream and glue to create a soft, puffy paint. Spread it on paper with fingers (fun, messy sensory play!) or a large paintbrush.

Variations: Mix in glitter or tempera paint to create different looks for your puffy paint. You can also sprinkle on lightweight plastic jewels, confetti, or small paper shapes.

Note: Shaving cream cans aren't toys! Always supervise this activity.

Community Resources

Teach Kids to Be Kindergarten Ready

Maryland's pre-kindergarten standards (mdk12.msde.maryland.gov/parents/index.html) provide insight into what schools look for in incoming kindergarteners. GSLP, as a state-accredited school, keeps up to date on the evolving standards that are used for evaluating rising kindergarteners and uses this knowledge to inform our practice.

Here are some signs of kindergarten readiness in children:

- Shows curiosity about what is new and different.
- Identifies and communicates feelings and ideas with complete sentences.
- Demonstrates self-direction and independence in self-care tasks and class activities.
- Follows basic health and safety rules.
- Demonstrates memory of the past and the ability to apply it to new situations.
- Carries out three-step directions independently.
- Can control impulses and delay gratification.
- Is excited about school and learning.
- Makes and keeps friends.
- Understands concepts about print (such as how to hold a book, knowing that the words tell the story, and which direction you follow to read text).
- Identifies at least 30 letters.
- Writes random uppercase and lowercase letters.
- Recognizes and writes name.
- Matches letters with their most common sounds.
- Identifies spoken words that share initial sounds.
- Identifies rhyming words.
- Counts at least 10 objects, pointing to each one.
- Makes groups of up to 5 items; tells how many are in the group without having to recount.
- Recognizes numerals and connects them to the correct quantity of objects.
- Draws a person with recognizable features.
- Recognizes and draws simple geometric shapes.
- Uses scissors with confidence and purpose.

For tips on how to help your child get ready for kindergarten, visit www.readyatfive.org.

2019-2020 Enrollment Information

The 2019-2020 Enrollment Application is available on GSLP's website (www.gslp-gaithersburg.org/enroll). Paper forms are available upon request.

Enrollment forms are due by **1:30 PM on Fri., Feb. 8**. Current students, student siblings, and church members receive priority placement in classes **ONLY** if forms are received by the deadline. After Feb. 8, all applications are processed on a first-come, first served basis. Don't miss out!

Applicants will receive class placements the week of Feb. 11. Upon placement, a nonrefundable \$85 registration fee and first tuition payment and a signed enrollment agreement are due by Feb. 22 to reserve the spot.

Please note that final teacher assignments are not made until summer. Teacher assignments should not be assumed to remain the same and should not be considered when choosing classes.

Book Nook

Unleash a Child's Imagination with Animal Stories

By Lori Forcey, GSLP Pre-Kindergarten Teacher

We're kicking off the new year in Book Nook with a heapin' helpin' of animals and winter. Pre-K's Awesome Animals theme provides us with too many quality book choices this month, so we picked a couple of lesser-known titles we hope you'll enjoy. Additionally, we threw in a snow book in our own little "Book Nook Snow Dance" to hopefully bring Mrs. Parrales the snow she longs for.

What If You Had Animal Hair?, by Sandra Markle:

This hilarious read casts a spotlight on the follicular features of some of our favorite animals (polar bear, reindeer, lion, porcupine) and some lesser-known but equally intriguing creatures (musk ox, oryx, Arctic Fox, three-toed sloth, giant pangolin). What makes this book special is that opposite each informational page loaded with facts and real-life animal pictures is a hysterical illustration of a kid with hair like that

animal. Sure to draw loads of giggles. Find this book at your local library.

Still A Gorilla!, by Kim Norman: Willy, the cute and charismatic baby gorilla, wishes he could be another kind of animal. He wanders the zoo in search of another animal to become, but he soon learns that just dressing and acting like another animal doesn't make him one of them — he's "still a gorilla." Filled with rhyming words, adorable illustrations and one silly Willy. Find this audiobook in our lending library.

Sneezy the Snowman, by Maureen Wright: Sneezy has a big problem. He's too cold! So the children give him a nice, hot drink, and *oops!* Now he's melted into a puddle. Oh no! The children don't panic though; they simply rebuild him. But now he's too cold again. How will the madness end? This silly story of trial, error, and finding the perfect solution can be found in our lending library.

2019-2020 GSLP Class Schedule

GSLP will be in session from Sept. 11, 2019, through May 29, 2020. Monthly payments represent the annual tuition divided by nine.

Early Pre-Kindergarten 2

Must be age 2 by Sept. 1, 2019. Toilet training NOT required.

Two-Day Early Pre-K 2 **\$255/monthly payment**
Tuesday and Thursday 9:30 AM–12:00 PM

Early Pre-K Plus **\$75/monthly payment**

Extends EPK 2 class until 1:30 PM.

Program and payments begin in October. Requires enrollment in Two-Day Early Pre-K 2. Final enrollment based on readiness.

Early Pre-Kindergarten 3

Must be age 3 by Sept. 1, 2019. Toilet training REQUIRED.

Two-Day Early Pre-K 3 STEAM **\$285/monthly payment**
Tuesday and Thursday 9:30 AM–1:30 PM
Early Entrance: Must be 3 years old by Mar. 1, 2020. Toilet training NOT required.

Two-Day Early Pre-K 3 **\$285/monthly payment**
Tuesday and Thursday 9:30 AM–1:30 PM

Three-Day Early Pre-K 3 **\$385/monthly payment**
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:30 AM–1:30 PM

Pre-Kindergarten

Must be age 4 by Sept. 1, 2019. Toilet training REQUIRED.

Three-Day Pre-K **\$370/monthly payment**
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:30 AM–1:30 PM

Five-Day Pre-K **\$545/monthly payment**
Monday – Friday 9:30 AM–1:30 PM





The bear went over the mountain
The bear went over the mountain
The bear went over the mountain
To see what he could see
To see what he could see
To see what he could see
The bear went over the mountain
The bear went over the mountain
The bear went over the mountain
To see what he could see

Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the
ground,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, show your
shoe,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, that will do.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, go upstairs,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, say your
prayers,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn out the
lights,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, say good
night!

Four little snowmen fat,
Each had a funny hat.
Out came the sun
And melted one.
What a sad thing was that!
(Continue with 3 little snowmen, etc.)

Thumb in the thumb place,
Fingers all together
This is the song we
Sing in mitten weather.
Whether it's sunny
Or it's snowy weather,
Thumb in the thumb place
Fingers all together

“Good morning,” said the sun.
 “Good morning,” said the sun.
 “I’ll be shining on you all day long.”
 “Good evening,” said the moon,
 “Good evening,” said the moon.
 “I’ll be dreaming with you all night
 long.”

Early in the morning, jumping out of
bed,
Reaching up my arms way over my
head,
Eating up my breakfast, running out
the door,
If you like the song, I'll sing it once
more!

Are you sleeping, are you sleeping,
 Brother John, Brother John,
 Morning bells are ringing, morning
 bells are ringing
 Ding, ding, dong, ding, ding, dong.
 Frère Jacques, Frère Jacques,
 Dormez vous? Dormez vous?
 Sonnez le matines, Sonnez le matines;
 Din Din Don. Din Din Don.

There were ten in the bed and the little one said,
“Roll over, roll over.”
So they all rolled over and one fell out,
There were nine in the bed and the little one said,
“Roll over, roll over.”
So they all rolled over and one fell out...
(Count down through one)
There was one in the bed and the little one said,
“Good night!” (or “Alone at last!” or “I’m lonely!”)

Oh, Mister Sun, Sun, Mister Golden Sun,
Please shine down on me.
Oh, Mister Sun, Sun, Mister Golden Sun,
Hiding behind a tree.
These little children are asking you,
To please come out so we can play with you.
Oh, Mister Sun, Sun, Mister Golden Sun,
Please shine down on me.

I've got peace like a river
I've got peace like a river
I've got peace like a river in my soul
(repeat)
vs. 2: I've got joy like a fountain
vs. 3: I've got love like an ocean

Let's clap, let's clap together,
Let's clap, let's clap together,
Let's clap, let's clap together,
Now everybody praise the Lord.
vs. 2: Let's stomp...
vs. 3: Let's jump...
vs. 4: Let's dance...
vs. 5: Let's sit...
(Make up verses.)

Rise and shine and give God the glory,
glory,
Rise and shine and give God the glory,
glory,
Rise and shine and * give God the glo-
ry, glory,
Children * of the * Lord **
(*clap)

