

Little Bridges News



June 2011

Calendar of Events

Donuts For Dads

Friday 6/17

Summer Camp Starts

For kids entering 1st -6th
June 20 – August 19

CLOSED

Fourth of July

Monday 7/4

CLOSED

In-Service Staff Training

Monday 8/22

Tuesday 8/23

Enrichment Classes

Art & Soul

Tuesdays

Tuff Tumblers

Thursdays

Science/Math/Magic

Varies

Soccer Shots

Mondays

CCPC Happenings

Vacation Bible School

June 13 - 17

Sunday Services

Services 8:30 & 10:00 am
Sunday School 10:00 am

Parent Survey – Thanks for the Feedback!

Thank you to the 127 families who took the time to fill out our Parent Survey. Your responses affirmed what we are doing here at Little Bridges. We take pride in all areas of our program – from the curriculum and the environment to the teachers and ways we communicate with you. Of course we are not perfect, and your comments are useful to us as we plan our goals for the next school year.

The data from the surveys has been shared with all our teachers and the results are available for parents to look over. Each classroom has a copy of the results posted. I have tried to address some of the more popular requests below.

Did You Know?

Communication

Every classroom at Little Bridges uses several communication tools to keep families informed. We use daily whiteboards, have information notebooks, write up weekly calendars, publish monthly newsletters, replace children's boards every week and send out emails to all parents. Phew! If you are not sure what's happening in the classroom – just ask or better yet, look around.

Daily Schedules

Each classroom has a posted daily schedule. The early mornings and later afternoon times include open centers for children to explore and socialize. More structured activities like circle time, journals, art projects, math centers and specials take place in the middle of your child's day. If you would ever like to observe a lesson, please come by! Children are learning all the time and we think we balance out their day with a variety of activities. Check out the article I wrote for this month entitled "What Kids Really Learn in Preschool".

Tuition Rates

I do an extensive tuition and program survey every year and know that what we offer here is unique and very fairly priced. I also conduct teacher salary surveys every year and can say that we offer the very best for our well deserving teachers.

Closure Days

Little Bridges is closed on all Nationally Observed Holidays. We feel strongly that we give our teachers these important days off. We also close for two days before the start of the new school year for teacher in-service training.

Our Door is Always Open

The parent survey always gives us a good sampling of how we are doing. It is nice to be reaffirmed and appreciated, as well as hear suggestions for improvement. Our most important goal here is to help raise your children in a loving, Christian environment where they can experience the wonders of God's world. Please know that Yumi and I want to hear from you throughout the year. Come by any time with concerns, comments or praises!

What Kids Really Learn in Preschool

High-quality early-childhood programs build a firm foundation that makes it easier for children to learn to read, earn good grades, and develop productive friendships. These crucial academic and social skills are pieces to a child's inner core that stay with them the rest of their lives. Below are the ten most important things your child will learn at Little Bridges whether she goes for five full days or only two or three mornings a week.

1. How to be a student. To a visitor, one of our preschool classrooms can seem chaotic, because children are free to choose from a set number of centers activities, toys, and playmates. Yet underlying this easygoing atmosphere are many rules and routines designed to teach children how to conduct themselves in a classroom and be part of a group. Kids as young as 2 know where to put their finished art projects, how to line up to go outside, and where to sit when it's time for a snack. At storytime, for example, children can't wander away from the group or interrupt the teacher the way they might do when reading at home with a parent.

2 How to make friends. Preschool offers opportunities for learning how to forge friendships and settle differences with and without the help of a parent or caregiver.

Preschoolers learn how to approach other children and be comfortable around them. They figure out how to start up a conversation by focusing on the other person - by saying, 'What are you doing?' instead of 'I can build a bigger tower than that.' " This social savvy benefits kids as they get older and need to work on school projects in pairs and groups.

3 How to be independent. Parents automatically tend to help their 3- or 4-year-olds with the small tasks of everyday life, such as fastening buttons, putting on their jacket, or carrying their show-and-tell treasure from the car to the classroom. But preschool teachers, who may need to get 20 or more kids quickly into their coats and out onto the playground, encourage students to take more responsibility. Children learn how to put on their shoes, open their own juice boxes, and remember to wash their hands after going to the bathroom. This early practice in self-care skills will help give your child confidence in other settings, such as at a friend's house, where you're not around to intervene.

4 How to tell a story. Although experts believe that pre-schoolers should not be pushed to learn to read, these young students can still develop a love of books. Children should feel that books open up the whole world to them.

Preschoolers have plenty of opportunities to hear stories as well as to tell them and act them out with their friends. Listening to stories helps them grasp the concept that a plot has a beginning, a middle, and an end, and it also motivates them to want to read on their own. Children begin to realize that print is something very meaningful and powerful.

5 How to ask for help. You can't have fun on the playground if your tummy hurts or there's tanbark in your sneakers but you're too timid to tell the teacher. Preschoolers develop the confidence and inner strength to speak up. Research has shown that having caring, responsive relationships with their first teachers helps children form productive relationships with subsequent teachers and other adults. Young children will approach new relationships with confidence if they've already had some positive experience in accepting authority from adults outside their family.

6 How to cut and paste. Those scribbled drawings and goey collages your preschooler brings home each week are more than expressions of his creativity. When children work with scissors, glue sticks, and crayons, they're developing the fine motor control that will help them form legible *b*'s and *d*'s and even take class notes in high school. This small-muscle development is critical during the preschool years.

7 How to build a block tower. Preschool block builders hone their spatial skills and gain hands-on math experience. When children play with blocks and other 'manipulatives,' they learn to sort and classify. So, when children are building a tower and run out of long blocks, for example, they'll discover that they can use two short blocks instead. This experience gives kids a solid foundation for understanding division, fractions, and geometry.

8 How to recognize symbols, concepts, and rhymes. Though they may not be ready to read, preschoolers are usually able to identify numbers and letters. Kids practice saying and writing the letters in their name, reciting simple number sentences, and even learning the letters in their classmates' and teachers' names. They generally develop a useful understanding of colors and shapes -- knowing, for example, that mixing two colors will create a third or recognizing that someone's hat is shaped like a triangle. Learning nursery rhymes and songs also helps children academically. Kids who know how to rhyme will learn to read more easily, and evidence suggests that music instruction at an early age can help children in math.

9 How to hop, skip, and jump. Children play outside nearly every day, strengthening their muscles and developing their coordination. Running, sliding, climbing, and playing with balls are all important ways in which children learn how to control their bodies, refine their large motor skills, and develop self-confidence.

Time spent on the playground also gives preschoolers opportunities for independent problem solving ("How do I move my legs to peddle this bike?") and social interaction ("Want to play house with me?"). This free play is a very different experience from going to the park with a parent or caregiver, who will watch a child more closely, offer suggestions for navigating the equipment, and applaud every achievement.

10 How to investigate and explore. Preschoolers are natural scientists, and they benefit from having plenty of opportunities for hands-on, self-directed experimentation. Curiosity leads to discovery - which leads to an intrinsic love of learning. Students who always have teacher or parent-directed experiences get used to being told what to do. But in our child centered program, where children are encouraged to choose activities and classroom materials on their own, students are prepared to do the kinds of independent projects that higher grades require.