

Little Bridges News



November 2009

Calendar of Events

Food Drive

11/2 thru 12/4

CLOSED – Veteran’s Day

Wed. 11/11

Conferences

Tigers	11/9 - 11/13
Jaguars	11/12 & 11/13
Tigers	11/16 & 11/17
Giraffes	11/17 & 11/18
Penguins	11/16 - 11/20
Koalas	11/19 & 11/20

CLOSED - Thanksgiving

11/26 – 11/27

Enrichment Classes

Art & Soul (3-4 yrs)

Tuesdays

Tuff Tumblers (2-4 yrs)

Thursdays

Science/Math/Magic (3-4)

Thursdays

Kinderdance (3-5 yrs)

Wednesdays

Art & Soul Music (K-5)

Piano Lessons Mondays

Canyon Creek Church

Sunday Services &

Sunday School

8:30 am and 10:00 am

Preschool Conferences

All pre-school classes (three-year-olds through pre-kindergarten classes) will be holding parent/teacher conferences this month. Sign-ups will be posted in your child’s classroom and I would encourage you to take the opportunity to schedule a one-on-one conversation with your child’s teacher.

Parent/teacher conferences provide you and your child’s teacher time to talk face-to-face with each other in an uninterrupted setting. It’s a chance for you to ask questions about the class or your child’s progress, and it gives the teacher an opportunity to share observations and work with you. It is also a time for you and the teacher to work together as a team to discuss ways you both can enhance your child’s learning and growth in all areas - cognitively, emotionally, physically and socially.

Food Drive

Little Bridges is sponsoring a food drive for the Contra Costa County Food Bank. We will be collecting food for the entire month of November. Our goal is to fill all 4 bins at least twice, which would be a donation of 1,000 pounds of food!

The Contra Costa Food Bank currently serves over 82,000 people every month and distributes about 8 million pounds of food a year – enough food for 6.4 million meals! The most needed food items include powdered milk, peanut butter, canned meats and stews, cereal, fruit juices, tuna, pasta, rice and beans.

Speech and Language Screening

Adriane Marsh, M.A., CCC-SLP, will be conducting speech and language screenings at Little Bridges on November 23rd and 24th. Adriane has been with the SRVSD for the past ten years and has two preschoolers of her own. The screenings will briefly assess language comprehension, expression and speech clarity. Registration forms will be sent home next week. If you are unsure if your child needs a speech-language screening, please consult with your classroom teacher.

Little Bridges is Going Green!

We are excited to announce that we have just put a recycling program into place throughout the school! Every classroom now has separate bins for paper and recyclable items.

Your children are not only learning about recycling, but about reusing and reducing as well. You can help by using labeled Tupperware-type containers and supplying reusable utensils when packing lunches.

We thank you in advance for supporting our environmental efforts!

Thoughts From Ms. Jacque...

Are You Afraid the Sky Is Falling?

Thomas the Tank Engine has been tainted with lead. Cell phones for 7 year-olds and GPS watch locators for kids. Infant helmets for wee ones taking their first steps and households with toilet lid locks. Too much homework robs our kids of childhood. But their futures are doomed without a math tutor. Immunize – no, don't!

Fear is plaguing modern parents. We are no longer just afraid of the Big Bad Wolf. Today, we worry the sky is falling. Every choice, it seems, is laden with hazards.

Do we let our children walk to school unsupervised or go on a fieldtrip without us? Or do we drive them and risk coddling? Do we let our kids experience ups and downs at school? Or call the teacher as soon as they complain about a bad day? Do we let our toddlers explore with scissors and dig in the mud? Or keep everything dangerous and dirty away from their hands? Do we let our children climb trees barefoot and go outside without a jacket? Or cover them from head to toe every time they step outside?

We want to keep our children safe and close at hand. But then there's that other threat – that well into their 20s they still won't want to leave the nest and they won't have the skills to cope.

Lately, I've had a creeping recognition that the biggest thing to be feared may indeed be fear itself and what it's doing to children and grownups alike. Do we really want to be raising our children in fear? Does monitoring our children constantly really relieve our anxiety?

I would argue that the risks of all our adult fretting, hovering and second-guessing far outweigh the hazards of skinned knees, school-age spats or flunking a geography test.

I'm talking about a mourning for lost childhood that goes beyond simple nostalgia. And from early childhood specialists and pediatric health specialists there is overwhelming research that shows the importance of unstructured activity and the need for parents to back off.

When us parents are overprotective it's about our own needs and illusion of control. Sadly, we often end up intruding into important learning opportunities – at playgrounds, in relationships and through consequences. Which in turn, then causes anxiety levels in adults and kids. This protective, child-centered approach fails to instill in kids a sense of competence, self-confidence and independence.

My 8 & 9 year old told me that there are some yard duty teachers who won't let them play chase or tag on the school playground - I suppose in an attempt to prevent injuries and hurt feelings - but what's next? – no kickball, dodge ball or jump ropes?

Our world is becoming too sanitized and childproofed, and a yearning to recapture the days when kids built forts out of real nails and pursued each other over backyard fences is missing from our kids growing up years.

I fear that a generation of preoccupied parents has been raising a generation of children full of sophisticated knowledge that is useless when the power goes out or the batteries die.

So how do we parents balance keeping our kids safe and encouraging independence? Too much risk and we endanger a child - too little risk and we fail to provide a child with healthy opportunities for growth and psychological development.

Learning in incremental steps how to weigh risks and avoid real danger is what ultimately keeps children safe. Babies who bump their head on the coffee table discover it's hard. Older kids who walk to school together learn competence and independence. Teens who don't study and fail the math test find out about consequences.

A concerned parent provides scaffolding for growth, not just a life jacket for safety.

I actually got a phone call one day after I let my kids play outside in the front yard together unattended. "A bunch of us are concerned...." said the voice at the other end. It's an unmistakable message: "You're not taking proper care of your children."

But, doesn't proper care include allowing freedom at appropriate times? As children mature, they gradually need more leeway to learn how to make their way safely in their communities, to make mistakes and to struggle. Otherwise, they too will emerge as anxious young adults, unable to take responsibility, with a sense of entitlement but little common sense and unequipped to deal with adversity.