



“Families Matter” focus for spring session

text by Tina Reeble, Programs Liaison Specialist

It’s time to celebrate YOU! Family involvement is a key component that contributes to the on-going success of Dimensions Early Education Programs. The partnerships that are created between parents, other family members, teachers and our nearby community help to create a unique



Hanging out at the year-end Dimensions’ picnic.

culture at Dimensions that supports the development of meaningful, authentic relationships.

We all know from experience (and research confirms) that children thrive when they are surrounded by adults who genuinely care about them. As babies and toddlers begin to formulate a sense of self and an understanding of what the rest of the world is all about, they rely on the relationships with trusted adults who provide positive and consistent emotional support. By preschool, children are ready and eager to become an active part of the classroom community, and learn to socially navigate with and from each other. Our teachers at Dimensions genuinely care about the children and families they work with, which is evident in their ability to support the

social and emotional aspects of the classroom that help to enrich children’s participation in the learning process. Your support and involvement as partners in your child’s care is indispensable. It enhances and strengthens our relationship with your child.

“Family” will be one of the main topics of learning and celebration during the next few months. Each teacher will be planning experiences for their group that help the children share about their families. We hope you will take an active part in the many opportunities that will be coming during this time. Let’s strengthen our Dimensions community as we learn even more about each other and affirm the specialness of every child in our program.



NEFC News

text & photo by Chris Kiewra, Outreach Liaison

We were a small group but we had fun at our last meeting at Wilderness Park. Zachary followed animal tracks in the snow leading up to this hollow tree. He is trying to check inside.

Parent Advisory Council teams up for successful Book Fair

As many of you know our Book & Toy Fair was challenged this year by a winter blizzard. Thanks to a large group of volunteers an abbreviated version of the Fair was successfully hosted. More than 60 books were donated back to the program!

I’d like to thank all of the Book Fair volunteers for being flexible and helping out where they could.

Volunteers who were able to help out: The Hawke family, Karen Wills, Amber Swanson, Heather Fox, Julie Reager, Amy Schmaderer, Amy Sparks, Heather Brundieck, and Jennifer Kirkland. When the bookfair was rescheduled these volunteers were unable to help: Ron and Kay Fox, Shelli

Werling, Sara Weyenth, Jen Jorges, Jenni Brown, Catie Olds, Jenny Amend, Emily Faubel, and Halley Myrus.

Heidi Thurber, parent and Advisory Council member

Books donated:

Always in Trouble
Animal Friends
Baby Bear Baby Bear, What Do You See?
Bear Feels Scared
Beetle Bop
The Best Nest
Big Bad Bully
Birds
Body Basics Bones
Charlie’s Superhero Underpants
Colors, the Rainbow of the Natural World
Crazy Hair Day

Dewey: There’s a Cat in the Library
Dinosaur Roar
Dogs Don’t Brush Their Teeth
Duck at Door
Froggy Plays T-Ball
Hello Baby!
I’m Your Bus
Gingerbread Friends
How do Dinosaurs say I Love You?
A Kiss Goodbye
A Kitten Tale
Library Mouse
Llama Llama Mad at Mama
Look Inside the Human Body
Lost in the Snow
Merry Christmas Mouse
My Book of Bugs
Oh David!
On Meadowview Street

The Perfect Nest
Puff the Magic Dragon
Purpicious
Skippy Jon Jones and the Big Bones
Skippy Jon Jones In Mummy Trouble
Skippy Jon Jones, Up and Down
Splat the Cat
Some Dog
There was an Old Lady who Swallowed
a Bell
Too Many Toys
The Tiny Seed
The Very Cranky Bear
A Visitor for Bear
When Santa Lost His Ho Ho Ho
Where Snowflakes Fall
Where the Wild Things Are
Where’s My Mummy?
Who’s My Mom

Staff development takes teachers out of classroom and into the park

text by Tina Reeble, Programs Liaison Specialist

When is the last time you spent a morning on a silent walk through the woods, looking and listening for the wonders of nature?

Our teaching staff participated in just such an activity this past fall as part of their staff development. We know that it is important to periodically rejuvenate our spirits personally so that we can be our best selves when we are learning with children.



During a regularly scheduled staff meeting in early October one of our Certified Nature Explore Trainers, Natalie Ragland, facilitated experiences for the teachers at Pioneers Park. The activities were designed to allow participants uninterrupted time in nature to focus on sensory engagement, close observation skills and communicating through movement.

These are key elements in our Nature Explore workshops that have been



Coffee & Conversation

Open to all parents & caregivers of small children. Fridays, January 8 & 22, from 9:30-10:30 a.m. We will brainstorm topics for the coming months, including potential speakers and discussion ideas. As the New Year begins, we may also share intentions or resolutions. Add your voice to the mix! Children are welcome. Please contact Erin Glenn-Hash, eglenhash@yahoo.com with questions.

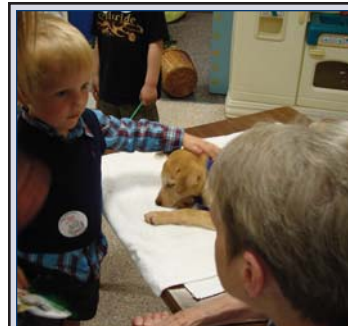
Parenting Workshop

This free workshop will cover a range of issues regarding parenting struggles and strategies, as well as offer support for the ups and downs of raising children. Classes meet Wednesdays, Jan. 6-Febr. 3, 6:15-7:30PM, at First-Plymouth Church. Led by Dr. Meghan Davidson, Assistant Professor, UNL, and Licensed Psychologist, and Kathleen Maynard.

Email addie@firstplymouth.org or call 476-7550 to register. Limited enrollment so call soon!

developed based on the on-going research and field testing that takes place with our teachers as co-researchers here at Dimensions.

The staff had opportunities to share personal reflections that helped to deepen relationships and understand and communicate even more effectively with each other as well as discuss implications for their work in the classroom, which strengthened their skills as a teacher. It was a very meaningful event for both new and



Max bonds with a puppy from the Humane Society.

Save the date!

Make sure to save the date for our all new bigger and better event for families! This event will take place Friday, February 12, from 5-8PM. Join us for a wide range of fun activities, great food and exciting raffle items. Ticket order forms will be released in the very near future!

Pajama Days
January 20th & 21st,
feel free to wear
your favorite pjs!

veteran teachers and contributed to the valued cohesiveness of our teaching staff.



Preschooler shows early literacy skills

text by Holly Murdoch

Dear Mom,
 I love all the ingredients and all the flowers and all of the wolves and all of the hugs. I love all the ingredients of the world. I forgot the pancakes word. And Will Levy. He loves pancakes.

Drew

Drew brought a clipboard, pencil and paper to Ms. Murdoch and said "Ms Murdoch, would you write this down for me?"

Drew's first statement "I love all the _____" sounded like greens. After some investigation I confirmed that he meant ingredients. He said "Yeah, ingredients."

Drew carried around the clipboard and letter to his mom with him for the rest of work time which was about another 20 minutes. During that time he took a pen and wrote below and over the top of my writing. I commented to Mrs. Haley that Drew had written the message another way for himself.

Nature Explore® Classrooms are part of a national initiative that we are working with in partnership with the Arbor Day Foundation.

Dimensions First-Plymouth Early Education Programs is a non-profit 501(c)3.

Newsletters and Program information can be found on-line www.dimensionsfoundation.org or contact earlyed@dimensionsfoundation.org