

Information for Parents and Families of Our Program

Wear Your Costume on November 1 and/or 2

We have a number of fun activities taking place for Halloween. Your child is invited to wear a Halloween costume on Wednesday, November 1, and/or Thursday, November 2. Please let your child be your guide. Some children love wearing Halloween costumes and some do not. Sometimes children just like to bring a costume to show... and that is just great. There is a fine line between fantasy and reality for young children. We try to keep things fun...but not scary for children.

Watch your child's cubbie for the Book/Toy/Gift Fair Flyer!

Let us help you with your holiday shopping at our annual Dimensions/First-Plymouth Early Education Programs Holiday Book/Toy and Gift Fair, November 15-17.

The Fair will take place in the Resource Room and Mayflower Hall. Days and hours are Wednesday, Nov. 15, 9AM-4PM (Scholastic Books only); Thursday, Nov. 16, 9AM-5:30PM; and Friday, Nov. 17, 9AM-4PM.

Choose from quality books for all ages from Scholastic, wonderful toys and gifts from Discovery Toys, and many gift items from family home businesses like: Sugar Shack candles, Arbonne, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Wonder-Full

Images (nature greeting cards), and Taste of Home Entertaining. We hope to make holiday shopping fun and easy ...and 20% of your purchases go back to help your child's school.

Thursday, November 14, 7-9PM, we will have two very informative workshops for anyone that has children or works with children. The first hour will help you find out ways to help your child love to read from infancy to independence. During the second hour, explore field-tested materials that will help your child develop visual spatial skills. Encouraging visual spatial development ultimately enhances math, science, and literacy learning. Several Scholastic Book gift certificates will also be awarded. (You can also browse the books for sale afterwards.) We hope to see you there!!!

On Friday, November 17, we'll have a fun Holiday Lunch by Godfather's and cookie-decorating.

Parent-Teacher Conferences – November 15, 16 and 17

Our first Parent-Teacher Conferences give teachers and parents a chance to get to know each other better and to share information about the children we all care so much about.

We really appreciate your taking the time to attend our conferences. (We'll have the Holiday Book/Toy and Gift Fair

open during conference times, so you can also get a little shopping done while you're here if you'd like.)

The great partnerships between families and staff help so much in being able to provide a truly quality early education program. I can't thank everyone enough for your support, suggestions, and donations. We couldn't do it without you!

from the Lincoln Journal Star 10/20/06...

Voters should give a boost to young brains

Amendment 5 is an extraordinarily good idea.

The proposal is aimed at providing enriching educational opportunities for at-risk children in Nebraska in the first years of their lives, when their brains are going through critical development.

Research shows that preschool years are critical in a child's intellectual development — not only in the cognitive ability that is essential to learning the three R's, but also in noncognitive abilities such as self-restraint and perseverance.

Proponents of the measure argue persuasively that investing money in early childhood education is a better investment than spending more money later on special education programs. In addition, they say, research shows early education makes it less likely that children will become involved in crime

**LSO Family Concert Series "Magic & Fantasy"; fliers by the Black Boxes.
Some complimentary tickets are available; call our Office at 476-8304.**

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Thoughts for Parents...

It has been our goal to make sure that we are serving healthy snacks for children while they are at Dimensions Early Education Programs. This is why we stress our Birthday Policy as listed in our Parent Handbook.

Please DO NOT bring a sweet, sugary snack for your child's birthday, for snack time or any other holiday. We will NOT be serving these sweet snacks to the children and will ask that you take them back home. If everyone brings this type of snack, we would be serving high sugar snacks several times a week or more. Some children, for medical reasons such as diabetes, allergies, or other medical conditions, cannot have these high sugar snacks and feel left out every time they are served. Thank you for understanding the importance of this policy. (See sidebar.)

From Center for Disease Control

- According to the Center For Disease Control (CDC), the percentage of overweight children aged 6-11 years has almost doubled since the early 1980's. The percentage of overweight adolescents has risen by nearly 300%.
- From 1994 to 2001, overweight among pre-school children aged 2-5 years, increased by 42%.

According to surveys of overweight/obese children and teens:

- 60% of overweight children already have one risk factor for heart disease
- 85% of children diagnosed with type 2 diabetes are obese
- 25% of overweight children are already showing early signs of type 2 diabetes
- Approx 20% of newly diagnosed cases of childhood diabetes are type 2, associated with obesity. This figure is up from 4% in 1990.

Environmental Causes of Child Obesity

1. Insufficient Calorie Expenditure Through Exercise
2. Excessive Snacking
3. Fast Food Diet
4. Family Behaviors
5. Body Image

From Child Care Center Connections newsletter; Vol 8 Issue 2

Today, childhood obesity is one of the major public health problems in the United States. Recent statistics indicate more than 20% of our young children are obese. (A child is considered obese if his or her weight is 20% or more above the ideal weight for a child of the same age, height and gender.) The increased consumption of empty calories, including soft drinks and high sugar foods, has been identified as one of the important factors contributing to this high rate of obesity. High sugar foods also can contribute to tooth decay.

"He who plants a tree, plants a hope." – Lucy Larcom

Theresa Frey

I/T Nature Explore Classroom Teacher

We'd like to thank our infant and toddler parents for their generous

donations to the Outdoor Classroom Tree and Plant Fund. We were able to purchase and plant a beautiful white bud tree in our Nature Explore Classroom.

The kind tree planters from Finke Garden Center invited our toddler friends to help dig the hole and cover the root ball. Some of our families were on hand to share the celebration.

Highlights of the event included scooping shovels of fresh, wet dirt into a green wheel barrow and finding big, juicy worms; and then dancing around the tree after we planted it.

There are funds left for spring planting projects and Nature Explore Classroom materials (like shovels and buckets).

Our sincere thanks to everyone who helped make this a special celebration.



Arbor Day Farm Visit is a Wonderful Adventure!

by Marie Woodhead, Parent

The leaves were bright shades of red, yellow, and orange. The sun was shining in a pool of blue sky. It was a perfect day for an adventure. We loaded the car and drove the short distance to Nebraska City and the Arbor Day Farm Tree Adventure.



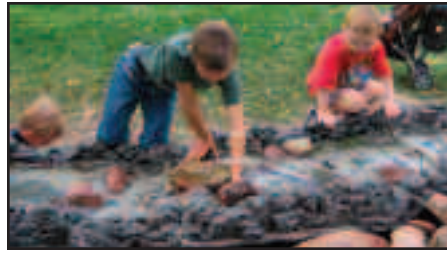
We began our experience walking along the Tree House Trail. It accommodated our stroller nicely. As we passed through the tall Sumac arches, we were quickly immersed in the beauty of the area. Along the trail, we encountered a giant Canopy Tree House, which was the perfect place to stop and sketch the trees in our notebook.



Further along the trail, we encountered the Nature Explore Classroom. This magical place has a variety of outdoor experiences to explore. We ran from one area to the next, eagerly engaging in the different activities. We loved getting our hands wet building with rocks in the waterway and playing the giant marimba.

Next, we visited the Apple House café. Our favorite treat was the apple cider slush, which was sweet and refreshing.

The highlight of our trip was picking apples in the orchard. The excitement was contagious as we moved from tree to tree finding the perfect apples. We



quickly filled a box with a variety of fresh apples to take home.

After picking our apples, we visited the Woodland Pavilion. This was the perfect place to relax and engage in an interactive learning experience. We wandered into the attached theatre where we enjoyed viewing a collection of movie clips featuring trees.

Finally, we visited the green house where we each received a little tree to take home and plant.

The day wouldn't have been complete without a trip through the gift shop. We emerged with glow in the dark butterfly nets, perfect for continuing our outdoor experience at home.

We truly had a wonderful adventure learning about the world around us and gaining a new respect for the role that trees play in our world. We recommend that everyone take a trip



to the Arbor Day Farm, it is a great experience for all ages.

Sue Erdkamp, Katelyn Erdkamp (8), Ethan Erdkamp (6), Atticus Woodhead (3), Lazlo Woodhead (4 months), Marie Woodhead



Children's Activities...

Spanish-Speaking Experiences

Senora Smith visited all the groups in our program Sept. 28th & 29th. They sang a call and response song that most of the groups already could sing in English. (Of course they learned how to say and sing it in Spanish.)

In English, the words are "Hello, Hello, Hello and How are You?" Children answer back by singing "I'm fine, I'm fine, and I Hope That You Are Too!" Spanish words are *Hola, Hola, Hola y Como Estas? Estoy Bien, Estoy Bien, y Espero Que Estas Tambien.*

Cold Weather Reminders

As a program and staff, we are committed to being outside regularly

and enjoying the beauty of nature all year round...so we'd like to remind families to please be sure to dress children accordingly and to mark their items with the children's names.

All age groups try to go outside as often as possible unless the weather is really severe. Dressing in layers during the colder months helps the children stay comfortable inside and out. Some things to keep in mind:

- wear socks and appropriate shoes for running, jumping and playing (such as tennis shoes)
- rain gear (raincoats, hats umbrellas, golasches, etc.) is a good idea, too
- come prepared with coats, mittens and hats (write children's names on clothing with permanent marker).

Emergency Clothes

If your child needs to use any of our clothes, please wash and return them as soon as you can so they will be available for when another child needs to use them.

Donation Requests

Preschool & Kindergarten

Needed for upcoming activities:

- ⊙ Yarn
- ⊙ Elmer's Glue
- ⊙ Crayola Watercolors

On-going Donations:

- ⊙ Toilet Paper Tubes
- ⊙ Small Boxes
- ⊙ Staplers
- ⊙ Band-aids
- ⊙ Masking Tape

Infant & Toddler

Needed for upcoming activities:

- ⊙ Pumpkins
- ⊙ Washable Tempera Paint

On-going Donations:

- ⊙ Kleenex
- ⊙ Glue Sticks

Staff Birthdays

Holly Murdoch11/17
JoAnn Rall.....11/25

Mark Your Calendars... Upcoming Events & Important Dates!

October 30-31 ... No School (Fall Break)

November 1, 2, 3 ... Full Day Discovery Days

November 14 ... Parent Workshop 7PM

November 15-17 ... Parent/Teacher Conferences

November 15-17 ... Holiday Book/Toy & Gift Fair

November 17 ... Family Holiday Lunch

November 23-24 ... No School (Thanksgiving Break)

November 27 ... Full Day Discovery Days

Dec. 21–Jan. 2 ... No School (Winter Break)

Events Held at First-Plymouth Church Open to the whole community!

Tower Club II...

... is a First-Plymouth group of couples and families seeking to connect with others through friendship, fellowship and service to the community. For info. call 476-7550.

First-Plymouth Halloween Ball

Sunday, October 29, 6-8 PM at First-Plymouth Church. All ages are welcome to attend this Halloween Fun filled night. Enjoy games, activities and other Halloween fun! Call Kathie at 476-7565 for more information.

*Newsletters and Program information can be found on-line ...
www.firstplymouth.org or dimensionsfoundation.org*

Information for Parents and Families continued from front page...

later in life, which means saving money on ruinously expensive prisons and the rest of the criminal justice system.

The programs mean that when children begin attending school, they are better prepared to learn and behave appropriately. Education groups including the Nebraska State Education Association are supporting the measure – even though it would deprive public schools of about \$1.8 million a year.

To establish a funding source, Amendment 5 would pledge the interest from \$40 million of the state's

permanent Education Lands Fund. This would be matched by a \$20 million endowment in private funds. Peter Buffett and the Susan Buffett Foundation have pledged \$5 million to get the endowment started.

Together the two funds would generate an estimated \$3 million annually for programs to help infants and toddlers when their brains are developing rapidly and they are acquiring the basic language skills they'll need for success later in life.

That's why voters should mark their

ballots for Amendment 5.

POGO Cards Still Available

Thank you to all the parents and families who have supported our program by purchasing POGO Cards! We still have a few on hand (and will be able to place another order); remember friends and family who might welcome the holiday gift of a POGO Card!

We really appreciate your support in this, since it is our ONLY fundraiser, outside of events, for this year. It really helps our program!