



Greenhills Cooperative Preschool

March 2016 Newsletter

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Enhancing Education Through Parental Cooperation for over 50 years



First and foremost a great big THANK YOU to all of the Greenhills teachers and staff for another amazing school year!

Administrator Notes

This is our final newsletter for this school year! Where did the year go? We have gone from Toddlers holding onto someone's legs coming down the hallway--- and seeing "George" to "big boys and girls" running to greet friends, play "soccer", letting us know that they can get their hands washed by themselves, etc. Isn't it amazing how much growth and development has occurred this year! And all of us adults have made new friends, learned to "let go" a little bit and grown as parents and teachers of a wonderful group of children. Thank you all for choosing the Co-op as a source for your children's early education!

I send a specific Thank You to Sadie Ridings and her family (3's class) for the donation of some "new to us" dress up clothes, play purses, a new baby doll, some "clamping shoes", puzzles, etc. Thank you so much for thinking about us as you prepared to move!

I also want to thank the Co-op Board that we had this year! You all did a fantastic job! Blessings to those of you that are not coming back "on Board" either because your child is leaving the co-op for Kindergarten, or your life has taken you in a new direction of busy-ness. We appreciate all that you have done for and with us! Those board members are, Erin Mann (fantastic fundraiser) and her amazing co-worker Kristen Otto! Kristen's youngest one is headed off to "big school" and Erin is trying to get her home business off the ground. (if you need any Mary Kay products, see Erin) Thank you also to our leaving Advertising mom, Amy Plante. We will miss you also!

Now to thank our returning board members!! We are so grateful to all of you for your continuing support. Kristin Lanham is our fearless Chairperson, She has done a wonderful job this year keeping everyone on task! Shelli Hoffmann will be returning for her 20th (I think) year as our very trusted Treasurer. Jen Mandeville is going to continue as our first line of contact as the Registration/Licensing Chair, Mark and Jeannie Steven (our current Team Special Events co-chairs) will be our new Fundraising Team. (You go Team Fundraising, we are looking for

ward to your enthusiasm!) Our new advertising team will be Kristen and A.J. Boothe. (They are coming back to school with a younger sibling in the fall) and, last but not least will be our Recording Secretary, Jodi Ridings. At this point, we are looking for a co-worker for our Special Events position. (I think that Christina Reardon will be working on this committee but she would love to have someone step up to be her co-worker!) If you are interested, please contact me (Jan Johnson) or talk with Kristin Lanham.

I will be sending out 1 more set of medical reminders. They are for children that have summer birthdays or had summer well child check-ups last year. These will only be sent out to families that will be returning next year. Please remember to take the form with you to your appointments and just send them back with the summer packets that you will be receiving(via email, so please let us know if your email address has changed since you filled in your registration form) at some point in June/July. Remember that your child's medical ----form is good for 1 year after their exam, so if you have already turned in a form since September/October, it will still be good to start the new school year.

We will be sending out an email about the Greenhills Pioneer Days Parade. (June 25th) We always have a Co-op section marching in the parade. Come with your bikes, wagons, co-op shirt, candy to throw some water and ready for about a 1 mile walk around Greenhills. We would love to have a big turn-out! It is great fun and a good way for us to do some advertising and showing off how much fun we can have as a group.

Again, I thank all of you for your support of The Greenhills Cooperative Preschool. You have all been wonderful to work with this year! If your family is leaving, us for whatever reason, you will be missed! Stop in to see us at any-time! If you will be returning, we are looking forward to a great 2016-17 school year with you. Blessings to all of you and have a wonderful summer!

Co-operatively yours,

Jan Johnson



3's news

WOW! This school year has seemed to just disappear! I apologize for any slip-ups of not notifying folks way ahead of schedule for some events. So many activities just seemed to pop up before I thought of sending home notes to give everyone more time to prepare! I also forget that we have new to our school, families that might not know what our routine is!

We have had a great year with our 11 fun loving boys and 3 very dear girls. Thank you to all of my parent helpers. We had so much fun, even though I don't feel like I got as much done at circle time as I would have liked at times. I think that all in this group will do just fine on their college entrance exams!! What a fun group! I will miss each and every one of your children! It has been wonderful getting to know so many grandparents this year also!

Have a wonderful summer and I can't wait to see you all at my house for a summer picnic! I promise, I will send home a note about this before school is out.

Thank you again for a wonderful year and keep reading with your children. It is the best thing to do to help your child develop a love of reading. (which will help them even more on those college entrance exams!)

Blessings and hugs for all of you!



Fours News

Hope you all had a fun and relaxing Spring Break! Well, we certainly have been experiencing some very strange weather - lots of sun and clouds and wind and rain and warm weather, and cold weather.... Hopefully, the cold weather is done for good!

We began April by taking a look at Spring weather - rain and all! (Did you know that we made it rain in our classroom? We counted 50 drops!) We wrote Spring stories and we made caterpillars and butterflies, and pussy willows. The children made some awesome bird nests - eat your hearts out birdies! We had a great time on Backwards Day, wearing our clothes backwards or inside out, talking lots about opposites, and doing as many things as we could think of backwards. We ended the month with a unit on the zoo and a visit to the Cincinnati Zoo. Fun was had by all!

May brought preparations for our Mother's Day Brunch. The children worked on many surprises for their moms, and they were so excited to show Mom (or Grandma) to their seat and to all their surprises. I think everyone had a wonderful time!

During the last two weeks of school, we will be talking about pets. Watch for some interesting and unusual "pets" to come home! For "Fun in the Sun" day, tentatively scheduled for Friday, May 13th, we have many fun activities planned on the patio: chalk, bubbles, water table, etc. (Please pray for no rain!) Wednesday, May 18th is our last day of school and we will be having a "make your own ice cream sundae" event (for the kids only) followed by an end-of-the-year program. We will be performing some of our favorite songs from this year (plus a brand new one). Everyone is welcome to attend. The program will be at 11:00 a.m. Bring family, friends, and cameras!

What can I say? It's been a fun-filled year. Your children are delightful and have provided us with much fun, hugs, and love - not to mention some great stories! They have grown so much and learned so much - it is really amazing! Please spend as much time as you can with them and make some wonderful memories. Let them know every day how special and precious they are - a wonderful gift from God! It has been a blessing and a privilege to be a part of their lives - and yours. I wish you and your families a safe and happy summer. Enjoy every minute together! God bless you, and please keep in touch.

Love,

Kathy Curry

P.S. - A special "thank you" to our class secretary, Michaela Noel for all her help, and to every one of you who went way beyond the call of duty to make this a really great year. Thanks for all your love and support!





COMBO CLASS-

As we close out the school year we continue to learn, practice behaviors conducive to a classroom setting and develop relationship skills with fellow classmates and the adults in the room. Being a smaller size classroom, gave us the opportunity to hone our skills and strengthen our relationships as we practice verbalizing our needs and watching for nonverbal and verbal clues from our friends. We can state what is bothering us, our needs and what we want to see happen in any interaction. We can also acknowledge our friends' sadness and discomfort and help them figure out what they need. We can acknowledge effort and express recognition of work by our peers. All this close interaction gave way to good friendships and higher levels of self-confidence. Building emotional IQ has been an important component to our classroom.

We have learned about animals, their adaptations and needs. Signs of spring, changing weather and insect life have all been part of our spring curriculum. In the Combo Class, we routinely work with numbers up to 20, discuss greater than and less than. We continue to work on letter formation (start at the top when making letters!). We continue to build vocabulary, recognize sight words and syntax. The students particularly enjoy our reading groups where they can share favorite stories from home with a small group of friends.

We thank the board for keeping our school running smoothly. Several board members were parents in our classroom. Christy Diercks for serving as our class secretary and chair of the housekeeping committee. Kristen Otto was a co-chair of fundraising/plant sales. Amy Plante served on the board as Publicity chair. Thank you all!

I thank you, parents and grandparents for choosing a co-op experience at Greenhills. It is such a good way to see first hand how your child is interacting with others, get insight on things to implement at home and get you comfortable in being a partner in your children's education. Studies have shown that the biggest factor in educational success is parent involvement. Continue to be involved, be your child's best advocate. Thank you for trusting this school year to us. It was a pleasure and an honor to be part of this very important time in your child's school experience.



May this summer be a safe and happy one! Read lots, play until it gets dark and hug each other every day!

Sincerely,
Mary Jo Berlon

Hey everybody!

We're sending this update out before we actually have the school picnic, so...

(Read this section if it rained during the picnic)

Wow! Rain sure does bring out the best in our school families! I never saw so many colorful umbrellas and stylish rain boots. I want to take this moment and apologize to any parents possibly frustrated when Team Special Events decided to start up a game of *Mud Bowl 7: Mudzilla Plays Dirty*. I want to apologize... but I can't. The game was great, my team dominated, and I would totally do it again! Also, the foresight of Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Curry, and Mrs. Berlon to dig a mud trench was phenomenal! The impromptu water games were a lot of fun! And I don't know which of you parents did it, but whoever unrolled that slip-n-slide... tears of joy! Thank you so much!

(Read this section if the weather was nice during the picnic)

Wow! Could we have asked for a better day for a picnic?!? The smell of a barbeque drifting across picnic tables should be required at every gathering like this. The kids found the sand volleyball court. I don't know why they started loading their pockets and socks with sand. And I totally was not the person who thought it was a great idea for the kids to bury themselves in sand and then quickly hop into the driver's seat of their parents' car with a case of the squirm-crazies. Not this guy... honest... (hehehe).

(Read this section regardless of weather)

Thank you all for coming to the picnic! You and your children make this school and community such a fun and happy place.

GASP!! This is the last Team Special Events newsletter update for the year! Where did the time go? It feels like it was just 8 months ago we were all celebrating Popsicle Night. Have a great summer everyone!

Have a great Spring! We'll see you soon!

Mark Stephens, Fun Manager

Jeanne Stephens, Secretary of Fun

Carolyn Stephens, VP of Fun

Charles Stephens, Intern



THE GIFT OF A YEAR

-Jennifer Griswold Osmanoglu: violin/viola teacher, waitress, book-keeper, mother, wife

My son Aiden is the brightest child I have ever seen; he was naming the makes and models of cars from the time he could talk. He could speak in full sentences and had a firm grasp of vocabulary words that a lot of adults I know do not use. When I watched him play with anything I was amazed at the attention and time he spent examining the toy, turning it all around to look at all the angles, moving it around and studying how it works, talking to my husband or I about the details that made this toy special. I felt sure that my son would excel at anything he did, and when he started preschool I was confident that he would be at the head of his class, learning how to read at lightning speed and painting works of art that would astound any art lover. I was happy to have him enrolled in a co-op preschool so I could witness just how great he was on a regular basis. Granted, my glasses were not entirely rose-colored...he is an only child. His social skills were based on mainly adult interactions and an occasional visit with cousins, so I did realize he had some social limitations upon entering pre-school.

The first year of preschool seemed to go pretty well; he was in a 3/4s class that had a pretty good mix of children. I thought he would be the standout, but I soon realized that he was the average guy....which was not bad, but not what I expected. He did not really have tons of social interaction at school until the end of the school year when he really developed a friendship with a boy in his class (with whom he is still friends to this day). He was perceived as a "quiet boy" who "talks about cars a LOT." He was not quiet at home and when I spent days as the parent helper at school I started to wonder why he acted so dramatically different at school. He barely participated in anything and if he was asked to do anything that challenged him he would just shut down...this became much more of a problem in his second year of preschool because it turned into an aggressive denial to write, work on simple projects or even play with another child. I watched him struggle with so many things and it made my husband and I very sad because we knew how great our son is...but he did not seem to value himself as a great child or student. He struggled a lot with social interaction and sometimes would just clam up so he did not have to answer a question or participate in circle time or a structured activity. And the stick figure people that he drew or painted never improved.

During the first parent-teacher conference in the second year of preschool, Aiden's teacher suggested that he wait another year to start kindergarten. It had nothing to do with his intelligence but everything to do with the way he handled himself in the classroom, around his classmates and teachers, and how he learned in an environment with a lot of other children who were not always quiet or respectful of his space and interests. Both my husband and I were initially horrified about this conference...surely the teacher must be crazy; the job of kindergarten teachers was to teach reading and classroom skills and we were already having him learn those things in preschool. Aiden only occasionally had a really BAD day and we worked with him at home on some things, so we could really buckle down and prepare him for kindergarten. Our thinking was based on our own educational experiences (of which we have forgotten many over the years) and the fact that we did not want to stigmatize our child as being HELD BACK. Those two words held a connotation of stupidity, bad behavior, helplessness, and many other negative feelings. But, when we really started thinking about all the things going on with our son over the next few months, we soon realized that maybe it was not such a bad idea.

I ran the idea of waiting to start kindergarten past a few people that know our family and the immediate response was "NO WAY, Aiden is going to be bored in school because he is so smart and he can just figure out the rest," or "he will be too old in school if you wait another year." Too old for what? I graduated from high school when I was 17...which I feel did not really make a difference. I started college when I was 18 and went to school with people who were 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, etc. It seemed that nobody cared how old you were and did not make fun of you for being the youngest person to graduate in your class, or the oldest to be in a certain year of school. I dropped out of college after my sophomore year and started again as a freshman when I was 25....and I did not really have anyone making fun of me that I knew of. So, graduating high school as 17, 18, 19....is it really a big deal? If you are immature at 19 you can be just as silly as a mature 17 year old. And when you are talking about primary school, yes, age is a hot topic of conversation, but I would rather have my son say "yes, I am a 7 year old kindergartner who gets good marks and is happy and relatively unstressed" than "yes, I am a 5 year old kindergartner who is completely overwhelmed and feels lost." Of course he would never say this, but if he thought it that would be outstanding.

We waited another year to start kindergarten. Aiden was 6 when he started, turned 7 in January and will be finishing kindergarten as the oldest child in his class. Do I care that there are second graders who are 7? Maybe I care a little. But, as I meet more and more parents who say "yeah, my daughter is in second grade but is having problems so we probably should have waited an extra year," or "my son has to repeat kindergarten this year because he had so much trouble last year," it makes me wonder why I have any problems concerning the age of my kindergartner. If anything, my son is doing well and learning what he is supposed to and getting along with his classmates. I am not receiving notes from his teacher telling me that he is falling behind or that he is too immature to belong with his peers. I have no regrets that I might have pushed him into a situation that put him in over his head, where he is insecure and unable to concentrate on learning due to other issues like being picked on for being little (which I was) or immature. My son is the smarty pants in the class who can read and write and listen to his teachers and, for the most part, get along with his friends. He is not the child who comes home crying for not understanding the lessons of the day or not being able to get along with anyone else...he was that child a few years ago, and I am so happy that he has changed. I have never talked to any parent who waited an extra year to send their child to kindergarten who regretted their decision (and I have talked to a LOT). I have, however, heard many parents regret the fact that they should have waited an extra year for their child to start kindergarten. I am so happy we waited to send Aiden to kindergarten, and when he asks me why we waited I tell him "you are where you are supposed to be." It will not always be that easy of an answer to everything, but I know that my husband Haschi and I gave our son the best gift we could by having him wait another year to start kindergarten. I have no doubt we did the right thing, and quite honestly, we got an extra year of time with our son that we can never get back (perhaps the reason that he is such a smarty pants)... I am forever grateful for that time.

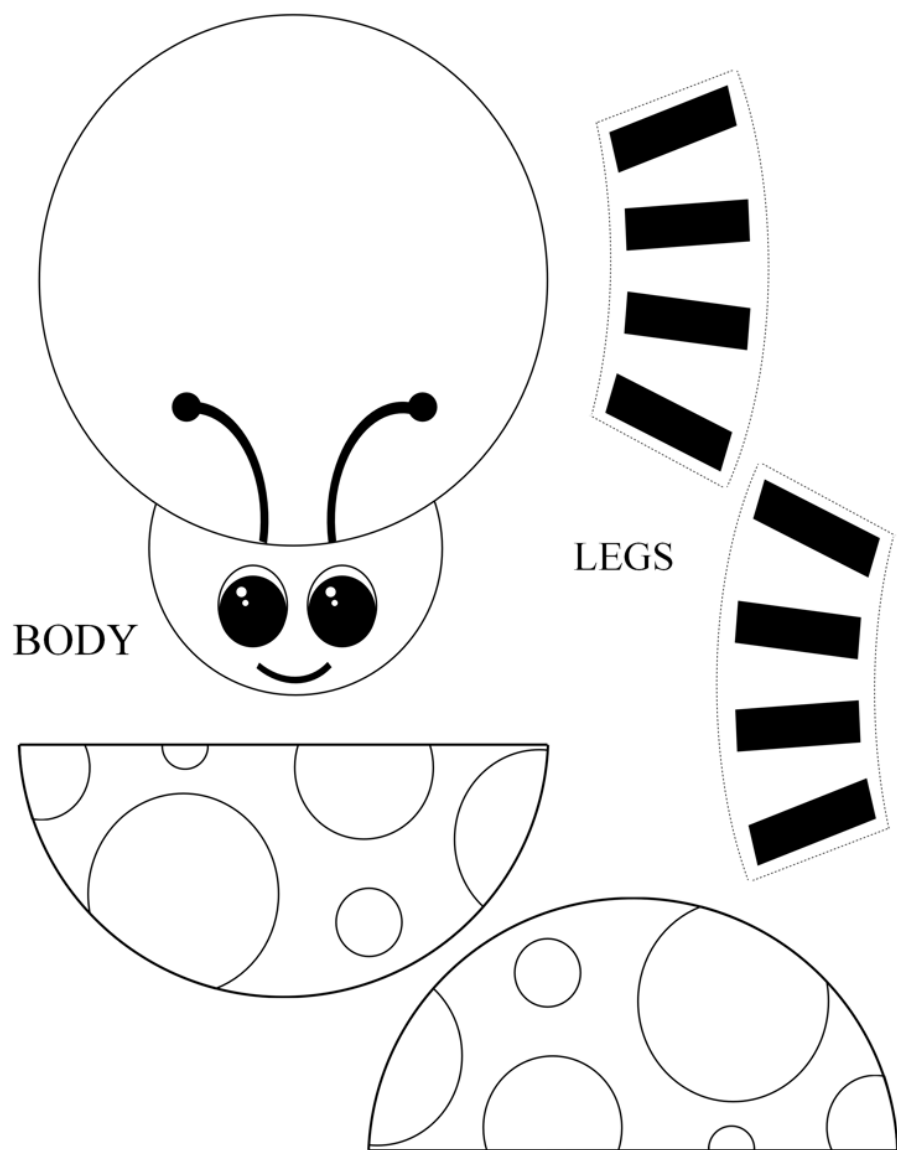


This is being posted just in case you did not see the note in our hallway.

I just wanted to thank everyone for tremendous outpouring of help offered to my family. Thank you to the many parents who have offered to watch Emma and who have expressed support. Thank you also for collecting the many varied gift cards. That was amazing! As several people have asked, the kids and I go every other week to support groups through Fernside. It is going very well. I have applied to Social Security also, THANKS AGAIN for everything!

Eric, Christopher, William, Eva and little Emma G.





Summer Activities

- Bubbles
- Sidewalk Chalk
- Swimming
- Ride bikes
- Visit new parks
- Splash pads
- Color in coloring books
- Playdoh
- Movie night
- Camp in the backyard
- Make cookies for friend
- Mini golf
- Visit farmer's market
- Board games
- Learn a new card game
- Go for a hike
- Make ice cream
- Catch bugs
- Frisbee
- Kickball
- Ride horses
- Zoo
- Children's Museum
- Picnic
- Camp Mommawatchi