

The Berkley Buzz

January 2005

Volume 6

Upcoming Events

January 29th Reggio Conference on "Meaningful Conversations". Free to Berkley Parents and Teachers-sign up at the front desk.

February 3rd FIP Meeting

February 10th Pancake Breakfast Ticket sales begin.

February 11th PDD-Berkley Closed

March 11th PDD and Pancake Breakfast

Music Program

Scott Maple is our new music teacher!! Scott will be working with us throughout the spring. He is a student in the Conservatory and has been a part-time teacher at Berkley for almost 2 years.

Practicum Students

Berkley has 20 practicum students working in the preschool department and 15 in the infant/toddler department. The students are currently working on degrees in early childhood education at UMKC. The main goal for the practicum students is to understand early childhood curriculum and how it is implemented in the classrooms.

Part Time Staff for Spring 2005

As you know, each semester we tweak the staffing pattern to more accurately reflect the needs of our families. We wanted to let you know about some of the changes that you might be noticing.

- *River and Fountain* have a great team of teachers throughout the day: Shaun opens both classrooms and helps with breakfast. Arlene covers breaks and some planning for teachers. Crystal helps with snack and closing the rooms.
- *Roo and Trolley* once again have Judy covering breaks and Melanie is closing three days per week. We have hired Brian Bustos to close the other two days.
- *Plaza and Westport* are sharing Cindy to close each day.
- *Royal and Zoo* are sharing Judy each afternoon.

Kerri and Monica are updating the teacher profiles-watch for details on teachers!

Art and the Young Child

By: Lindsay Aven

Recently Megan McLane let me borrow an amazing book entitled Art: Basic for Young Children. I thought it was extremely important and relevant to the ages of the children at Berkley and so I would like to share with you some of the details I found in this book.

Art is important as a non-verbal language; it helps children express some of their emotions through a system of symbols that they develop. Children gain a sense of accomplishment through creating art work, and they have a natural drive to create and be creative.

Mostly we see children develop through two phases. The first phase is composed of early scribbling, usually 15 months to 3 years. The children simply enjoy the movement of the instrument and the results (marks on the paper). The second stage is representational, children begins to use circular shapes in an attempt to represent objects. It is important to note that this development is not linear and children may return to scribbling throughout the representational stage.

It is essential to remember that children do NOT see the way adults do and that this is often reflected in their artwork. Their artwork is never wrong; it is a depiction of how they see the world.

The authors offer some excellent tips for nurturing children's art development:

- Coloring books should be excluded, they limit creativity and put pressure to stay in lines

- Large pieces of newsprint on the floor allow for large movements of the body while creating
- Crayons are really best until the child's fine motor skills develop more fully
- Show interest in what your child is doing, praise them often
- Allow the child to decide what they will do with the materials and with the finished art. Never throw away artwork in their presence
- It is ok to demonstrate how to use materials, but you should not tell them what to do. When demonstrating make sure you are demonstrating at their level of use so they do not feel inadequate.
- Drawing for a child is discouraging. Your drawing will likely be superior. Encourage them to draw for themselves
- Let the child decide what their art should look like
- Do not ask your child "What are you drawing?" This tells them they should be drawing something, rather than simply experimenting. Instead comment on the colors they are using, or something objective. Another idea is to say, "Tell me about what you are doing"

Source: Lasky, Lila and Rose Mukeri. **Art: Basic for Young Children**. National Association for the Education of Young Children: Washington D.C., 1980.