

Cornerstone Preschool

APPLE Accredited/Florida Gold Seal Preschool ~ License #C860613

Fall Themes & Activities

In September we learned about colors, shapes, good nutrition, and our five senses. This month we'll move on to healthy bodies, tools & construction, music, and science! These themes include many hands-on activities that we hope will inspire creativity and curiosity.

Friendly Pumpkin Patch

We don't officially celebrate Halloween at Cornerstone; instead, we focus on pumpkins, fall, and concepts like night vs. day and pretend vs. real. We request that parents *not* send in Halloween candy or treats due to health department regulations. Also, no Halloween costumes in school, please.



Please send in a small pumpkin with your child's name on it by Tuesday morning (10/27) for a class activity that day and our Friendly Pumpkin Patch on Wed.

Lunches & Nutrition

Thank you for sending in a nutritious lunch for your child each day. Because children establish food preferences and dietary habits during the first six years of life, it is important for parents and caregivers to teach healthy eating habits early on. Children will model the eating behaviors they see around them.

At Cornerstone, we always encourage eating our "healthy" foods before "fun" foods or desserts, and we spend time each day discussing nutrition (and table manners) during snacks and lunch. We ask that parents limit "junk" foods or dessert-type foods like cookies, fruit roll-ups, chips, etc. and try to pack a variety of healthy choices from two or three food groups each day. Soda, glass containers, and cans are not allowed. *Please remember to put a cold ice pack in your child's lunchbox if it has lunch meat or dairy.* Thank you!

October 2009 Newsletter

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Mark Your Calendars

- ◆ October 28-Pumpkin Patch
- ◆ November 23-27-VPK Vacation
- ◆ November 26 & 27-CLOSED
- ◆ December 18-Earthlings Holiday Music Show
- ◆ Dec. 21-Jan. 1-VPK Vacation
- ◆ December 24 & 25-CLOSED
- ◆ December 31 & Jan. 1-CLOSED
- ◆ January 18-CLOSED
- ◆ March 24-Picture Day
- ◆ March 29-April 2-VPK Spring Break
- ◆ May 7-Mother's Day Coffee
- ◆ May 31-CLOSED

VPK Updates/Reminders

- Arrival: thank you, parents, for having your children here before 9AM and signing in each day!
- Monthly certificates: when you see the VPK notebook on the front counter, please sign your child's certificate for the *previous* month and date it on the day of your signature. This is required by the state for auditing purposes
- Vacation days: Please do not schedule vacation days when VPK is in session. Regular attendance is a requirement of the VPK program and your child will benefit most if he/she is at school on consistently. Excessive tardies and absences may also result in financial penalties and/or dismissal from the program
- Sick days: please call in your VPK child's absences when he/she is sick. We are required to keep track of absences and illnesses

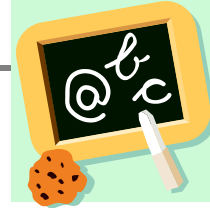


Evaluations

Teachers have begun working on evaluations. They should be completed by the end of January and parents will receive a written copy of the report when it is done. We evaluate children throughout the year in several domains: social-emotional, physical health, fine and gross motor development, cognitive (math, science, social studies & the arts), and language & literacy skills. If we notice that your child needs more help in areas such as speech, letter recognition, fine motor development, etc., we will speak with you. In the meantime, if you have any specific concerns about your child's development, please don't hesitate to bring them to our attention at any time.

Family Picnic

We are sorry to announce that our annual Family Picnic will *not* be held on October 16th as planned due to a scheduling conflict. We hope to reschedule later in the year when the weather cools down. Keep watching the newsletter for info in late winter or early spring.



Cornerstone Curriculum

Many of you already know that our curriculum has a strong emphasis on emergent literacy and includes many pre-reading and pre-writing skills. Last year the Department of Education revised the VPK Education Standards (all the things children should know and be able to do at the end of the VPK year) to include 23 specific math objectives. Our teachers work on early math skills with their classes on a regular basis, even in the 3's & 4's classes. At this age, math does *not* include addition or subtraction in the traditional sense; it does include counting out loud, but also matching sets of objects to written numerals, sequencing, categorizing, and placing things in order. Children begin to develop a strong foundation in math when they manipulate 2 and 3D shapes (block building), discover symmetry through an art project, understand positional and directional words through songs and games (such as left, right, above, below, diagonal, horizontal, etc.), use measurement words (length, height, weight, more, less, etc.), and "analyze" simple graphs and charts.

We do all of these kinds of math-related activities all throughout the year. *They* think they are playing; *we* know they are learning! For more information about our curriculum, see Judy; for more information about the VPK Education Standards, visit the DOE website: http://www.fldoe.org/earlyLearning/pdf/FINAL_VPKEducationStandards.pdf.