



April 8, 2013

Dear Annette's Preschool Families,

From all of us here at Annette's Preschool, we wish you a happy and sunny spring! We have been absolutely thrilled to be outside exploring the many sights, sounds, and smells that the spring months bring to our preschool. From the fresh air in our lungs to the mud on our boots; we've been enjoying every moment of it!

We have many exciting announcements and general information to communicate to all of our Preschool families, but would also like to share some of our professional development and agendas from the March In-Service as well. This newsletter is intended to accomplish both.

In-Service Productivity....

The past few months have brought our family here at Annette's Preschool many positive changes! The new Annette's Preschool owners, Andrew & Andrea Sambrook, have been an absolutely inspiring, collaborative, and supportive team for our staff and administrative team! We have all been working so hard to create clear goals, policies, and philosophies together - making for a very refreshing and unified approach here at the center. We spent much of our March 29th In-Service focused on the professional development, team building, and clear goal setting needed to foster such a positive and congruent framework. We feel as though it is important for our families to hear about our goals and trainings! We are so proud of our dedication to professional development and best practice and feel as though sharing our accomplishments during in-service day is a great way to foster open communication and relationships!

Our in-service started off with some general housekeeping amongst staff - important dates, observations, school-wide suggestions, team building (we all shared what we are good at through an art activity!), and discussion of sorts that clearly outlined our goals for the day. Andy & Andrea joined us shortly after our Staff Meeting to present a really fun and interactive presentation (designed using Prezi!) on what YOU had to say in our Parent Survey. I must begin with a big, genuine THANK YOU for all of your input, suggestions, thoughtful comments, and meaningful reflections! As we've said before, your reflections are absolutely priceless to us - as it is easy to get caught up in the day to day of teaching, making reflection from a third party very useful!!

I conducted a Think-Ink-Pair-Share activity to reflect and collaborate on some of the areas of improvement that our parents identified. The "Think" was intended for individual teachers to reflect on the areas that we were asked to improve on, the "Ink" was for them to jot down their ideas on ways to improve, label obstacles, convey needs, and brainstorm specific solutions! The teachers then



PAIRed into groups of about 3 or 4, SHAREd their ideas amongst each other, and I acted as a scribe onto an easel pad. The power of putting all of our educational backgrounds, expertises, and experiences together was immense, and we feel like we made some great strides in our action plans! For those of you who might like to view the results, it can be found [here](#).

After the presentation and collaborative brainstorming, Andrea & Andy treated us to a healthy lunch before moving on to a presentation by Andrea on the results of the National Child Development Study she directed at the Gesell Institute. Andrea shared meaningful data and responses to assessment from 3-6 year olds from across the country. Andrea spoke of the connections to the beauty and energy of the children, the importance of the individual, and what is truly "typical". From Andrea's work, we were reminded that it is easy to lose sight of what "typical" actually means with the pressures of the culture, schools, and the media. Andrea shared a fascinating study on the spiraling development of children - meaning that development ebbs and flows as a child is focusing on one area of growth. We pulled from all of our education backgrounds to make inferences on what this format of development may look like, how it affects the importance of play and curriculum design, or what it may mean for the individual assessment of children. Most importantly, Andrea was able to tie this into the Sambrook's mission statements and philosophies. In addition, her role here at the Preschool has solidified as a strong and educated resource!

The Sambrooks also introduced their "A-B-C" mission for Annette's which is based on **A**chieving the highest quality professional development and mentoring for our staff, **B**uilding a strong community among Annette's families and the greater Hinesburg community and **C**ultivating sustainable practices for both the environment and the overall workplace. We are excited to have a common set of goals that we can use to guide our vision to become the best early care and education in our area!

Shortly after, the staff re-grouped to learn a bit more about the "Effects of Environmental Toxins on Young Children" - as creating a state of the art green center is one of the top missions of the Preschool going forward. We discussed the data behind the effects of environmental toxins and what we can all do to control exposure to children and staff in our center. We all completed Eco-Checklists for each of our classrooms to use as a reference point for our improvement plan, as we hope to obtain "Green Certification" for our center! In the upcoming months, we hope to begin our educational journey and share our findings with our families! We have started this process by ordering green cleaning products, "no idling" signs, designing our outdoor classrooms and natural playgrounds, and have amped up our Recycling stations!

Overall, our in-service was an inspiring, collaborative, and educational day! We hope to share our information with families and hope that our findings are reflected in our classrooms!



Welcoming....

The Spring months have also blessed us with the birth of Miss Maeghan's little boy, Kellen Booska! Kellen was welcomed into this world by Miss Maeghan and her husband, Earl, on March 26th at 9:21 a.m. Kellen weighed 5 lbs. 13.3 oz and was measured at 19 inches long. Miss Maeghan brought Kellen in to meet her colleagues and little Tree Froggies yesterday morning, and we were all overwhelmed by how perfect and tiny he is! Kellen will be joining our Monkey classroom mid-May, while Maeghan will return to the Tree Frog classroom from maternity leave. We are so proud to welcome another family member into our Preschool, and of course thrilled to have Maeghan join her teaching team again!

As many of you know know, Miss Amy began maternity leave and welcomed her perfect little boy, Joey Heath, into this world on February 2nd. Joey was born 10 lbs., 2 oz.! As we approached her return, Miss Amy and I met to discuss both her transition back into the Mobile Infant Program and her son, Joey's, transition into the Nursery Program. We discussed her definitive needs as a mother and professional goals as a teacher - all of which brought us to the conclusion that Miss Amy would thrive and succeed as both in a more flexible position here at Annette's Preschool! As of this week, Miss Amy has been welcomed back to Annette's Preschool as our floater/substitute - an extremely valuable and helpful position, as I'm sure you know! You will still have the opportunity for occasional morning and afternoon chats, as she will be assisting all of the classrooms in a part-time capacity. We are so happy that Miss Amy's infectious smile and positive energy will be spread amongst the school while in this position, and look forward to giving Amy more school-wide responsibilities such as fundraising and community events! All the while, supporting her individual needs as a mother to an infant!

As a result, we are proud to announce Miss Jenny's permanency in the Lemur classroom. Originally hired as a Maternity Leave substitute (we've got three in a row to cover here at the Preschool!), Jenny began her time in the Lemur classroom and we instantly found her to be a perfect fit! She has impressed us with her genuine calm demeanor and sincere love of this age group. She has formed bonds with each and every one of your children, as individuals. Miss Jenny and Miss Khari work so well together as a collaborative teaching team, one that has supported immense growth in your child's classroom. From creative curriculum planning to family communication, we feel as though Miss Jenny has excelled to a level that deserved a permanent position in this classroom!!



A couple of general housekeeping items...

Please be sure to bring in sunscreen (labeled) in the upcoming weeks. As the weather begins to warm up, we will be spending much of our time outside and we want to be sure that all the kiddos are protected with sunscreen! In addition, weather (and MUD!) appropriate clothing are also a must at this time of year!

The end of the "academic year" is scheduled for Friday, June 15th - making Monday, June 17th the summer kick-off date! Some of your kiddos may be transitioning into a new classroom at this time. Transition letters will go out to families the first week of May, with transition morning "move up" dates and times as well as welcome letters from your child's new classroom. Again, all of these transitions are suggestions based on both chronological and developmental age, which will be thoroughly communicated to you during our Parent/ Teacher Conferences and Progress Reports! These transitions are absolutely open to questions, comments, and/or additional conferences!

As we are looking to both create natural playscapes and strengthen our connections with families, we would like to ask our families if there are any special skills or tasks that you would be willing to contribute to the school, such as:

- 1. Classroom Reference for new families**
- 2. Sewing/Tailoring Skills**
- 3. Gardening time and talent**
- 4. Excavating equipment for assisting with plan to create outdoor natural playscapes**
- 5. Cutting and transporting 12-14" logs for outdoor natural seating**

Please email me directly if you are interested in volunteering for any of the above listed items, or for anything else that you see fit for our future goals and missions! :)



The New & Improved Clubhouse Summer Camp...

Speaking of Summer - our newly designed Clubhouse Summer Camp is looking like it's going to be the BEST and most ENRICHING Summer Camp yet for our School Age children! Camp is open for children attending kindergarten in the Fall of 2013, up to 12 years of age - with activities, projects, field trips, and swimming for all age groups! We are offering FREE swim lessons to all campers, as well as new field trip locations, guest performers, and a Clubhouse Summer Camp tee shirt. The Clubhouse Summer Camp is structured into five 2-week sessions, all of which will include an "End of Session Celebration" relating to it's theme. The following are our Session Themes for the 2013 Summer Camp:

- **Sporting Strong Bodies: Run or Walk, You Rock!**
- **Sketch, Paint and Perform: Express Yourself!**
- **A Kid's Taste of Vermont**
- **Raptors, Reptiles, and Rivers: A Closer Look at Nature**
- **This Land is Your Land, This Land is My Land: Become a Global Citizen**

Please visit www.clubhousecamp.com to access more information, register online at a discounted price, or to forward to a friend, colleague, or neighbor that may be looking for a fun and high quality summer camp! Also, for any friends or neighbors that have a minimum of two years experience working with SchoolAge children and are preferably enrolled in pertinent college level courses, we are hiring high quality and experienced counselors for a 10 week position. In addition, we are also actively hiring for the Lifeguard position and are looking for a candidate with 2 years experience and Lifeguarding, WSI, CPR, and First Aid certified! We can't wait to spend our summer swimming, exploring, and traveling to some of Vermont's most well-known attractions! Please enroll as soon as possible, spots are going fast and we want to make sure we are able to accommodate all in-house families as a priority!!

As always, please continue to send all questions, concerns, or positive comments my way! I appreciate all of our families positive comments and constructive improvement suggestions over the past couple of months - we couldn't do it without you and look forward to your support as we grow!

Warmest Regards,

Megan Godfrey
Annette's Preschool Director