



Parents as Teachers

April 2021

Reflections from the Coordinator...

It has been so fun to welcome back little faces to our playground this month. We have so enjoyed the opportunity to interact in person again. We want to thank everyone for cooperating so well with our COVID policies as this will allow us to continue to offer these opportunities. I know educators are excited to be resuming in person visits this month for those who have chosen that option. We appreciate your willingness to have your family members 3 years and up wear masks throughout these visits. Please make sure to let your educator know if anyone in your home has any COVID symptoms or is awaiting a test result or had a high-risk exposure. Following these protocols will enable us to continue to offer in person visits and keep everyone safe.

I also just wanted to acknowledge that this continues to be a hard season. As numbers in our community drop and activities start to pick back up many, including myself, are feeling "reentry" anxiety. It is hard to go from mostly being at home to venturing back out into the world and adding things to our schedules. There is also an uncertainty underlying it all. Please continue to be open with your parent educator about any supports your family needs during this time and know that you are not alone. We meet with over 400 families every month, and I can promise you, other people are struggling too. So take it slow. Maybe limit yourself to 1 activity outside of the home a day to start, or for some, maybe once a week. Be honest with yourself and say no to things that overwhelm you. Continue to set aside time for your family and some of the new routines you have made during this season. Welcome things back into your life that bring you joy, fill your cup and make you a better parent, spouse, friend and self. I love that the weather is warming up creating opportunities to be outside, get some much-needed vitamin D and provide a "safer" environment for some social opportunities.

We appreciate everyone who has participated in our recruitment efforts, we have seen an increase in enrollments and we thank you! We will be offering a new opportunity in April. We will be creating a fun spring sensory box that we will raffle off. To get into the raffle, share PAT with a friend. When they join, you will both be entered to win! More information and pictures of the box coming soon! We are soon going to be at capacity for evening home visits but continue to **have immediate openings for families with daytime availability** so please communicate that to families you encourage to join. Most families who are put on a waitlist this spring will receive visits when we return in August.

Thank you for your continued engagement with our program,

Michelle Kelly

BV PAT Program Coordinator
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CALENDAR

Outdoor Playgroups at Hilltop

Registration
Required and
space is limited

Wednesdays
9:30-10:15am &
10:45-11:30am
April 7th, 14th,
21st, & 28th

Evening Outdoor
Playgroup
April 14th
5:30-6:15pm

Saturday, April
17th
9:30-10:15am &
10:45-11:30am



April Outdoor Playgroups

We will continue to host outdoor playgroups on the playgrounds at Hilltop Learning Center (7700 W 143rd St) during the month of April. Due to COVID restrictions, we will be **requiring families to register in advance** to attend our playgroups (limited to 15 families each session). We will host two sessions each Wednesday and Saturday, April 17th from 9:30-10:15am and 10:45-11:30am.



For the month of April, we are asking families to only register for **two** playgroups so that we can serve as many families as possible. All adults, and children 2 years of age and older, will be required to wear masks while on Hilltop property. We realize that 2-year old's are still learning how to wear a mask and ask that you help them practice. Child and adult masks will be available if you do not have one. We ask that adults maintain social distancing and that only one adult attend per child. There will be no food or drinks allowed on the playground. Water in a closed lid container may be kept in a bag carried by parent, but please do not leave it unattended. At check-in, you will be asked COVID screening questions and have your temperature checked. Hand sanitizer will be available. Thank you for helping follow the protocols set in place for your safety so that we can continue to provide in-person experiences. We look forward to welcoming those who are comfortable back to our playground. Click [HERE](#) to register.

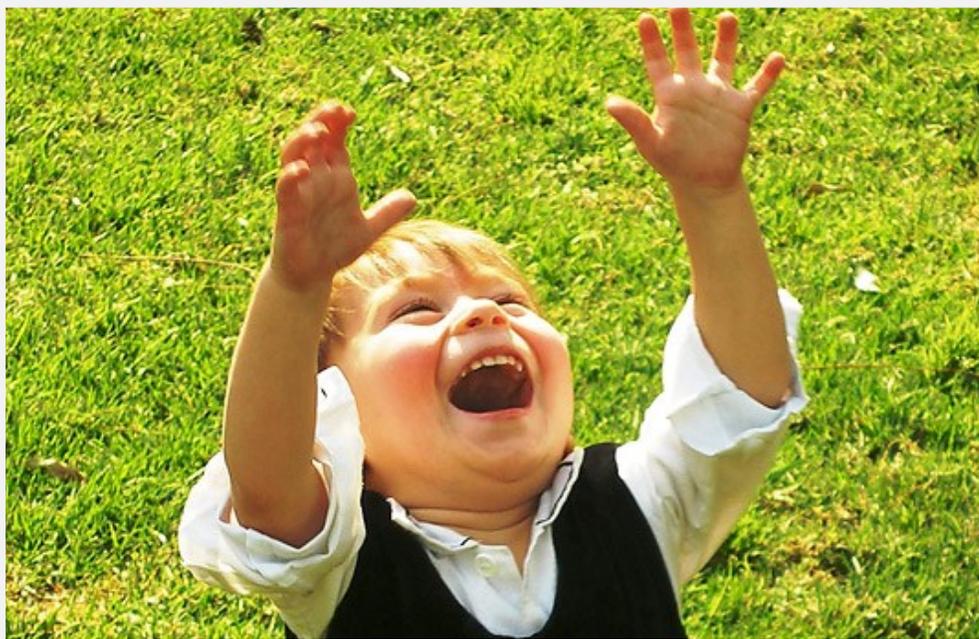
Annual Parent Satisfaction Survey

We strive for continuous improvement and use our annual parent satisfaction survey when planning for the next school year. We love our jobs and our Program but know that we always have areas that we can improve and grow to continue to meet the needs of young families. To that end, each year we send out a survey to gain your insight and feedback. Please take a few minutes to follow the link and share your thoughts. We would love to hear what you love and where we can improve. Last year we heard from families that they would like more opportunities to connect with other families, so we brought back baby playtime as one way to meet that need. We really look forward to reading through your responses. The survey is anonymous, but feel free to give your educator a shout out in the comments ...they love that! Click this link to begin.

<https://tinyurl.com/j4v8wxjb>

Reward Positive Behavior

If you want to see problem behavior disappear, pay more attention to the things children do well than to their mistakes. Without thinking, we often take for granted those behaviors that please us. Then we exaggerate out of proportion those things that children do wrong. Unfortunately, this approach doesn't work because children tend to repeat those behaviors that get the most attention. For example, the more you ask a child to stop an annoying behavior, such as playing with his food, the more he may do it. Try ignoring it instead. Then when you notice he is eating neatly, compliment him. An old rule says parents should compliment a child for every time they criticize him. As you watch for positive behavior and compliment children on that behavior, you can begin to see some changes in the behavior you don't like. *~Growing Child*



FUN WITH BOXES!

For Infants:

Give baby his own "treasure box" to play with. Start with a cardboard box about 16 inches tall or tall enough that your baby can just reach over the side when sitting or kneeling beside it. Fill the box half full with folded newspapers so he cannot tip the box over by pulling on one side. Then put 4-5 toys or safe small objects on top of the papers in the box. Some of the objects should be new to him or toys he has not played with for a while. Show baby the box and have him look over the side to discover the toys. If he has to stretch to reach the objects, they will be more valued prizes. This box will be his "fun box", a magic source of new things to play with. Put just a few toys in at a time and change them often. After your baby is used to crawling over the box to find new sources of entertainment, move the box to a new location when he isn't around. See if he goes to the old location or if he can find the box in the new location. This activity teaches a baby to get into new things and explore his surroundings. He can learn so much about his world by being curious and by having his curiosity rewarded. It is your job now to see that things within his reach contain nothing that can be harmful.

For Toddlers:

Toddlers love to play with boxes in lots of different ways! Use small boxes like shoe boxes to help sort your toddler's toys. Have her help put the toys away in the right box to develop matching and sorting skills and develop her independence. Make "furniture" for your toddler's dolls and stuffed animals. Make a bed, refrigerator, stove, etc. Pretend that boxes are buildings to drive your toddlers cars around. Talk with your child about where the cars are going and what the "buildings" are. Use a small box as a "mystery box". Put items in the box and have your child put her hand in (without looking in) and try to identify what is in the box. Tissue boxes work great for this kind of activity. Also use boxes to bang on with wooden spoons or paper towel holders. See what different sounds different boxes make.

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This publication
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