



Parents as Teachers

May 2021

Reflections from our Coordinator...

What a crazy year it has been. I want to take a minute to again thank you for your continued engagement in our program as we had to adjust to virtual visits this year. Parent educators have so enjoyed returning to in-person visits with families who are comfortable this month. Seeing families in-person has been such a bright spot for our staff and a great way to finish out the program year. We have also appreciated you sharing PAT with your friends and families over the past several months. We have seen a jump in enrollment and know that word of mouth is always our best resource. Please continue to share our information as we will have more spots open over the summer.

As we look ahead we are hopeful for the 2021-22 program year. We are in the planning stages for bringing families back into our playroom this fall. We look forward to seeing little people exploring and parents having the opportunity to connect to one another. We are hopeful that we will be able to bring back popular group connections such as Block Fest and Touch-a-Truck. We are hopeful that we will once again be providing hearing screenings in your home and vision screenings in our playroom. We have hope!

My wish for you this summer is that you and your family are able to have a chance for restoration, reflection, and rest. This past 15 months has been a time of intense, prolonged stress for our world. It will not be as simple as returning to normal. I believe we need to take time to reflect on this past year and grieve the things, people, experiences, milestones that we have missed or that were canceled. Some are grieving a loved one, or a lost job or change in circumstance. We need to take time to allow ourselves to deal with these losses. Then we need to reflect on what we need to heal. What have we learned that we want to carry forward with us, what people do we want to reconnect with and maybe make amends with. And then we need to allow ourselves the time and space to do that healing work and to allow ourselves to rest and restore and heal.

I hope that this summer you will have intentional time with your family and children and we will be anxiously awaiting our return in August.

I wish you well,

Michelle Kelly

Program Coordinator
Blue Valley Parents as Teachers

CALENDAR

All playgroups require
registration on our website

**OUTDOOR
PLAYGROUPS
WEDNESDAYS**

May 5th and May 12th

9:30-10:15AM

10:45-11:30AM

**To VISIT OUR WEBSITE
CLICK [HERE](#)**



Three Years of Service

Parents as Teachers provides three years of service to families with children birth to age three. We provide universal access to all families, however the school board directs our priority categories for service. Those include: first time parent with a child under one year, children with special education needs, teen parents, and families with multiple children under three.

What Comes Next?

After those three years of service with a parent educator what happens? How will you continue to stay connected to the school district, and how will you network with other families? We would like to encourage you to join the Blue Valley Early Childhood Parent Teacher Association. This group of parents provides group meetings and playgroups hosted by a BV parent educator and field trips and fun! Contact them at byearlychildhoodpta@gmail.com or visit their website at www.bvecpta.com.



May Outdoor Playgroups at Hilltop

We will continue to host outdoor playgroups at Hilltop on Wednesday, May 5th and Wednesday, May 12th. We will have two sessions per day: 9:30-10:15am and 10:45-11:30am. Due to COVID we are requesting families register in advance. All adults and children 2 and older will need to wear masks. Please click [HERE](#) to register.

You are your child's favorite toy. There is nothing in the world your child would rather do than play with you! Use the ideas below as a starting point for the many joyful ways there are to explore, play, learn, and discover with your child.

THEME: ANIMALS

Talk Together

For your baby: What animals do you see outside? Name these different creatures for your baby: birds, squirrels, ducks, dogs, cats, rabbits. Which animal does your baby seem most interested in? Make each animal's sounds. Which sound makes your baby giggle?

For your toddler: Baby animals are a special part of spring—can you spot any in your neighborhood? Go on a "safari walk" with your toddler and ask her to tell you when she sees an animal. Does she know the animal's name? The sound it makes? Does she know where it lives (nest, pond, trees, etc.)? Watch these animals with your child and talk about what you see.

Read together

For babies, try: Whose Nose and Toes? by John Butler, Does a Kangaroo Have a Mother, Too? by Eric Carle, Good Night, Gorilla by Peggy Rathmann, Baby Animals by DK Publishing, and Country Animals, Farm Animals, and Pet Animals by Lucy Cousins.

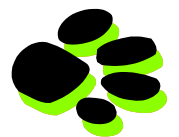
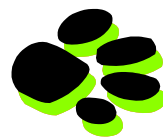
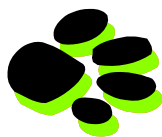
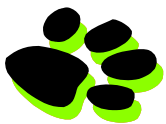
For older toddlers, try: Over in the Meadow by Ezra Jack Keats, Make Way for Ducklings by Robert McCloskey, Mrs. Brown Went to Town by Wong Herbert Yee, Cock-a-Doodle-Do! Barnyard Hullabaloo by Giles Andreae, The Napping House by Audrey Wood, and I Love My Mama by Peter Kavanagh.

Play Together

For your baby: Babies are often captivated by watching animals outside or through the window. Stick with your baby and let him watch as long as he wants, though be very cautious about approaching animals you do not know. Teaching your child animal safety begins early. You can support your baby's interest in animals by, for example, installing a bird feeder to encourage birds to visit. For an indoor activity, you can give your baby swatches of fake fur and feathers to touch (both available at craft stores).

For your toddler: Cut pictures of animals out of magazines and glue them to sturdy cardboard. Make sure there are matches—2 pictures of horses, 2 pictures of sheep, etc.. Lay these pictures out (face up) on the floor and see if your child can match the animals that are the same. Matching games build thinking skills in your toddler. You can also play "barnyard". With your child, walk and "talk" like an animal—perhaps meow like a cat or "trot" and neigh like horse. Which animals does your child like to be? Turn a big cardboard box into a barn and see if your child would like to pretend to trot in and out.

Language, Books and Learning blurb



Blue Valley Schools

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This publication available in
alternate formats.

ANIMALS