

Winfree Preschool News

February 2012

VALENTINE SEASON

The Valentine season will be the theme for the month of February. We will have art activities, baking, learning about the Post Office, songs and stories geared to teaching the children about love and friendship. Children will discuss how the Valentine mail goes from place to place. In addition, we will explore transportation. Expressions of love for each other, both at home and at school will be stressed. Many of the classes will also be learning about how to keep our hearts and bodies healthy.

Here's a Valentine song your child may sing:
(Tune: "Did you ever see a lassie?")

Will you be my Valentine, Valentine, Valentine?
Will you be my Valentine,
Tell me, please do.
Nod your head this way
Or shake your head that way.
If you will be my Valentine,
Tell me, please do.

Attached to this newsletter or to your child's calendar is a list of the children in your child's class. Have him/her cut out the names and paste them on Valentines for his/her friends. He/she will have the opportunity to match the names as he/she "mails" the cards at school. (Please do not write the names on the envelopes in cursive writing.) **Toddlers and Two's do not mail Valentines.** Valentines may be brought to school during the first two weeks of February unless otherwise instructed by your child's teachers. **Please do not bring or send sweet treats or candy to school with Valentines.** Classes will be cooking or baking healthy snacks for Valentine's Day.

Colin with winter puzzles
Winter 2012



DATES TO REMEMBER THIS MONTH

February 1, 2, 3	Parent - Teacher Conferences for 2's classes
February 4	Playground Workday, weather permitting, 8:30 AM
February 8, 9	Parent –Teacher Conferences for toddler classes
February 9	Jonathan Austin the Juggler, 11:00, 1:15
February 16	Preschool Chapel, 9:30, 11:45, 3:30
February 17	Preschool Chapel, 9:30, 11:45
February 20	President's Day, school holiday
March 9	VAECE Teacher Training Conference, school closed
April 3	Dad's Night
April 19	Kindergarten Registration

Winfree EIN (Tax ID)

54-1070190

Call Bonnie if you need a 2011 receipt (794-1388).

PARENT RESOURCE LIBRARY HAS MANY HELPFUL BOOKS

Books, videos and audio tapes are available to check out by stopping in the preschool office. The church library also has many titles which you may check out on Tuesday mornings. Some of the most popular titles have been:

How to Help Children With Common Problems, Schaeffer and Millman

The Hurried Child, Elkind

Ages and Stages, Miller

Siblings Without Rivalry, Faber and Mazlish

Parent Power, Rosemond

It Worked For Me, Murphy

Golden Rules, Dosick

Why Good Parents Have Bad Kids, Hayes

The Optimistic Child, Seligman

Guide My Feet, Edelman

The Divorce Book For Parents, Ives, Fassler and Lash

If you have a particular question or concern, ask Ginny to help you find a book or article that meets your needs.

BACKPACK MINISTRY NEEDS ONGOING DONATIONS

The Backpack Ministry at Winfree Church provides back backs of non-perishable food for local Watkins Elementary and Greenfield Elementary school children and their families each weekend. Please think of these hungry children when you are at the grocery store and consider sending some food item to the collection box in the school hallway. We will see that it is well used.

COLD AND FLU SEASON STRIKES

With onset of cold and flu season, we urge you to remember the school's policy regarding sick children. Children are to be kept home when they show any of the following symptoms: sore throat, green or yellow running discharge from the nose or eyes, severe cough, fever of 100 within the last 24 hours (must be fever free without medication), rash, earache or gastro-intestinal distress.

A VALENTINE FOR YOUR CHILD

It's you I like,
It's not the things you wear,
It's not the way you do your hair-
But it's you I like.

The way you are right now,
The way down deep inside you-
Not the things that hide you,
Not your toys-
They're just beside you.

But it's you I like,
Every part of you,
Your skin, your eyes, your feelings
Whether old or new.
I hope that you'll remember
Even when you're feeling blue
That it's you I like,
It's you yourself, it's you,
It's you...I...like!

-from the song "*It's You I Like*"
by Mr. Fred Rogers

EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER'S PRAYER

Lord, I've got too many children and too few hands,
too many demands, too long hours and too little rest,
too much tension and too little notice,
never any peace and not enough pay.
I make less than janitors, parking attendants, and
garbage collectors
though I help mold the human future every day.

Lord, when is our nation going to come to its senses
And value those who care for our children?

from *Guide My Feet*
by Marian Wright Edelman

**Please say a prayer of thanks for your child's teacher
on Valentine's Day!**

CARING FOR A COLD

The common cold is an infection caused by a virus. Colds are not caused by cold air, wet hair, wind blowing in the face or ears, or teething. The infection stays mostly in the nose and throat. A cold is very contagious. It can be spread by sneezing, coughing, kissing, or sharing cups or utensils. Young children may get between 3 and 10 colds in one winter season. Colds usually last about 10 – 14 days.

If your child has a cold, there are a few things you can do to make him or her more comfortable:

- Give plenty of fluids
- Give acetaminophen for fever (check the label carefully for the correct dosage)
- Use a cold air humidifier in your child's room
- Use saline (salt water) nose drops to help clear your child's stuffy nose
- Clear your baby's nose of mucous with a bulb syringe
- Do not give antibiotics or over the counter cold medications

Call your health care provider if:

- Your baby is less than 2 months old and has a cold
- The cold is not better in one week
- The cold seems to be getting worse
- There is a fever over 102
- Your child has difficulty breathing even after clearing his/her nose

Prevention:

- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly
- Get enough rest and sleep
- Make certain that you and your child are well nourished
- Teach your child to cover coughs and sneezes with the inside of the arm (not hands)
- Use disposable tissues and wash hands after each tissue

REGISTRATION RESULTS

Re-Registration for the 2012 – 2013 school year is well underway. With a new family-friendly system in place, everyone has been pleased to get places for their children. As of this time, some classes are filled with waiting lists, some classes have a very few openings, and we are accepting applications for those remaining placements for all ages. Waiting lists are not terribly long at this time, so have your friends and neighbors give us a call. Letters of acceptance are going out now and any unsecured spots will be filled from new families and the waiting list in mid-February.

Virginia International Gymnastics (VIGS)

VIGS offers a gymnastics class for Winfree students, ages 3 and older, on Tuesdays from 2-2:45. The cost is \$35.00 for each 5 week session. The next session begins on Tuesday, 2/7. If you would like to enroll your child, please contact Anne Counoupas at 423-6596 or counoupas@gmail.com.

SUPPLY FEES DUE

A few families have not yet paid the supply fee of \$50 that was due before school began. Check with the school office if you are not certain about your payment.

Self-Control: A Major Requirement for School Success

Is your four year-old child impulsive? Is sitting still in a fancy restaurant and listening at the dinner table conversation a forgotten dream? The boisterous and active behavior of the typical four year-old is entirely normal and appropriate, even though it leaves parents and teachers exhausted at the end of each hectic day. The ability to control impulses and stop to think before acting, is called self-regulation. Another current educational buzzword that means the same thing is executive function. This develops as the child's pre-frontal cortex of the brain matures and "wires" to allow forethought, planning, and self-control.

The infant's, toddler's and preschooler's brains are aptly called "under construction" because the experiences that they have help to create the brain synapses which build the foundation necessary for language, cognition, motor and self-help skills, social and emotional intelligence. Among the many skills which must be developed during these years is executive function. It is called executive function in reference to the front brain ability to put brakes on emotional outbursts and fight or flight behaviors and impulses which are hallmarks of the limbic system and brain stem. It is the maturing frontal cortex which allows us to pause and "look before we leap." Essentially the frontal lobes need to be the "boss" of the brain.

"Big school" requires a great deal of self-control. It requires a long day with very little play or freedom to move, explore and laugh with friends. Children must listen closely, stay on task, follow complex multi-step directions, and cope with a large building, much larger class, with less teacher attention and guidance. As families look at their four year-old and young five year-old to consider their approaching Kindergarten experience, please look closely at your child's self-control. If his or her brain is immature, you will see impulsive behavior. The impulsive child may have a great deal of difficulty and unhappiness in school that could be avoided with a "gift of time," a year of Junior Kindergarten. Give it some thought and prayer, and call your child's teacher if you have questions.