



COLE HARRINGTON'S PRESCHOOL POST

Issue 70

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Dear Families,

The other day a parent and I were talking about some child guidance ideas to use with her four year old son. She told me that at home he never listens. She was tired of calling his name over and over again and having him tune out. She was curious about what we do at school to get a group of nineteen plus her son, to listen and follow our directions.

I told her that it's a lot easier for us because we are teaching in a context of a group. When we say; "Let's see who is ready for our story," and acknowledge children who are ready, the other children quickly get to their mats, cross their legs and put their eyes on the teacher. We also let children know ahead of time the consequences of being a good listener; "You get to hear this real cool story about dinosaurs," as well as the negative consequences; "If you keep making noises during the story you will have to read a book by yourself in the library area. Your noises are bothering your friends."

Another strategy we use to get children's attention is to flick the lights, ring a bell or talk quietly. Once we have their attention we can then give them the direction. You can do the same at home by just establishing eye contact and gently touching your child as you give your instruction. You're right there to provide support to ensure your child follows through with what you ask them to do. Don't forget to reinforce them for a job well done. (This works so much better than calling them from across the room.)

From time to time we use another method. This is called the "Count to Three" method. We let children know what we want them to do and give them to the count of three to follow through. Before we count we spell out the consequences. Here's an example; "If you get in bed by the time I count to three I will let you pick two books. If you don't get in bed by the time I get to three, there will be no story. I'm letting you decide." Then you start the count. Be sure to always follow through with what you say you are going to do.

A word of advice; it's important that you yourself do not get distracted after you give your child a direction. For example; if you tell your child it's time for bed but then get distracted by the phone or by a conversation with your spouse it is unfair to the child to get upset with him for not going to bed. Young children often need your guidance to help them stay on task and to follow through.

My favorite technique that I like to use is to offer children choices. After I make sure that I have their attention, I give them two choices; "Do you want to clean-up the big blocks or the little blocks?" This way I'm not in a power struggle about clean-up. I just give them some autonomy to make their own choice.

Most important, we articulate to children how they are feeling at the time and empathize. It's hard for young children to have to listen to grown-ups all the time. It's important that we let them know that by empathizing with them. "I know you're mad because it's clean-up time, but, when we put our toys away after playing with them we keep them in a safe place for next time." "I know you want to stay at school and play with your friends, but we have to pick your brother up at school. He's waited all day to see you."

I wish you all good luck. If you would like to discuss this further or have other child-rearing questions please don't hesitate to call us. We have a wealth of resources and knowledge to share.

Sincerely,
Linda Feller
Program Coordinator

SPOTLIGHT ON LINDA FELLER

(As Program Coordinator, Linda Feller writes the Cole-Harrington Preschool Post quarterly. In each issue she highlights various teachers in the program. In this edition, We would like to turn the spotlight on Linda. Let's get to know her a little better.)

If you were to ask anyone about Cole-Harrington Preschool Enrichment Center, there would be a number of responses describing the program. However, one resounding description would likely be "Linda Feller". She has become synonymous with the Program. She has been working at Cole-Harrington for almost thirty-five years. She has been named a favorite from the newest child at the program to the many alumni who often come back to visit.

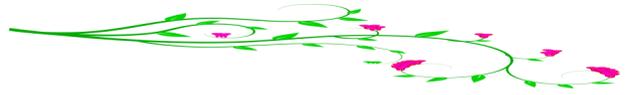
Linda comes to us from Iowa, where she received her Associates degree in Early Childhood and her BS in Preschool Special Needs from the University of Iowa. There she worked in a residential group home, preschool special needs program and a community based childcare program.

In 1980 she relocated to MA. Linda recalls it as being a difficult transition at first. She literally went from the green, green grass of Iowa and it's slower pace to teaching at an urban school in Dorchester. There was a period of culture shock and homesickness.

When she applied at Cole-Harrington there was an instant connection with the philosophy and she felt this was the place for her. Unfortunately, the timing wasn't right yet but with more experience under her belt and her persistent nature she became a part of the teaching staff. Her obvious love of children made her an instant success. When asked what she loved most about teaching, Linda said "the kids". "You get to relive your childhood. Something as simple as smelling a flower, playing in the leaves, or catching bugs has a different meaning through their eyes. The world remains exciting".

In 1986 the opportunity presented itself to become Program Coordinator. The varied responsibilities and potential for growth were appealing to her. She would be learning new things every day taking on the challenge of adult supervision and relationships, a mound of paperwork, and still be able to spend time with the children. In this role, however, she utilizes more of her special needs training. She's able to objectively observe and evaluate troublesome situations. She can be a support system and advocate for the children, teachers, and parents alike.

When Linda is not at Cole-Harrington, she can be found spending time with her friends, her Massachusetts "family" or participating in one of her favorite hobbies. She enjoys yard sales, antiques, reading, biking and trying various craft projects.



COMMENTS FROM THE CHILDREN ABOUT LINDA

- Vincent* "She asks if I'm ok and calls my mom and asks her I'm ok."
- Maverick* "She works in the office. She checks her computer."
- Aaliyah* "Linda plays with me games, read a book, she plays dolls."
- Kaylee* "She works in her office and calls people. She helps people in our room. She tells teachers something."
- Andrew* "She works in her desk. She plays games with me. She goes in the Front Room and comes in the Back Room some times."
- Logan* "She works and takes care of people."



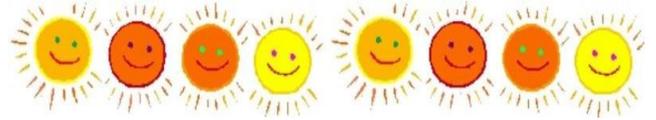
UPCOMING EVENTS

July

- 11 Grandy's Ice Cream Truck Visits
- 17 Big Ryan's Tall Tales visiting to tell us stories, sing songs, and participate in movement activities.
- 27 Barnyard Babies - a petting zoo
- 31 Stacey Peasley- singer and guitar player

AUGUST

- 8 Hike at Farnham-Connolly Park
- 13 Joe's Crazy Critters
- 23 Children's Outdoor Picnic & Tad Travis' Music and Dance Session
- 31 Last Day of Summer Session
C-H Closed for Facility Day



HOW TO PUT SUNSCREEN ON MOVING, SQUIRMING CHILDREN

- *Play connect the dots! Place dots of sunscreen on children's bodies and have them connect the dots by rubbing in the sunscreen.*
- *Have them apply the sunscreen themselves.*
- *Give children lots of praise and positive reinforcement.*
- *Give children a sticker every time they put on sunscreen.*
- *Some children enjoy putting sunscreen on when it is treated like make-up.*
- *Let children put sunscreen on you.*
- *Make the application of sunscreen a regular part of their morning routine. Brush teeth, put on sunscreen, get dressed, brush hair, eat breakfast, etc.*
- *Sing a nursery rhyme while applying sunscreen.*
- *Ask the children where you should put the sunscreen. Let them squeeze the bottle. Give them some control.*

STAFF NOTES



* Rachel Dunbar-Leal went cherry picking at Tougas Farm in Northborough, MA. She was so excited about picking cherries because she had never picked them before.

She will go on other excursions with her son Chico this summer and have many other new experiences to share with her class.

- * Lisa Michaelson will be going camping on Cape Cod where she will enjoy fishing and visiting the beaches.
- * Lilly Ferguson will be spending the summer on the beach and re-reading the Harry Potter novels.
- * Lesley Otero and her husband, Ruben will be going to New Hampshire Labor Day weekend for the Mustangs of America Grand Nationals where they will enter their 2008 Mustang GT Convertible in the show.
- * Jen Anzivino is spending some time at Cape Cod this summer but is reserving her vacation funds for a future trip to Sweden.

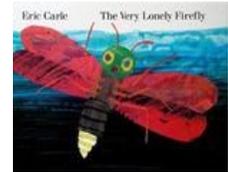


COLE-HARRINGTON EXTENSIONS

Activities that Extend Cole-Harrington's Curriculum and Content in the Home

Literacy Activities

- Have your child draw a chalk highway complete with traffic signs. Cars will make this activity complete.
- At the beach have your child make lines, shapes, letters in the sand.
- Visit the library and read Eric Carle's book "The Very Lonely Firefly". Before bedtime see if you can catch some fireflies. Then write a book complete with illustrations about the experience.



Gross Motor Activities



- Together draw a hopscotch game and play with your child.
- Turn on some music and dance with your child. Play stop and go by turning the music on and off.
- Plan walks together; sound walks, animal walks, walk to a certain destination.
- Play catch with sponges soaked with water.
- Fill a bucket with water. Give your child a ball and let him or her practice throwing into the bucket.

DID YOU KNOW

Screen Time and Developing Brains

Taken from <https://childcareexchange.com> ExchangeEveryDay November 17, 2017

"Educational apps and TV shows are great ways for children to sharpen their developing brains and hone their communication skills—not to mention the break these gadgets provide harried parents. But tread carefully: A number of troubling studies connect delayed cognitive development in kids with extended exposure to electronic media," writes Liraz Margalit, PhD, in a *Psychology Today* article.

Margalit explains that "parents who jump to screen time in a bid to give their kids an educational edge may actually be doing significantly more harm than good—and they need to dole out future screen time in an age-appropriate matter...When a young child spends too much time in front of a screen and not enough getting required stimuli from the real world, her development becomes stunted...Much of the issue lies with the fact that what makes tablets and iPhones so great—dozens of stimuli at your fingertips, and the ability to process multiple actions simultaneously—is exactly what young brains do not need.

"Tablets are the ultimate shortcut tools: Unlike a mother reading a story to a child, for example, a smartphone-told story spoon-feeds images, words, and pictures all at once to a young reader. Rather than having to take the time to process a mother's voice into words...kids who follow stories on their smartphones get lazy. The device does the thinking for them, and as a result, their own cognitive muscles remain weak."

Source: "What Screen Time Can Really Do to Kids' Brains," by Liraz Margalit, PhD., *Psychology Today*, April 17, 2016