

H A P P Y H O L I D A Y S !

The Children's Center News

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Carrie Rain, Director of Early Childhood Programs



Reading Corner

Karen Roudybush, Reading Specialist

When you are traveling this holiday season, be sure to take books with you. This not only helps provides some quiet time for you and your child, it also provides opportunities for special family members to share a story. Have a great trip!



Holidays at the Children's Center



December is always one of the most exciting months of the year in the Children's Center! The Holiday season started with our tradition of decorating the Children's Center Christmas tree on December 5th. The students filled the Christmas trees with their handmade ornaments... it looks beautiful! On December 16th, Santa took time out of his busy schedule to have breakfast with us. He arrived in style on the WPSD security cart and was greeted with hugs and squeals of delight at the door. Each child visited with Santa and received a special book. It was wonderful that so many families and friends could join us for this magical event; it's always a highlight of the year. On Friday, December 19th, we had our annual 'Polar Express' celebration. Students especially enjoyed finding silver bells in their cubbies at the end of the day! What a magical time of year... Ho, ho, ho!



Our best wishes for a wonderful Holiday season and a happy, healthy New Year!

The Children's Center Staff

Hooked on Books

About Experiences

Saturday, February 7th
9:30-12:00

Children's Center Playroom

Special Guest: Nancy Kelly Jones

The presentation will be livestreamed at www.wpsd.org

Save the
Date!



Pretend Play

Patty Greeno, Preschool Teacher

Play -- an activity all of our children love to participate in -- but how important is it? There is a growing amount of research that shows connections between high-quality pretend play and cognitive ability. Even when adults participate in the play with children, the children need to have the chance to transform objects and actions symbolically, set up rules and use their language to lead the play. Pretend Play engages many areas of the brain because it involves emotion, cognition, language and sensory-motor actions.

In our classroom, the children have various learning centers set up for pretend play. The materials in these areas change based on the theme, vocabulary and concepts we are working on in class. During Center Time the children may choose to play in one of these areas, usually transitioning from solitary play to parallel play (playing next to a classmate) and then gradually beginning to interact with their peers in social play. Teachers encourage this play by following the children's lead and supervising as necessary.

During Pretend Play, children use many cognitive strategies such as narrative recall, social dialogue, negotiation, planning, literacy skill development and problem solving. They begin to act out a character's thoughts and actions, with small dolls/action figures or by pretending that they are the characters. We have fun playing house, cooking, eating, going shopping, taking babies for walks, acting out stories we have read in class, being a train engineer, Santa Claus or a Community Helper. The ideas are limitless.

Central pretend play years are between the ages of 3-5. Giving children time for pretend play is fun and relevant to their overall development not only at school but at home as well.

"What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store? What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more?"

-Dr. Seuss



