



### Important Dates

#### **November 11th 1-4pm - Conflict Resolution Workshop for Parents**

This month's Learning Dialogue will be a workshop on conflict resolution, as this is the time of year when the children are starting to feel comfortable, but haven't had much practice with conflicts yet! This year we'll be trying out an afternoon workshop and it's Veteran's day, so hopefully everyone can join us for a presentation, small group discussion, and maybe even some role-playing! Please RSVP if you are planning to come and let us know if you are interested in having your children drop-in (if they don't already attend that afternoon).

#### **November 14th – First Day of Second Trimester**

#### **November 16th 7-8:30pm - Dr. Roy Speaks on Keeping Kids Healthy!**

Join us for a FREE presentation by renowned holistic Pediatrician, Dr. Roy Steinbock of Mindful Pediatrics ([www.mindfulpediatrics.com](http://www.mindfulpediatrics.com)). He will talk about nutrition, supplements, and other great ideas for making it through the cold season. He will also be available for questions! Please RSVP if you are planning to attend, so we can be sure to have enough chairs and handouts! This event is open to the public, so please feel free to invite your friends.

#### **November 21st-25th - School Closed for Thanksgiving Break**

#### **November 30<sup>th</sup> 7-8:30pm – Information Session**

If you know anyone that is interested in getting on the waitlist, let them know they should come to an information session!

### Announcements

**Original Works & T-Shirts** – You will soon be receiving an Original Works packet and a T-shirt order form in your parent cubby. If you are interested in ordering something, please remember to fill out the form and return it to us by the due date. This is a great way to support the school and get wonderful gifts for friends and family!

**Student Directory** – Thanks for sending all of your updates, and thanks again to Katie (Lila's mom) and Heather (Raffa & Milo's mom) for getting it all typed up. We will be getting an updated copy to you soon!

**Volunteering & Offerings** – The children are really settling into the routine now, so this is a good time to start thinking about volunteering or bringing in an offering. Good parent offerings can come from



Getting ready for the Halloween Parade!

something that is a passion or expertise of your own, an idea that came from one of our threads, or even a family tradition. Let us know if you need help coming up with an idea! You can find the sign-up sheet near the sign-in sheets.

**Boots/Winter Gear** – As we prepare for the snowy days ahead, we wanted to share with you our snow plan. When you arrive, please encourage to children to stay and play outside, since they will already be bundled up! When they are ready to come in, there will be rugs on the porch and in the mud room to help dry off wet feet, and we would like children to remove any wet shoes or clothing there. Please label everything & keep boots on the porch, hang coats & snow-pants on your child's hook, and put mittens and hats in our new baskets next to the lunch cabinet. Thanks for helping us keep the floors nice and clean and the children nice and warm!

**Poppy Vacations** – As the weather gets colder, Poppy Seed will need resort destinations for weekends and school vacations. Please sign up to take her home if you are interested! This is a wonderful opportunity for your child to care for a pet and also help connect home and school!

## **School Happenings** **Halloween!**

By Haley Sladek, Preschool

As you probably have guessed, since this month has a very exciting holiday at the end of it, the children have been really interested in anything related to pumpkins, monsters, vampires, ghosts, bats, spiders, witches etc. This current thread is quite complementary to the dragon thread we have been doing since school started because it has helped the children connect to "pretend creatures." Because of our interest-based meetings now, we have been able to dig deep into this thread by having intentional meetings about pumpkins, decorating, haunted houses and we even had a meeting about what things scare us and how do we help ourselves feel brave. Overall, Halloween is proving to be a thread that so many children connect with because of the many topics within the holiday, for example, for those of you whose favorite nocturnal animal is a bat, we have a place for you to talk about the fact that they *do* have mouths and *HUGE* ears!



**Jack puts his spider in the web and Winston draws a spider on the Tarantula poster.**

## **Patchwork Theater**

By Isaac Graves, Red Group

I've been amazed watching Red Group engage in intricate dramatic play over the first months of school. Detailed stories and characters weave together and build on each other each day with new ideas, different students, and themes. I enjoyed thinking about how I could best scaffold this experience and challenge them to take it a step further. I began by slowly introducing

elements of performance such as giving dramatic reading performances. I also brought in a PA system to allow them to experience singing on a microphone and experience what it is like to have an audience with all eyes on them. When the month of October began, it became quite obvious what the next step was. With all the excitement around Halloween, I suggested writing and performing a play in four acts to the students. They jumped at the idea and we've been working on small elements all month which will culminate in a performance for the school sometime soon. We've collectively written the story, drawn storyboards for each act, created decorations, and have just begun to create the costumes. The real challenge, and what I'm most excited about, is the necessary cooperation and collaboration that comes with acting the play out together. I can't wait to see how it goes.



**Working on the story boards.**

## **Planting Seeds and Watching Them Grow**

by Michele Leonard and Laura Daniels, Toddlers

In Mid-October we all sat down together outside around beautifully painted pots, soil, and shovels to participate in the seasonal tradition of planting an herb garden to cherish through the cold months. We also helped water bulbs that were delicately placed in the ground that will show their much appreciated faces at the first signs of spring. What a difficult concept it is to explain how we bury seeds that will hide for several months, what may feel like years, and hope that something wonderful will come from it. How hard it is to be patient and watch these vulnerable seeds brave the elements and become the flower that is so desired.

When we talk to children, we plant ideas about how people can relate to one another peacefully. And then watch and wait to see as the child owns the idea to manifest it into something beautiful. Just like nature we cannot force, bribe, or rush it. We can only water and

nurture their feelings and guide communication with confidence that it will blossom in time.

The process of planting and nurturing seeds and bulbs is an excellent analogy for our lives with young children. Often times it seems that we, and the world, are rushing them along to "completion". Parenthood often begins with lists of milestones and accomplishments that we come to expect from our child. We watch for their first smile and coo with eye contact, we are thrilled by their first scoot across the floor after a desired object, and we are hopeful when we see their first step. And often, unfortunately, we are anxious when we don't see milestones or an expected behavior at the times we perceived to be correct. On a day to day level, we may overlook the slow unfurling of their leaves, or we may not appreciate the small steps that go into learning something new. For example, yesterday I watched the children learning how to use a small see-saw. They had to learn to stand up and shift their weight to allow a friend to join them on the other end. They had to come to realize that they needed the friend to join in to really fully appreciate the fun that the teeter totter could provide. It was charming and fun to watch the laughing and merriment that came along with the falls and bumps off onto the rug.

Getting acquainted with each child's unique personality and trying to understand what motivates them has become our primary task with the toddlers. As we continue to nurture our relationships and community, to learn communication skills, how to play with others, and to work on life skills like potty training, we are finding many different outlooks on life within our young friends. We are also finding that things just take time. Like the bulbs sleeping under our ground, and the seeds in our windows, our children are moving steadily forward in a time of growth that will become fleeting all too soon.



**Toddlers planting seeds!**



**More Planting Projects!**



**Fun with Plants & Water!**

## **Recycled Materials!**

By Michele Beach, Preschool & Red Group

In conjunction with Transition Louisville, as part of the Tour of Sustainable Homes, Christy, Haley & Sally hosted a Patchwork booth for kids that resulted in the creation of the big styrofoam dragon that haunted our roof for some time. The previous week, Brenda (Atom & Andra's mom) helped us kick off a "trash for teaching" thread here at school by doing a print-making offering using recycled materials and paint. Using recycled items is a wonderful way to offer open-ended materials that can become anything the children can imagine, from a fireplace box to a racetrack! In addition, it helps the children view the world through a different lens – rather than seeing packaging as trash, it keeps their minds open to all of the many things that an item could be re-used for. My son now often stops me from throwing away a paper cup, shouting "wait, I can take that home

and use it for a project!" This means that I, too, will now often pause before throwing something away to ask myself if I could reuse it.

**Please help us continue with these projects by bringing in more recycled materials so that we can keep the studio shelves stocked!**



**Cameron adds fire to the dragon's mouth (a shoe sole) at the Sustainable Homes Patchwork Booth.**

## **Beginnings**

By Sally Anderson, Red Group

Hello there! For those who do not know, instead of substituting I am now working with the Red Group on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. I am excited to spend more time at Patchwork and to get to know everyone in Red Group better. It has only been a week but the students have helped me as I find my way in this new group and were very helpful in getting me accustomed to the rhythm of morning meeting. I was very impressed with how the morning meeting was run and the eagerness of each student to facilitate the meeting as 'agenda board person'. Seeing a classroom run democratically is so refreshing and I am excited to be a part of such a wonderful group of people.



**Sam K, Atom, Alex & Oscar create rockets, jails, ramps & racetracks.**

## **Tornadoes, Natural Phenomenon and Art**

By Sean Allen, Red Group

Some of the children have shown an interest in tornadoes, thunderstorms, and dust storms recently, both learning about them and drawing them. We did a project this past week where we made tornadoes out of double and single bottles, and also experimented with putting objects into the bottles such as leaves, wood chips, sand, dirt, pieces of paper, and sparkles. Adding materials to the bottles accented the spinning action of tornadoes, which leads nicely into other types of art projects and can also further understanding of physics as seen in the natural world.

**We'd like to continue this work on tornadoes, so if parents in Red Group would be willing to send a few extra empty water bottles or 2 Liter bottles, that would be much appreciated.**



**Sophie, Zoey, Madeline & Sadie use fabric scraps to create clothes for stuffed animals.**



**Making Tornadoes!**

## **Pumpkins**

By Liza Sparks

Fall is here at The Patchwork School and that means Halloween and pumpkins. The children have been engaged in several Halloween/Fall related projects. A scarecrow made of recycled materials stands outside the school and watches for dragons, Jack O'Lanterns hang joyfully in the kitchen, and ghosts and witches fly from the ceiling in the common room. In pumpkin meeting, we talked about the things seeds need to grow, what we might find inside a pumpkin, what other words start with the letter 'P', and what things we might make with pumpkins. We sang pumpkin songs and read pumpkin books. Several of the children shared their adventures to pumpkin patches with the group. We cut open two large pumpkins and investigated the insides. The children enthusiastically scraped the pulp and took out the seeds. Several children planted pumpkin seeds in the garden. One of the pumpkins was baked and offered for snack. All in all, it's turning out to be a pumpkin-tastic fall!



**Gavin & Annabelle explore the gourds.**



**Lila and Thuy start scooping out the seeds!**



**Annabelle, Grace, Aiden, Bailey, Sophia, Kaiya & Josie collaboratively create a fun pumpkin decoration.**

## **Community Updates**

### **Hand in Hand Parenting**

By Brenda Ilowit, Parent to Andra and Atom DiGiovanni  
I am very excited to be involved in a year-long instructor Certification Program for Hand in Hand, a resource that has supported our family deeply during normal times as well as extremely traumatic transitions.

*Our Mission Statement: Hand in Hand fosters healthy parent (or caregiver)-child relationships that will last a lifetime. Our Parenting by Connection approach teaches parents and professionals how to meet children's core emotional needs, reverse the damaging effects of stress in their lives, and how to create support for the work of nurturing children.*

I will be offering one or two talks for the community during the year, focused on the "Listening To Children" Tools developed by Patty Wipfler; These Pamphlets are available in the Patchwork Library to borrow as well as other recommended reading. This work is backed by 20 years of profound experience as well as Neuroscience

Research that you can investigate online at [www.handinhandparenting.org](http://www.handinhandparenting.org). There are articles under, "support" that will move you. Join "The Hand in Hand 'Connecting!' Newsletter" and participate in free monthly teleseminars! The "Superprotective factor" is connection, so when you find this material rewarding, let me know if you are interested in participating in a Parent Resource Group I will be leading together with Michele Beach. My email: [bamdigiovanni@gmail.com](mailto:bamdigiovanni@gmail.com) I look forward to deepening my practice and sharing the health.



**Making Connections.**

## **Learning Dialogues**

### **Conflict Resolution Workshop**

**Friday, November 11<sup>th</sup> 1:00-4:00pm**

Thanks to everyone for allowing us to Trick-or-Treat at your houses – it seems that all of the children and the teachers had a wonderful time! We look forward to continuing our Learning Dialogue series this month with our focus being "Conflict Resolution." Now that the children are getting more comfortable, this is the time we often hear more questions about how we handle conflict at school and also how parents can handle and also help their children discuss conflicts at home. For this topic we will be doing a short presentation for the whole group on Conflict Resolution strategies that we use here at school, then we'll break into smaller groups to do some group discussion about Listening, Conflicts and Parenting. Finally, we'll have an opportunity to play out some common scenarios and practice! Here are some quotes to ponder:

*The more the student learner can be empowered, involved in making decisions about his or her education, the more powerful that force can be toward helping them to take true responsibility for their own education. (Mintz)*

*Rather than endlessly continue the debate about which program best controls student behaviors, we might look at the question from the other*

*end: What is it that we hope to teach children about being good people, and does this mean more than what schools call 'discipline'? If we can better define our ends, we might have a better standard by which to evaluate the means to achieve them. (Covaleskie)*

*Children need the freedom to make mistakes and ask questions without fear of shame or belittlement. Mistakes and "failures" teach as effectively as successes, as long as a child continues to be respected. Children's keen sense of justice demands that they and others be treated thoughtfully and fairly. Fairness, to children, means limits but not anger, boundaries but not belittlement, facing problems but not attacking people for having problems. (Wipfler)*

Again, here are some questions that might help you think about your own parenting strategies and what you might want to talk about at the Learning Dialogue:

- What parenting strategies or techniques do you currently use at home?
- Which ones work and which don't?
- Have you and your spouse discussed your parenting styles and are you on the same page?
- What are your primary goals when you are resolving conflicts at home?
- How much do you know about conflict resolution at Patchwork and/or what did you learn last year?
- Do you have questions about Non-Violent Communication?



**Haley (Ms. Frizzle) & Christy (Bumble Bee) visit Parker's House!**