



RVCP News

a newsletter for growing minds



Doing Even Better Than A 'Good Job!'

A few weeks ago, a parent in the Sunflower class asked for my opinion on saying, "Good job!" to kids. This is something that parents, care-givers, teachers and almost anyone who comes into contact with children say. I hear it at parks, in restaurants, in my home and in the classroom, but what does it really mean and why do we say it? What information does "good job" convey to kids?



Poppy achieves a task during her Sunflower class.

intentions were good, I was taking away her internal motivation and replacing it with my evaluation of her.

I had never thought about it this way, but "good job" is just as judgmental as "bad job." I also noticed that, a lot of the time, my praise was connected to something that made my life more

convenient – she picked up her toys, left a park without complaining, etc.

My hope for my child, and for the Sunflowers, is that they will grow to become thoughtful, empathic people willing to take risks and try new things. One way to foster this is to give them meaningful feedback, "Johnny smiled when you let him use your toy" or "You tried climbing all the way across the monkey bars!" or simply a "You did it!"

This notices the child and their effort as opposed to their accomplishment or achievement and encourages trying new things regardless of the outcome.

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Amelia enjoys some water play in the Sunflower class.



Roasty-Toasty

From the Board

On the way home from Camp Long tonight it was a quiet car until Maceo said "Well, that was a good trip!" Indeed, good weather, good food, good company. Thanks to Rachel and Keith and their extended family for awesome organizing and thanks to everyone who was able to make it.

As we head into fall and settle into this school year, the board is thinking about publicity and outreach for the next school year. It has consistently been true that our most effective means of recruiting new families has been word of mouth. This year we are hoping to take advantage of ourselves as recruiters by using our connections in the community.

Some ideas are having speakers and /or information tables at local community centers and churches, bringing RVCP to the attention of any neighborhood groups we may be a part of, and sending fliers home via schools our older children attend. We also have business cards (on the table in the foyer) that we encourage everyone to carry and give out to people you meet at the park, library, etc.

If you have any other ideas of places to target or if you are a member of a church or community organization that would be receptive to having us present our school, please let Jamie Katz know.

In the meantime, we do hope you are starting to feel settled in here! We encourage everyone to take advantage of

the opportunity to conference with your child's teacher in November; it is a great time to share information with each other.

Sincerely,

**Barbara Pastores
and Kelly Lippman
RVCP Board Co-chairs**



*Above: Poppy and her dad, Mike, tackle rock-climbing together.
Right: Shane enjoys the gooey part of a s'more.*



Sander and Rein, Jamie and Cece join the group trying out the camp fire.



Above: Landon moves like a mountain lion down the rocks.

Keeping Up With Milestones

A message from Cesily, Parent Educator



This month we will be having diversity training instead of my usual parent education

time. In your mailboxes I will be placing copies of an article on developmental milestones. I think it's important to take the time to look at where children are developmentally as well as where they are headed.



Owen prefers his milestones to be the type you can climb.

It is my belief that the best parenting comes from having as much knowledge as possible. Studying developmental milestones gives parents an idea of what is happening and what will be happening. Also, it helps to set up realistic expectations. Knowing these milestones can help parents learn how to approach things and what types of activities we should be sure our children are exposed to.

As you read the article and see the milestones I want you to keep one thing in mind: milestones are recorded using that famous bell curve that we have all

learned about. Some children are at one end, some in the middle, and some at the other end. We do not look at these as concrete markers – just flexible examples of development. Will/did your child have 272 words at the age of 2? Who knows? Only a few parents actually count (one time my husband and I sat with his laptop, and an Excel spreadsheet pointing at things and asking my daughter “what’s that?”) The basic idea is that there is a big language growth between 18 months and 2 years.

One of the most common debates around milestones is over nature vs. nurture. It is hard to know just how much of a child’s development is “nature” - would happen anyway, and how much is “nurture” – influenced by the world around them and by how much adults intervene. I think with most things there is a balance.

My children’s kindergarten teacher says “(developmental) things click for our children when their brain is ready.” I agree. Children won’t walk or talk before all of the brain development that has to happen occurs. However, adults can support the process. We help our children feel balance and encourage the development of that part of the brain every time we take our baby by the hands and “walk” with them. We encourage a strong vocabulary by talking to and reading with our children. So even though the brain has to be “ready” parents can support what their children do.

The section of the article titled Ideas For Parents is a list of things that a parents can incorporate into their daily routine to support their child’s development. Doing these things does not mean that your child will develop these skills faster; it just helps to support their growth.

As stated above, language is the best example children who are talked to, who are read to, and help give labels to things have stronger vocabularies than those who don’t. Also, we are all good at some things and challenged by others. If we as parents support all sections of development, language, motor skills, social and emotional, we can help our children bridge that gap. We are able to notice the unique abilities of our children and are able to offer support to those things we notice as challenges.

Enjoy the article. Contact me if you have any questions.

Plan ahead- RVCP Activities

November

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

- Nov 3 Payment due for Chinook Book fund-raiser
- Nov. 10 Holiday: NO SCHOOL
- Nov. 14 7:30 p.m., Monthly Parent Meeting
- Nov. 21 6 p.m. Diversity Committee meets, 7 p.m. Board meets
- Nov. 23-24 Thanksgiving holiday
- NO SCHOOL

Things you should know

Clarification on Allergy Policy

The question of food at parent meetings, potlucks, etc. and the allergy policy was brought to our attention. The board decided that food for adult gatherings can be prepared at home and can contain eggs and nuts, as long as the food is served on paper/disposable plates in order to avoid contaminating the school's dishes. Food to be served at functions that include children can also be prepared at home, but must be egg and nut-free and must have an ingredient list attached. Food at these events is also to be served on paper/disposable plates. Thanks for your patience and understanding as we fine-tune our new policy!

Parent's Day Out: Customers and Chaperones Wanted

The next parent's days out are scheduled for Saturday Dec. 2 and Sat. Dec. 16 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Lunch is provided and we'll all likely participate in some festive crafts and/or baking. This is a wonderful opportunity for parents to finish off their holiday shopping, wrap those gifts or just catch up with some long neglected friends over lunch! Rates are a reasonable \$8/hour for one child and \$12/hour for two. Parents who don't think they might be interested in leaving their children, are asked to consider helping with the hosting. We need at least 5 kids and 5 adults signed up to make the sessions worthwhile for the co-op. Craft and baking suggestions for these days are welcome. Attempts will be made to keep things non-denominational as per preschool policy. The kids that attended our last parent's night out had a blast, as did the adults that helped out! Many thanks to Caroline Miyake, Jennifer Wise-Maccoll and Dave, and Barb Pastores who all stepped up when needed. Much appreciated! -- **Deb Cheers** (Lizzies mum...)

Find Meaningful Ways to Praise Kids

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Another way to express meaningful positive regard and warmth is to ask them what they think about the situation, "I see lots of purple in your picture, I wonder why you chose that color?" or simply, "tell me about this drawing." This creates a situation where the child can express what they think and feel about an accomplishment or an effort; if we step in too soon with our opinion and judgment (even if it's positive) we run the risk of telling them how to feel about something instead of

discovering what they are genuinely experiencing.

I suppose the point is that I try to think before I speak to make sure that what I am saying will be useful. When I used "good job" it was something that just came out of my mouth (about 100 times a day) without me having to think about it at all. I want my child and students to be thoughtful, notice others and express their feelings, what better way to accomplish that than to be thoughtful with my own words.

Interested in more? Ask Julie or Sara for Alfie Kohn's article, "Five

Recently at RVCP

Right: A tea party tickles tastebuds.

Below: Yoga sessions practice poise.

