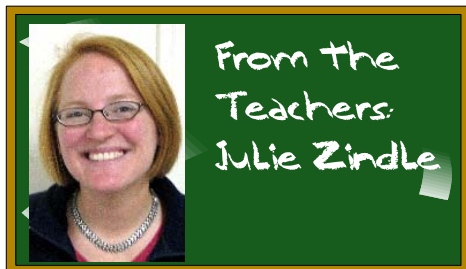




# RVCP News

a newsletter for growing minds



## Is my child *always* like this?

I am often asked by the working parent in the classroom: "Is he like this all the time!?" Often



Tessa and Sam in the Salmon class spend time building blocks and friendship.

### What's inside...

- 2 A message from the Board co-chairs on why we raise funds and on upcoming board elections.
- 3 Parent educator Cesily Crowser tells us about brain development.
- 3 Preparations for the annual Spring Carnival are beginning to take shape.
- 4 Mark some important April dates on your calendar.

children behave differently when their grown up is working. Parents are surprised by their child's possessiveness of them, their clingy-ness, their demands, or their higher level of need, anger, or sadness. "But he likes school." "But, she misses her friends when we're at home." "She doesn't do this anyplace else." It is really okay. I don't know about you but I behave differently at home, than I do at work. At home, I may show my happy, mad or sad feelings in bigger or louder ways. I swear.

I zone out ... and am just, in general, less vigilant about social conventions. I leave home the minute I walk out the door. However, for your child, you are their home. If they are with you, they are home. They are able to let their guards down and be just who they need to be in the moment because you are there and it is safe.

Participating in your child's early education is a gift you are giving them, but they don't know that. When your child needs you in class, let it be so. For many of you with multiple children, it may be especially difficult because being at preschool together may be the only time you have with your preschooler alone. It makes sense that she or he will amp up the expectation of your attention – "It's *my* time with you!" It may help to check in with your child before class and make plans about what she will do when you have to take the cover off the sandbox, or wash dishes, or change another child's diaper, but, it may not help, and that is okay too. There is nothing wrong with your child. He isn't insecurely attached, overly needy, or misbehaving. He is simply at *home* with you. If you are anxious about not being able to accomplish all the tasks that are required of you, let another working parent

know, or the teacher. We can help, and care for one another. We can be there so that your child's needs are met – that is our responsibility.

Being a preschooler isn't always easy. Put yourself in your child's shoes for a moment and imagine some of the challenges she might experience during the short preschool day. First: Does my grown up get to work today? Yes? Oh. Dear. I must share her with 12 other children, and it's hard enough sharing her with my brother. Other children may want her when I do! What if she puts that child's shoes on before mine? No? Oh. Dear. This is confusing. She stayed last time. Why can't she stay every time?! I'm going to have to say good-bye – where will she go? Will she come back? Will she look the

# RVCP Fund-raisers Keep Tuition Down

## From the Board

### How Fund-raisers Help RVCP

As we gear up for Spring Carnival and get ready to sell all those raffle tickets to unsuspecting friends and family, board members have been getting a lot of questions about why we raise funds and where the money goes.

The simple answer is that we raise funds because we want to keep our tuition affordable so that our school is accessible to all families. Tuition covers about 80 percent of our operating budget and fundraising makes up the other 20 percent. We use a small percentage of the funds we raise for scholarships.

This year, we substituted coffee sales and Parents Day/Night Out events for the Fall wine raffle held in previous years because we heard a strong message from parents they would rather only sell raffle tickets once for the main Spring fundraising event. This year, we approved a new board position to lead fundraising and community outreach. We hope to see everyone at the Spring Carnival – not just to raise money but to have a great time!

### Board Elections Ahead

Spring also brings board elections. This has been a year of big changes and next year's board will help guide the school in successfully transitioning to a multi-age program with two full-time teachers. It's an exciting time to join the board and there is a lot of energy about the changes the school has made.

Nominations will take place over the next month – keep your eyes open for a large sign at preschool for nominations.

Elections will occur at the May 1 meeting. The new board will begin on May 15 with a joint meeting with the current board.

If you are interested in a board position, we encourage you to look at the job description in the handbook and talk to current board members about their experiences.

Board meetings are on the third Tuesday of the month and it's important to attend all the meetings. Board service is a great way to contribute and help shape our school. We are all happy to answer any questions about board positions.

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

# Julie: Home is where the parent is

*Continued from front*

same? What if she forgets me? What if I feel scared?

Second: Oh. I have to remember all of these rituals – for getting a turn, for moving to the Sunshine room, for cleaning up, for washing hands, having snack...

There are so many toys to play with, and NONE of them are MINE! I have a lot to learn. But, learning can be hard work – I have to take risks – I have to wade in and try things. I have to pick up the gooey paintbrush in order to paint. I have to bang on the drum – loud – for this child to look at me. I have to cross the bridge to go down the slide. I have to use a word message to get off the rocking boat. I have to talk to a grown up if I have to pee. What if I'm rejected? What if I'm wrong? What if I'm thirsty? What if I want my Dad?

There may be a hundred other questions or concerns on your child's mind that may not be obvious or reasonable in our

estimation. Through showing up, playing, observing and participating, your child is beginning to answer the questions herself.

Hopefully, most days, the fun or just plain familiar children and activities that your child enjoys will tip the scale towards engagement and comfort during his day at school.

But, if it doesn't on the days you work, it's not so unusual or surprising.



Jackson Forebaugh makes some creative noise during Sunflower class.

# Cesily: How We Mold Our Child's Mind



Lately, there has been a lot of talk about brain development and how it applies to raising our children. Everyone wants to know how this important piece of muscle develops and what we as parents can do to foster this development. I have to admit I am a brain development junkie. If there is a speaker, I'm there, an article I'm reading it and if they make a movie about it – watch out because I will wait overnight outside the theater for tickets.

Why? Because despite everything that is written about it, the brain still remains a mystery. Our brains haven't given us enough knowledge to figure out how to figure them out. However, within this mystery there are facts that have been uncovered. I love knowing that there are little things I can do, some you probably already do, that make a difference in the development of my child.

To begin with, every parent should know that from 0 (well actually pre-0, because the brain is retaining information in utero) to 3 the brain is a sponge. It holds onto everything.

What does this mean for the parent? Should you begin reading Shakespeare and taking your toddler to the art museum? Sure, if you want to. You could just take her outside to see the wind blow through the trees, hear birds and cars, or feel the water as he plays in the wading pool. You can sing songs to him. You should read and talk to him as often as possible. You are laying a foundation and the more the better. It is not necessarily the "educational" quality of the content, but the availability of a variety of experiences that one should consider during this time.

Also, remember nobody learns well under stress. Children need to feel a sense of security and attachment that someone is there to meet their needs. If she is worrying about whether or not someone will respond to her when she's hungry or her environment is stressful for a long period of

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## Spring Carnival preparations on target

Once again the RVCP community is coming through! The auction procurement portion of the event is moving forward with leaps and bounds. As of March 19, 88% of families have procured at least one item and we haven't reached the deadline. The list of auction and raffle package items is looking great!

If you didn't do your part with procuring your share, have no fear. You can alleviate your guilt complex by selling a spectacular number of raffle tickets!

In early April each family will receive 80 tickets, a return envelope, 2 flyers describing the packages and a simple instruction sheet in their folder. The tickets are \$2 each or 6 tickets for \$10. Feel free to sell way, way more than the minimum. (If you didn't procure your share for the auction, we expect even more from you ☺).

Extra tickets will be made available upon request. This year, we plan to decrease the density of raffle packages and put more items up for auction. (Don't worry, the raffle packages are still going to be amazing. We just feel that there may be more money for the school if we spread out the money raising options). Our hope is that we can spread the wealth of the auction and raffle around and more families will go home with some great items.

To meet our overall fundraising goal, each family will need to sell raffle tickets and/ or bid on items totaling \$150. This means that you are either selling \$150 in raffle tickets or bringing your check book to the event and purchasing \$150 worth of auction items....or a combination of the two.

Now on to the event logistics.....

Spring Fling is going to be at the Delridge Community Center (4501 Delridge Way SW) on May 5, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Please note: only **CHECKS** or **CASH** will be accepted at the event.

This is going to be a great time for you, your kids, and the entire RVCP community. There will be a bouncy house, temporary tattoos, face painting, balloons and much more. Plus, there is a good chance you will be going home with some great auction items or a raffle package. Make sure to mark your calendars.

We will be in touch about more event details and the "next steps" in the coming weeks. In the meantime if you have questions, talk to us.

Cheers,  
Allison, Rachel, and Kelly

## Plan ahead- RVCP Activities

April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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					

- Apr 9-13 No School
- Apr 11 Parents Night Out
- Apr 21 Newsletter deadline

## Things you should know

### Annual Picnic

The end of the year school picnic will held at Seward Park on Sunday June 3rd from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. We have reserved Shelter #3 and tables 1 through 5.

### Farmers Market Activity

Rainier Valley Cooperative Preschool is going to sponsor the Kids Tent at the farmer's market on Wednesday, May 23, from 3 to 6 p.m.

The activity will include making stamps out of cut pieces of fruit and veggies (such as apples, pears, potatoes). The kids can use them to make drawings or paintings. We are looking for volunteers to work the tent.

### Carnival Request

We are in the planning stages for the annual spring carnival fund-raiser. We are looking for anyone who has items that we could borrow (or rent for cheap) to use at the carnival. We're looking for anything that is carnival inspired, such as games, popcorn machine, decorations, etc. We would be happy to pick up and return anything you have. The date of the event is May 5th at the Delridge Community center from 11 to 1. OR if you have any ideas that you think would work for our event, let me know. Questions? Feel free to call or e-mail Kelly Forebaugh at [kelly\\_forebaugh@hotmail.com](mailto:kelly_forebaugh@hotmail.com).

# Understanding Brain Development

time, her brain is in survival mode and won't be doing any connection building until things get taken care of.

From age 3 to 10, the brain still makes new connections, but begins to get rid of some connections in a process called pruning. What does this mean for the parent? Well, basically the same stuff as mentioned above. Now that language has begun to develop, conversations are a must, don't just talk at your child, talk with your child.

Encourage them to share their thoughts. Expose them to new things. The brain needs exercise just like any other muscle. Now is the



Mason and Seppo keep traffic flowing safely during the Salmon class.

time when we start to focus on "educational" experiences. Take an active part in your child's learning. As much as possible, bring school into the home. From the sensory play at preschool to your child's fifth grade math homework, encourage your child to get the most out of these experiences. For example, you could talk to them about how the water in the sensory table is cold, or how it looks like a waterfall when they pour it. Encourage older children to talk to you about their homework, sometimes even have them teach it to you. Repetition is the key.

Once we reach the ripe old age of 10, researchers say major pruning begins. What you don't use you begin to lose. At this time, repetition is even more important. Make sure they are exposed regularly to things that are important to you.

Of course we still learn after 10 years. From my readings I get the impression that new connections can still be made – it is just harder.



Jasper Webb gets the scoop on playground sand during sunflower class.

Our role in supporting brain development in our child is not complicated. We don't need to spend a lot of money or even focus all of our time. We just need to make sure that we encourage our children at every age to have new experiences and to continue to learn. We must spend time communicating, singing, laughing, playing games, and studying with them. We must make sure they are eating well and getting enough rest. Take comfort in knowing that what we do every day helps to build the brain.