

From the Teachers...



Intolerable Uncertainty

by Julie Zindle

Ursula K Le Guin's belief: "The only thing that makes life possible is permanent, intolerable uncertainty; not knowing what comes next," reminds me that uncertainty breeds learning, discovery, creativity and change. I really like being right and sure, CERTAIN about what is next. Unfortunately, I'm often wrong, scared, and doubtful of what the future holds. As your children mature, build relationships, become a community, my level of uncertainty grows -it's hard to keep up with

the changes in growth, development, power, and voice of 40 children as they uncover and make sense of the world.

Who your child is informs our actions as teachers, and because the one constant at preschool is growth, and because (much to my dismay) we are not all-seeing and all-knowing super heroes, we struggle to adjust our thinking and planning as your child changes. The strategy we tried a month ago, no longer applies -the activity

of last week no longer provokes, the song from the beginning part of the year dissolves into floor-rolling... We are guided by philosophy, values, and experience but rely on current, everyday observations to direct what is next.

Because we aren't taking down the box in the closet marked "MARCH" and pulling items and activities out to put in front of kids, the process of planning is more complicated. Sara and I are in the never-ending cycle of observing, reflecting, trying, and refining (or ditching). We are observing: How- how are children using logic, exploration, trial and error, and asking why? What - what skills, what words, what materials, what strategies. What elicits frustration, concentration, satisfaction? Why? Who -with whom is your child interacting or not, and

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School Board Notes

Looking Ahead, And Back

by Veronica Golden

At the May parent meeting we will be voting in new members to the RVCP Board. As you think about nominating yourself or a friend for a position, I thought it would be helpful to share a few thoughts from the present Board.

Allison Singleton, our Alumni Board Member, feels serving in this position has been a good way to bridge the gap year

between her son Sam's last year in 2007 and her son Noah's first year in the Fall of 2008. Allison suggested this position be filled by someone who has served on the Board in previous years.

Cynthia Steiner Ganz has enjoyed serving on the Board as our PAC representative because it helped her know she was part of a larger community.

Lisa Harris-Millard volunteered to serve on the Board as our Fundraising Manager because she wanted to effect change in our fundraising strategy. She successfully organized a NEW toy and clothing event and eliminated procurement from our spring event!

Mindy Schaberg, our Treasurer, encourages you to try this position if you have some math skills. She told me this position flows pretty smoothly and the bookkeeper does most of the heavy lifting.

Allinece Andino is our Secretary. She likes the process of the people on the Board talking and coming up with new ideas. If you can write this might be the job for you.

Anoma Howard worked this year to represent the great families in the Salmon class. She has enjoyed working with the board members who all bring varied life experiences to the running of the school.

Jamie Katz working as the Caterpillar Class Coordinator

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why? As we reflect we hazard theories about the "whys" of all of the above, but that's all we can do - is hazard a guess because really, only your child knows the answer. We make the best decisions we can - should we try this material, activity, or strategy - should we step in more, or back off, should we try to build this bridge, or strengthen this connection - or keep observing it?

In short, our uncertainty is

a direct reflection of your child's learning and growing. We are always reinventing the wheel because so is your child. Because we view each child as an individual whose learning is distinct to her/him, we are also always learning and uncovering how to meet your child's needs and interests. You can bet we will make mistakes, but you can trust that our uncertainty will keep us trying.



*"Here comes Uncle Jessie,
Riding through the fields.
On his horse and buggy,
He knows just how you feel.
He's hollerin' [pink]!
Jumpin' down [pink]!
Jumpin' down [pink]!
Jumpin' down [pink]!
Sit down, [pink]!"*



Board ... cont.pg 1

enjoyed learning how things get done at RVCP. She felt more in touch with the goals and mission of the school and is more invested in RVCP's future.

I encourage everyone to look over the descriptions of the Board positions on pages 21-26 in the handbook and think about which position you would like to fill!

--

RVCP Board Chair Veronica Golden is mom to Madeline, a Salmon student.



Helping Children with Grief & Loss

by Karleen Wolfe

I recently took a four-day grief and loss workshop where we explored a variety of losses along with ways for supporting people in the grieving process. I was especially interested in ways for supporting grieving children and realized this was good information to pass along to others.

Children experience loss when they find themselves deprived of something. It can be loss of a person, as in a death or divorce, or through unavoidable circumstances (e.g., a best friend moves to another state). Children experience loss when pets die or run away, when they lose a favorite toy, or when they change schools.

Grief is the anguish and sorrow one experiences as a result of loss.

Here are just a few facts to help you understand how children grieve. A child's identity is

deeply-rooted in the family and therefore she/he depends upon family for recognition when grieving. Whether the loss is a broken toy or the death of someone close, the child needs to feel supported by other family members. A child will also experience grief to what is called

"...if a young boy wishes his brother would drop dead and then his brother later dies, he may feel he caused his brother's death."

secondary losses - for example, if an out-of-state relative dies, even though the child may not know the family member well, he or she may feel the grief of parents and react to this as a secondary loss. Changes in routines and sadness in a household can trigger this feeling of loss.

Children grieve over and again. Child development plays a key role in how children grieve. A child may first experience a loss at a very young age and grieve in a very concrete way, and then re-grieve again later when she/he reaches an age where abstract thought allows her/him to better understand the meaning and finality of death. It can be disturbing or worrisome to discover your child re-grieving a previous loss, but be reassured that this is normal behavior.

Just like children want to hear a favorite story over and over, they want that same kind of repetition when grieving. A child may ask over and over, "Why did Grandma die?" or "What happened to Fluffy?" She/he is establishing trust with you and looking for reassurance to the information being processed. Children will comprehend loss and grieve appropriately to their developmental level. At very young ages, children cannot understand abstract thought and so typical sayings may be confusing to them -- "Grandma sort of fell asleep, but she won't ever wake up" (Translation: "Will that happen to me when I go to sleep at night?"). Children engage in what is

known as "magical thinking." Magical thinking is the belief that one's thought processes caused something to happen. For example, if a young boy wishes his brother would drop dead and then his brother later dies, he may feel he caused his brother's death.

At the April 8 Parent Meeting, we'll talk more about grief and loss and discuss strategies of how you can help children though these and other grieving processes.

April 8 - Parent Education Topic:

"Grief and Loss: What Does it Mean to Children?"

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Karleen Wolfe is our Parent Educator, working with us from the offices of Seattle Central Community College's Parent Child Center. Individual appointment times are encouraged and can be arranged (either at school or another location) by contacting Karleen -- at kpwolfe@sccd.ctc.edu, or by calling her at 206-478-0274.

Karleen's Parent Ed Schedule

Karleen will be available to meet with families in the Sunshine Room once a week (additional times available by appointment). Her April schedule is as follows:

(April 1-4, spring break)
Wed, April 9, 12:30-3
Wed, April 16, 9-12
Tues, April 22, 9-12
Wed, April 30, 12:30-3

APRIL

Su	M	T	W	Th	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			

April 1 - 4 | Spring Break
NO SCHOOL

April 8 | Parents' Meeting

April 17 | Board Meeting

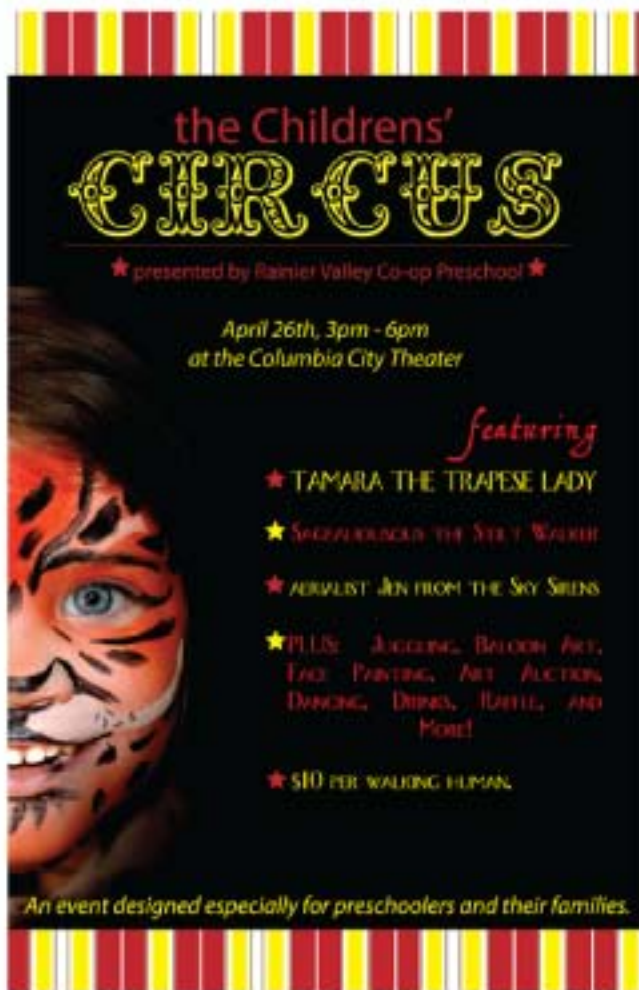
April 21 | Newsletter Deadline

April 26 | Children's Circus

Lottery Status!

New families will receive a letter with their enrollment status by:

Tuesday, April 15th



the Childrens' CIRCUS

★ presented by Rainier Valley Co-op Preschool ★

April 26th, 3pm - 6pm
at the Columbia City Theater

featuring

- ★ TAMARA THE TRAPESE LADY
- ★ SHERWOODS THE STEEL WARRIOR
- ★ ADRIAN JIN FROM THE SKY SWIMS
- ★ PLUS: Juggling, Balloon Art, Face Painting, Art Auction, Dancing, Drums, Juggle, and More!
- ★ \$10 PER WALKING HUMAN.

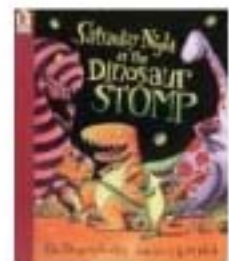
An event designed especially for preschoolers and their families.

GOT TICKETS?

NEED TICKETS?

CHECK THE EXCHANGE BOARD.

EVERYTHING IS DUE APRIL 8.



Beloved Books.

Sunflower Dylan's favorite Books (today):

How I Became a Pirate |

Melinda Long

Young Jeremy Jacobs is drafted into pirate-hood, only to find that a pirate's life lacks some of the things he has grown to love at home.

Pirate Girl | Cornelia Funke

Mollie is captured by pirates, who wish to ransom her safe return home. But Mollie knows a secret they don't. Who will prevail?

Saturday Night At The Dinosaur Stomp |

Carol Diggory Shields

Dinosaurs dance their way through the prehistoric weekend.



Located in the heart of Columbia City, Rainier Valley Cooperative Preschool welcomes families of all races, genders, religions, sexual orientations, and cultural backgrounds. Learn more about our school online: www.rainiervalleycoopreschool.org

