



Parker-Chase Newsletter

PCPO (Parker-Chase Parent Organization) News

May, 2013

Annual Parker Chase Picnic:

Our annual family picnic is just around the corner! *See the article below for details.*

Teacher Appreciation:

PCPO's Teacher Appreciation Committee have been busy putting ideas together for all of the teachers for our annual Teacher Appreciation Week May 20-24. There will be a different theme posted for each day of the week. We hope to provide our teachers with a spectacular week of appreciation and need your help to make the week a complete success. Some of the activities the Committee has planned involve volunteers helping facilitate the event and other activities involve preparation by children and their families at home before the actual day. Watch for emails and notices on the PCPO Bulletin Board for opportunities to participate!



Book Fair:

Thanks to **Eilene Gold** (Upper Pre-school teacher) for coordinating another *amazingly* successful Book Fair. Books remain a favorite among our children and the Book Fair is a great mechanism to keep fresh books flowing into our classrooms and the old favorites on the shelves. All of the classrooms really appreciated parents purchasing the books on their "Wish Lists"—those are some of the children's favorites!

Fundraising:

Mixed Bag Designs Fundraiser:

We've got one of our favorite, exciting fundraisers happening right now—our Mixed Bag Designs Fundraiser!

Join the FUN!!! The product is a high-quality, eco-friendly, adorable, and affordable product. The selection of cool and chic products include many "must-have" items: Grocery bags, lunch

(Continued on page 2)

Mark Your Calendars

- ☺ May 3—Ms. Natalie's 11-Year Anniversary (Infant II)
- ☺ May 8—12:00 Release for Plano ISD
- ☺ May 9—Ms. Kirsten's Birthday (Pre-K)
- ☺ May 9—Picnic @ Russell Creek Park
- ☺ May 10—Rain Date for Picnic
- ☺ May 12—Happy Mother's Day
- ☺ May 16—Ms. Dori's 2-Year Anniversary (Toddler 2)
- ☺ May 18—Ms. Kaylan's 2-Year Anniversary (Lower Preschool)
- ☺ May 19—Ms. Eilene's 22-Year Anniversary
- ☺ May 20-24—Teacher Appreciation Week
- ☺ May 24—Frisco ISD Bad Weather Make-Up Day
- ☺ May 27—Closed for Memorial Day
- ☺ June 7—4:00 p.m. Pre-K Graduation
- ☺ June 8—Dance Recital

Fling into Spring—Family Picnic May 9

The annual Parker-Chase Spring picnic is scheduled for Thursday, May 9th from 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. at Russell Creek Park in Plano. (Rain date is Friday, May 10th.)



We encourage Parker-Chase parents, teachers, and children to attend. This relaxing and fun evening is a great way to introduce yourself

(Continued on page 2)

PCPO News

(Continued from page 1)

bags and shopping bags that are reusable, strong and stylish; iPad, iPhone, iPod, Kindle and lap top cases; travel totes, garment bags, cosmetic bags, coolers, table top and gift items, notecards, Post-its and white boards, pet products and so much more...



PCPO Bulletin Board:

PCPO posts current notices, upcoming events and sign-up sheets on the "PCPO News" bulletin board over the water fountain in the Kiva. Watch that board for upcoming events and information. If you have anything you would like all parents to know about, be sure and drop it by Ms. Sherry's office and she will post it for all to read.

Don't miss out—get your orders in NOW! Proceeds from this fundraiser go to the Teacher Appreciation Fund...just in time for Teacher Appreciation Week!!

PCPO Meeting:

PCPO will not meet in May because of the Annual Picnic. ♥

Reminders:

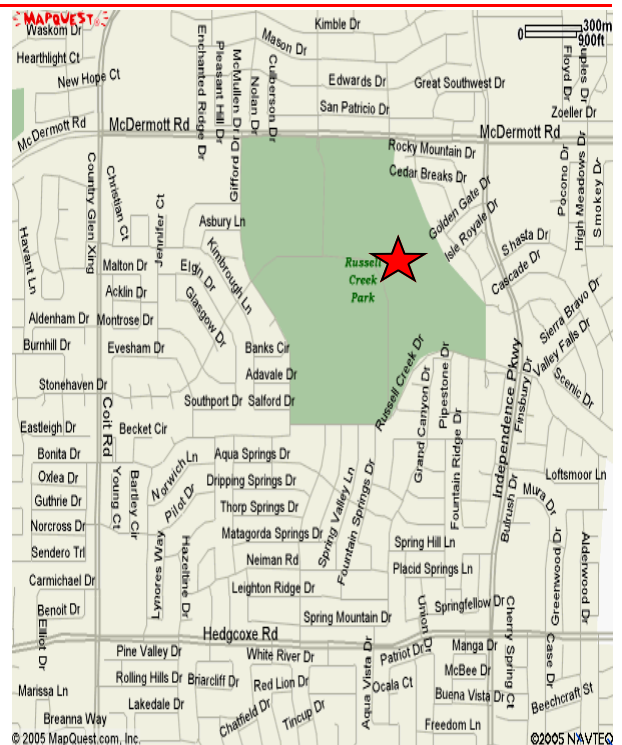
- ♥ *Week of the Young Child was SUCH a FUN week! Be sure and check out the pictures posted to Shutterfly! If you need the log-in information, check with Ms. Sherry or your child's teacher.*
- ♥ *We will be closed for Teacher Work Day on August 23rd this year. Be sure and mark your calendar now for this important day at our school—the day that teachers prepare their classrooms for the new school year!*

Fling into Spring

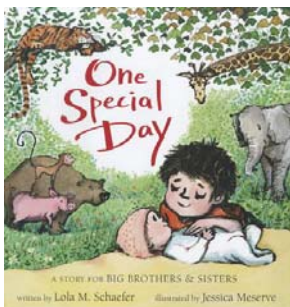
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to parents, get to know the teachers, and to see your children have a wonderful time with their peers. Parker-Chase and the PCPO organization will provide hot dogs, chips, watermelon, and lemonade. Reservation forms for the hot dogs go out May 1st so that you can pre-order your dinner. If you want to make another choice, you are encouraged to bring a dinner for your family. Russell Creek has a lot of picnic tables, a lake, and a playground. Bring bicycles, tricycles, skates, kites, rockets, airplanes, hoola hoops, bubble makers, and anything else that brings huge smiles to your children's faces when they are outside. Trust us when we say that you don't want to miss this exciting evening with the family!

Russell Creek Park is located at 3500 McDermott Road - between Coit and Independence roads. See you on Thursday, May 10th at 5:30pm. ♥



The Reading Chair



***One Special Day: A Story for Big Brothers & Sisters*, by Lola M. Schaefer. Illustrations by Jessica Meserve. Ages 2-5.**

Parents and teachers often look for positive ways to help older siblings welcome the changes that new babies bring to the family, while reassuring them that plenty will stay the same. In this well-paced story, readers spend most of the book getting to know Spencer for the boy he is: strong, fast, wild, and free. Schaefer's message is that none of that is going to change. But by the end of the book, Spencer shows he can also be quiet, patient, and gentle when it's time to meet his new sibling. Without resorting to didacticism, this book celebrates big siblings for who they are and reassures them that they can grow to face new roles and responsibilities.

In describing Spencer, Schaefer uses similes to compare him to various animals, but the name of the animal is always omitted. Using Meserve's illustrations as their guide, readers will enjoy the invitation to guess the name themselves, a clever and interactive technique. For example, the book begins, "Spencer was a boy. He was strong—strong as a [illustration of a bear]. He was fast—fast as a [illustration of a horse]." Illustrations of Spencer remind us of Maurice Sendak's Mickey from *In the Night Kitchen*, both in his appearance and in his free-spiritedness.

***Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns: A Muslim Book of Colors*, by Hena Khan. Illustrations by Mehrdokht Amini. Ages 3-7.**

A young girl takes readers on a tour of what it means to be a Muslim by sharing aspects of her daily life that are special to her. Each aspect is represented by a color and captured in beautiful, ornate illustrations. There's her mother's blue *hijab* with which she covers her hair; the green cover of the girl's Quran, which she reads with pride; the yellow box for *zakat* (charity that helps the needy and purifies those who give it); brown dates enjoyed as a Ramadan treat; and the orange henna that

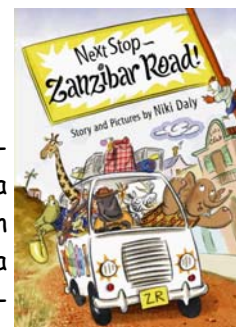


decorates her hands. Traditional elements of Islamic art are woven into many illustrations, including the patterns of prayer rugs, Arabic lettering, and the golden domes of the mosque.

The book feels like it was created with love and familiarity, and it will appeal both to a child well versed in the subject matter and to one learning about Islam for the first time. The inventory of cultural and religious items, on subjects including food, prayer, celebration, study, and the importance of helping others, makes this a good starting point for classroom discussions and activities about other cultures. Gorgeous endpapers feature classic Islamic tile work in rich blues, oranges, and yellows.

***Next Stop—Zanzibar Road!*, by Niki Daly. Ages 4-8.**

Five mini-stories within one picture book all center around Mama Jumbo, a loving and sometimes vain elephant with pink toenails and a floppy red hat. Set in an African village of colorful and vibrant animals, the book also features Mama Jumbo's helpful son, Little Chico, who is a chicken; Bro Vusi, his babysitter; and Mr. Motiki, the taxi bus driver, among others. The stories focus on everyday happenings and the frenzy created as all of the characters scramble to help each other solve problems.



Mama Jumbo spends her day visiting the market, bargaining and bartering to secure the items she and Little Chico need, helping fix a flat tire on the taxi bus (plugging the hole with a piece of Bum-Bum bubblegum and inflating the tire with her trunk), and making Little Chico a shirt from the fabric she found at the market.

Daly uses rich language. Mama Jumbo's cheeks are as soft as "marshmallows," she lives at "Number 7-Up Zanzibar Road," and Little Chico likes to exclaim, "Super-doops! Sharp-sharp! Snazzy! Jazzy!" Daly writes honestly about the struggles the villagers face. Old Granny Baboon swaps beads for fruit because her family is hungry, for example.

Daly, a resident of South Africa, brings fun and humor to this very real picture of close-knit village life, and it is a pleasure to read along and share some

How to Support Children's Approaches to Learning? Play with Them!

As a parent, you want your children to learn all that they can—to grasp math concepts, to be curious about exploring the world, and to learn to read and write. Did you know that you can help your son or daughter academically by playing with them? Play and learning go together!

What kind of play helps children learn the best? Play that really engages children—play that they will focus on and stay with even when problems arise. This kind of play helps children develop their approaches to learning—in other words, the ways they respond to learning situations. Curiosity about the world, initiative and problem solving, and focused attention and persistence are just a few approaches to learning that children develop through play.

In the early years, parents can help children develop the skills to be better students by playing with them. Yes, as they enter kindergarten and the elementary years, children need to have some understanding of letters and numbers. However, if they have not developed solid approaches to learning, they will not be as successful in school settings.

Encouraging Toddlers at Play

Joey is 20 months old. He has a basket full of toys, including rattles, soft plastic blocks, a set of stacking rings, stuffed animals, and cloth and plastic books. Joey's dad often sits down on the floor with Joey and invites him to play with items in the basket. Joey's favorite activity is to dump out all of the toys and put the basket on his head! This is typical toddler play behavior. Joey is curious about the world and is looking at it another way—through the slats in the basket!

Joey loves to shake the rattles to hear the different sounds or to stack two or three blocks and knock them down. His attention to each might be up to five minutes or so, which is just right for his age. He may solve problems as he tries to place the rings on the stacking post or to add more blocks to a tower.



Joey's dad encourages his curiosity. He comments about what he is doing: "I see you are trying to get that last ring on the post, but it just won't fit." Or he asks him questions: "Where did that ball go? Do you see it hiding behind the chair?" He connects his play to learning by responding positively to his interest: "I can tell you like to look through the basket, you silly boy. Does everything look different from under there?" He also encourages him by asking him to keep trying even when he gets frustrated. "Oh, those blocks keep falling down, don't they? Can you try to put just one on top of another gently? Let's see what happens. I'll help you." This encouragement fosters his perseverance, his attention, and his initiative at problem solving, all positive approaches to learning.

Encouraging Preschoolers at Play

Alicia is 4 years old. She loves to dress up in her mommy's clothes, jewelry, and shoes and then pretend to go shopping, care for her baby dolls, and cook dinner. Through her pretend play Alicia learns to think abstractly. When she holds a block in her hand and uses it to pretend to talk on the phone, she is using the block as a symbol for something else. That's abstract thinking in action! And, since letters and numbers are abstract because they are symbols of what they represent, pretend play is one way a child develops her understanding of letters and numbers.

Alicia's mom and dad have recognized that supporting her pretend activities keeps her engaged for 10 to 15 minutes at a time. They pretend right along with her, asking her to "bake some cookies" or to "go grocery shopping" for them. They give her paper and crayons so that she can pretend to write grocery lists. They encourage her to count how many items she has placed in her toy shopping cart. They accept her scribbles and letter-like shapes as her writing (just right for 4-year-olds) and help her when the numbers

(Continued on page 5)

How to Support Children's Approaches to Learning? Play with Them!

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(Continued from page 4)

get a little mixed up.

Alicia will work with puzzles for long periods of time, too, especially if her dad joins her. Together, they figure out strategies for putting the pieces together. She may turn the pieces around, trying out different ways until she is successful. She is developing problem solving and persistence as she does so.



Your Role as Your Child Plays

Playing with your child helps keep your child engaged in the kind of play where learning occurs. Your interest, questions, and comments as you play alongside will help your child use toys productively. And the two of you will have lots of fun together! Most importantly, you will be working toward your child's future success as a student by building important approaches to learning. Play and learning go together! ♥

Healthy, Fit Families

Children need to move their bodies and eat healthy foods. Families can promote healthy habits by encouraging children to eat nutritious foods and get some exercise every day. Here are some suggestions.

Follow the nutrition guidelines for children under 6.

Information on nutritious foods, portion sizes, and sample menus for planning snacks and meals are available free [through the USDA](#).

- **Eat meals together.** You'll know what your child is eating, you can model appropriate choices and portion sizes, and you'll have fun talking and spending time as a family.

- **Steer your child toward healthier choices at fast food restaurants.** Look for salads, sliced apples, baby carrots, and low-fat milk, soy milk and almond milk in colorful containers.

- **Offer fun, healthy snacks.** Ants on a log (celery sticks with peanut butter or cream cheese topped with raisins), sliced fresh fruit on a skewer, or raw vegetables and low-fat yogurt dip are favorites of many young children.



- **Teach your child to listen to his or her stomach.** When children do this, they'll learn to know when they have had enough to eat. It takes 15 to 20 minutes after eating to know if you're really hungry for seconds.

- **Plan a taste-testing event.** Family members can taste and vote on new, healthy foods—veggie burgers, baby spinach, turkey hot dogs, whole wheat pasta, kiwis, and the like. Then make the favorites part of your regular menu.

- **Give hugs and kisses—not food—for comfort and encouragement.** This simple action helps children associate eating healthy foods with taking care of themselves. They are likely to grow up to be adults who avoid using food as a reward or a way to cope with stress.

- **Limit your children's screen time.** Instead of watching television or playing on the computer, spend time together—go for a run, kick a ball around, ride bikes (or trikes), or take a nature hike.

- **Walk instead of driving to nearby places.** Leave the stroller at home. Park a few blocks from the store and walk the rest of the way. ♥

Coping with Tragedies

Our hearts go out to all affected by the tragic bombings in Boston, Massachusetts. NAEYC compiled these online resources for parents, teachers, and others working with young children about coping with violence and talking to young children about tragedies they learn about in the media.

[Fred Rogers: "Look for the Helpers"](#)

Read timeless wisdom on what to keep in mind when talking to young children about a tragedy from Fred Rogers for parents, teachers, and caregivers. Also see a [photo and video clip](#).

[The National Association of School Psychologists - Resources to cope with violence](#)

Resources on talking to children about violence, tips for parents, teachers, and school administrators, dealing with a death in a school and more. The Association has listed some of these key resources on their home page for quick access.

[The National Child Traumatic Stress Network - Tips for talking to children about the shooting](#)

Resources on talking to children about the recent shooting, information about the shooting's psychological impact, tips for parents on media coverage - includes tips specific for preschool-aged children.

[The National Education Association - School crisis guide](#)

The National Education Association (NEA) and the National Education Association Health Information Network (NEA HIN) developed this easy-to-use crisis guide with essential, to-the-point advice for schools and districts.

[American Academy of Pediatrics - Talking with children](#)

Resources to help parents talk to children about violence and disasters.

[Child Care Aware - Helping families and children cope](#)

In the wake of any kind of emergency or disaster - large or small - children and adults may feel anxious about their own safety and security. Child Care Aware offers resources for Parents, Caregivers, School Professionals and more.

[American Psychological Association - Helping children manage distress](#)

As a parent, you may be struggling with how to talk with your children about a shooting rampage. It is important to remember that children look to their parents to make them feel safe.

[National Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry - Coping with tragic events](#)

In hopes of helping families cope with such tragic events AACAP created a collection of resources.

[Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration - Coping with violence and traumatic events](#)

This web page includes information about the Disaster Distress Hotline, the nation's first hotline dedicated to providing disaster crisis counseling. It also includes articles for students, parents, teachers, and other caregivers, and for responders and health professionals.

[Sesame Workshop - A resource for parents and caregivers](#)

"Here for Each Other: Helping Families After an Emergency" is a resource that includes tips, ideas, and activities to help adults and children cope with disasters.

[Helping Children Deal with Tragic Events in the News - Timeless wisdom from Fred Rogers for parents, teachers, and caregivers](#)

In times of community or world-wide crisis, it's easy to assume that young children don't know what's going on. But one thing's for sure, children are very sensitive to how their parents feel. They're keenly aware of the expressions on their parents' faces and the tone of their voices.

[Tips for Talking to Children and Youth after Traumatic Events](#)

This printable PDF from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services offers concise tips for talking to children after traumatic events as well as resources for when more active intervention may be needed.

[Helping Children Cope with Tragedy-related Anxiety](#)

Mental Health America offers tips for parents in helping preschool-age children, as well as grade school-age children and adolescents, with tragedy-related anxiety.

[After the Crisis: Using Storybooks to Help Children Cope](#)

Authors Cathy Grace and Elizabeth Shores offer literature-based activities to help children who have been through a trauma. With activities and exercises that can be used in conjunction with 50 children's books, the discussion starters and writing and art activities in *After the Crisis* can be used by teachers to promote children's ability to cope and heal.

[Media Coverage of Traumatic Events](#)

This web page discusses research findings that link watching media coverage of traumatic events with stress. The article gives viewing recommendations and other advice for parents of young children. ♥