

# Director News

November 2018

## MMPS

### Monthly Memo



Dear Families,

October was a fun filled month! It was so nice to see all our families attend Back to School Night. The children love to come to school at night and show off their classrooms and visit with fellow classmates. It's also nice to see some alumni back with their younger siblings. Thank you for attending!

You will soon receive a brief progress report on your child's development. This will give you an idea of how they are doing so far this year. It is a quick summary that highlights areas of development and areas for continued growth. Parent conferences will be in January. This will include a more detailed review of your child's development. Of course if you have any questions during the year please speak with your child's teacher or come to the office. We are all here to create a positive learning experience for you and your child.

This month the preschool is holding a non-perishable food drive for the West Springfield Open Pantry. We hope to collect a variety of items to share with local families who are in need. Collection baskets are on each floor. The first floor bin is in the stairwell and the second floor bin is at the top of the stairs. Thank you in advance for your generous support.

#### Advisory Board Update

The next Advisory Board meeting is the end of the month. Look for an update in the December newsletter.

#### Other News

This month starts the Taste Book fundraiser. These books are loaded with great deals at local businesses. Plus the preschool gets \$10/book once we sell over 50 books. We have books on site for a quick turnaround once orders are received.

How are we doing so far this school year? Let us know what you think about your preschool experience so far. The survey is on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/MMPS-Kids-118937778179876/>

Thank you in advance for your input.

#### Wellness Corner with Carrie Taylor, RDN

“Keep your Preschooler Healthy with Foods”

Taking the steps now to ensure your child is healthy in time for cold and flu season will help keep illness at bay.

Fewer foods are more powerful for building up the immune system than vegetables and fruit. What if your child turns their nose up at anything green? Keep strong. Children often need to try new foods over 20 times before they are accepted. Remember- their taste buds are maturing just like the rest of their body! Offer vegetables and fruit from every color of the rainbow, a variety of textures and cooked and uncooked versions. Make it a habit to offer at least one vegetable and fruit with every meal and at least one vegetable or fruit at snack. Getting the vitamins, minerals, antioxidant-acting compounds and fiber these foods offer into your child's mouth will make the difference in their cold and flu defense.

Protein-rich foods such as milk products, eggs, nuts, seeds, beans, lentils, chick peas, seafood, poultry and meat provide essential building blocks for the cells that make up the immune system. As with fruits and vegetables, offering a variety of high-quality protein foods is a must. If you find yourself in a rut, think outside the box of frozen chicken nuggets. Begin introducing Meatless Mondays for dinner, offer nut-free seeds and seed butter for snacks and opt for kid-friendly seafood options like haddock, shrimp, scallops and tuna 2 to 3 times per week.

Believe it or not, simply meeting hydration needs can make or break your child's immune system. Proper hydration rids the body of waste, allows cells to function properly, prevents skin cracks and dryness and regulates body temperature. The go-to sources of hydration for children over the age of two is water and a calcium-rich milk like cow's milk or soy milk. If your child isn't a fan of plain water, mix things up. Offer sparkling water, add flavoring to water with fresh lime, lemon or orange slices and brew up hot or iced tea. Decaffeinated bags of flavored green tea and herbal tinctures like a rooibos or peach tea can mean the difference between your kiddo keeping up with their hydration or turning their nose up at what is offered.

Have a nutrition question? Contact Carrie at [nourishsatya@gmail.com](mailto:nourishsatya@gmail.com)

### **Educational Spotlight**

#### **“I did nothing today...”**

When children come home at the end of the day, the question they're asked as they run out to play is “Tell me what you did today?”

And the answer they give makes you sigh with dismay. “Nothing, I did nothing today!”

Perhaps “Nothing” means that I read a book.

Or .... With a Teacher I got to cook.

Maybe I painted a picture of Blue.

Or heard a story of a mouse that flew.

Maybe I wrote my name myself,  
or found a great book on the library shelf.

Maybe I helped a friend today,

or went to my favorite area alone,

Maybe today was the very first time  
that my scissors followed a very straight line.

Maybe I sang a song right to the end,

or worked with a special brand new friend.

When you're three, four or five your heart has wings  
And “Nothing” can mean so many things!

Next time you ask your child, “What did you do today,” remember they are doing so much within their day and their retelling of it might not sound like much to you. Getting a pre-schooler to recall their day requires knowing a little bit about where they are cognitively. There are several areas of thinking that are developing at this time. Recognition memory is really quite good, meaning if there are some visual cues, they can remember and talk about something that has happened recently. I say recently, because their working or short-term memory is a bit limited at this point and usually only events that are striking or personally meaningful will be kept for a longer term. This extended, “autobiographical memory” is why they can remember every detail and tell everyone about what happened the day Mommy backed into the garage door... but remembers very little about what happened in school today.

In addition, pre-schooler's recall, or ability to remember something without any supports or cues, is not very good at all. So, knowing these things, how can we best support our preschoolers?

1. Provide sensory reminders. You can use these things as conversation-starters, to encourage your child to open up and talk about their school day.
2. Ask questions in a specific way. Most of the time, we use a technique known as “repetitive prompting”... asking a very broad and generalized question, such as “What did you do at school today?” And, when your child fails to produce the expected, substantive answer, we ask again and again in the same way. This typically goes nowhere. But, if you think about it, the answer your child gives makes perfect sense in his mind. A generic question deserves a generic answer. “What did I do at school today? “I played.”

Now, if you try a different approach- something called “elaborative prompting,” there's usually a better result. If your child is asked some specific questions about a specific activity, he can focus in on it, memories are triggered, and you get some good information!

For example:

“When you had Circle Time today, what did Michael bring to show everyone?”

“Did you have milk at snack today? What else did you have?”

Teachers help parents with this technique by posting some “trigger ideas” outside the door on the white boards. Use this information to create questions to learn about your child’s day.

”Ask me about the fireman who visited today- what was he wearing and what did he show us?”

“Ask me about the story Mrs. Roit read to us today and the funny clothes she was wearing.”

Questions like these are bound to spark enough information to last the whole car ride home. And, if this is done on a regular basis, the child’s memory and language skills will get a boost, as well.

### **Upcoming Events**

- Nov 7th Early Dismissal @ 12:00 for Staff Meeting
- Nov 1<sup>st</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> Non Perishable food collection for Open Pantry
- Nov 21<sup>st</sup> Early Dismissal @ 12:00
- Nov 22<sup>nd</sup> –Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> Thanksgiving Break/No School
- Dec 5<sup>th</sup> Early Dismissal @ 12:00 for Staff Meeting

### **Reminders**

- Cars in the drop off line, please leave the area in front of the sidewalk open for those walking into the building allowing access to the sidewalk.
- If your child is going to be out, please call the school to let us know. If we don’t hear from you, the school will call you.
- It’s getting colder and the classes still go outside; please bring warm coats, hats and mittens.
- Please start saving change for “Operation Santa” coming in December.

November is going to be filled with many exciting learning experiences. Be sure to read the

classroom newsletters for classroom specific details.

Enjoy the month!

