

# PARENTS' POST

The Early Learning Program of WCPC

January 2012

## From the Director

**W**elcome back and Happy New Year! We are so excited to see our friends return to school after the long holiday season and hope that it was a joyous one for all.

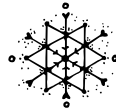
We will begin the month with the story of the journey of the wise men to Bethlehem as we introduce the season of Epiphany. We will have an Epiphany celebration during our first full week back to school. We will continue through the month introducing the winter season. One of our goals here at ELP, is to make things as "real" to the children as possible. So our winter season will come alive during our ELP Snow Days. More details on these events will follow.

Our Christian theme is "With God All Things Are Possible", Matthew 19:26..

Even though we miss the snow, Houston's unpredictable winter weather still has its charm and one of the best places to appreciate it is inside the house. As the air turns cool and humid, we draw the drapes, brew a pot of tea, build a fire and those of us with children should roll up our sleeves and stir up a batch of cookies or pull out the Christmas games and toys, play dough or arts and crafts. Of course, whatever is on the agenda, as the wind starts to howl and the rain falls, the important thing is that you are doing it together. The next two newsletters will include some fun indoor activities and recipes for parents and children to enjoy together during the winter months.

As we begin the New Year and think about resolutions for 2012, please remember to include spending a few extra minutes of your time with your children. You can play a game; include them in food preparation, read a book or just sit and really converse with them. They will love you for it.

God bless you,  
Rita



## Mark Your Calendar

First Day Back, January 2

**Tuesday-Thursday, Jan. 3-5**  
Chapel—Epiphany Celebration

**Tue, Wed, and Thurs. -Jan 18, 29, 20**  
Snow Days!

**Friday, January 13 &**  
**Monday, January 16—CISD Holiday**

**Tue-Thurs February 3-5**  
Parent/Teacher Conferences  
No Classes

**Thursday, February Noon**  
**2010-11 Registration Due!**

**Sunday, February 12**  
**WCPC Early Registration**

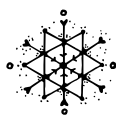
**Thursday, February 16, 6:30 PM**  
**Public Registration 2012-13**

## Register for 2012-13!

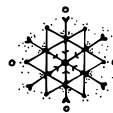
Watch you child's backpack!  
Registration packets will be distributed in January.

**REGISTRATION FORMS ALONG WITH REGISTRATION FEE AND SUPPLY FEE ARE DUE BY THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, NOON!**

Please feel free to turn them in sooner (the sooner the better!)



SCHOOL  
IS  
COOL



Every class has a blog... Don't forget to check out what has been happening in your child's class! There are great pictures too!

## ELP Snow Day

Let's do away with paper snowflakes and cotton ball snowmen. Bundle up and prepare for a snow fall of this winter here in The Woodlands. Yes, this snow fall will take place right here on the ELP yard. What better way to introduce young children to snow than to bring it to school in large quantities. With the help of Texas Ice and Distributing, our yard will look like a winter wonderland on **Tuesday, Jan. 17 Wednesday, January 18, and Thursday, January 19.** If your child does not have class on that day, you are welcome to bring him/her up to play in the snow during the day on one of those days. We do ask that you stay and enjoy it yourself though.

**Please send your child with a towel and a complete change of clothes in a pillow case (underwear and socks too).** It's a cold, wet fun day but we'll warm up with hot chocolate.

Let it snow...let it snow...let it snow.



## The Art of Appreciation



We want our children to learn how to receive praise as well as give it. When they grow up surrounded by praise, they learn to accept it gracefully and with gratitude, rather than with embarrassment, denial, or self-aggrandizement.

When we appreciate and praise our children, we teach them to appreciate and celebrate the world around them. Taking the time and making the effort to find the good in each day will make our children's lives, and their memories of their childhood, much happier.

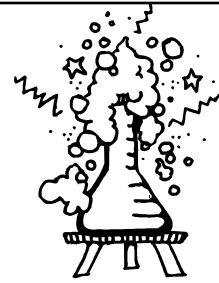


## Parent Teacher Conferences

At ELP, we feel very strongly that communication between parents and teachers is important. Parental involvement is essential to ensure a quality early childhood experience for your child. Many hours of observing evaluating and assessing your child's development go into the final preparation of the Parent-Teacher conference. Parent/Teacher conferences are a recommendation and requirement of NAEYC accredited preschools.

Due to so many overlapping classes and schedules, it is necessary for **ELP to close our doors for four days, Tues – Fri., Jan. 31-Feb. 2.** This will allow us time to meet with each of you. Classes will meet on Monday, January 30, but will be out for conferences the rest of the week. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding with this schedule.

We thank you for setting this important time aside to discuss your child's development with us. Your children and their well-being are important to us.



## Registering for PreK or Transition? Science-Fun offered...

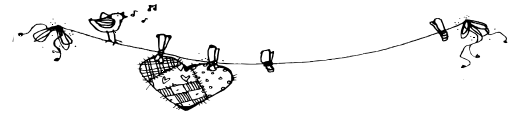
Parents when registering for PreK or Transition next year...

Keep in mind you have the option of registering for ScienceFun as well!

ScienceFun is a half day program for Pre-K and Transition students. It is a science based hands on Christian curriculum enriched with activities to provide the children with opportunities for creative expression, cooperative play and individual growth.

Check out what they have been doing this year at:

[www.elpsciencefun.blogspot.com](http://www.elpsciencefun.blogspot.com)



## PVO News

All ELP Parents are members of PVO and it is FREE! :) PVO stands for Parent Volunteer Organization. Our Parent Volunteer Coordinators are Tera Turnbull and Jacklyn Smekjal.

Thank you for your help in December with the Birthday Party for Jesus!

In January we would love for you to come and help with "Snow Days", January .

Thanks for your help and support!!!

## Reward Positive Behavior

If you want to see some problem behavior disappear, pay more attention to the things children do well than to their mistakes.

Without thinking, we often take for granted those behaviors that please us. Then we exaggerate out of proportion those things children do wrong.

Unfortunately, this approach doesn't work because children tend to repeat those behaviors that get the most attention.

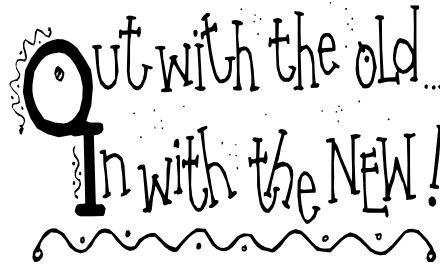
For example, the more you ask a child to stop an annoying habit, such as playing with his food, the more he may do it. Try ignoring it instead. Then when you notice he is eating neatly, compliment him.

An old rule says parents should compliment a child for every time they criticize him.

As you watch for positive behavior and compliment children on that behavior, you can begin to see some changes in the behavior you don't like.

## New Year's Resolutions for Parenting in 2012

1. I will listen to my children.
2. I will calm down and relax.
3. I will foster a loving relationship between myself and my spouse.
4. I will allow them to make mistakes.
5. I will pray with them and for them.
6. I will appreciate their uniqueness.
7. I will remember that childhood years are fleeting years and enjoy and savor every single moment.



## Before you Discipline

Before you administer discipline, ask your child three questions.

1. Did you understand what you were doing?
2. Did you know that it was wrong?
3. Did you know what the consequences might be for doing such a thing?

If your child answers affirmatively to these questions, you've established

- a. The child knows what she was doing.
- b. She willfully disobeyed and
- c. She knows there would be consequences. Children often get involved in things that they don't understand are wrong or dangerous. Deal with those types of infractions differently than you deal with incidents of willful disobedience.

Once you determine that you're dealing with willful disobedience, determine the most effective form of discipline for this incident. (Whenever possible, determine consequences for specific behaviors in advance, clearly communicate them to your child, then enforce them when needed.)

Don't wait too long between the offense and the discipline. Otherwise, the issues and reasons for the discipline will become blurred in your child's mind (and in your mind, too). When you've determined the appropriate discipline and how that discipline will help modify your child's behavior positively while she learns a lesson, then apply it.

Afterward, look your child in the eyes and say, "I love you. You've done wrong, but I still love you. I don't want to go through this again, do you???? Let's learn from this experience and go on." Then hug her. Discipline should leave your child with the assurance that she is always loved, no matter what.

## Right From Wrong

Developmentally, a child under 3 has no real ethical ability. In one study, psychologists made an interesting discovery. When they told toddlers to sit in a room alone but not peek at the toy behind them, they were not able not to peek. What I find really fascinating is this" When they asked each child, "Did you peek?" none of them were able to lie!

By age 5, however, most children would not admit they toy peeked. Now aware of the rules and the repercussions and knowing right from wrong, they often chose to do "wrong" and say they hadn't.

What does this mean to a parent? It means that building a conscience takes years. No child was ever civilized by one well-chosen phrase of correction. No child was ever civilized without many, many repetitions of both words and deeds by his parents, who set the tone and expectation of knowing right from wrong. The single most important way a parent can raise a principled child is through example. In parenting we call this modeling. Although this sounds obvious, sometimes in practice it may be harder than we think.

## Asking Open Ended Questions

A question like "What color is that block?" evokes a one-word answer. But an open-ended question, "tell me about the blocks you are using," encourages a child to describe the blocks or explain what she is doing. There is no right or wrong answer here.

An answer to an open-ended question gives us a window into what the child is thinking and feeling. And the response is sometimes wonderfully creative. In explaining or describing, children also use language more fully.

In our program, we try to think of good questions to ask children. You might hear one of us say to a child.

- ~ Tell me about your picture.
- ~ What else can you do with the play dough?  
What could you use to make the tower stand up?
- ~ What do you think would happen if \_\_\_\_\_?
- ~ Is there another way to \_\_\_\_\_?

It is difficult to change the closed-end question habit. But when we ask open-ended questions, children reap great benefits as they think through their responses to express what they want to say. And with their answers, we find out more about what they think and feel.

**Please label  
those coats,  
sweaters and  
jackets!**



## Collection Painting

Materials needed:

Rocks, bricks, clay pots, acorns,  
pinecones, tiles, scrap wood pieces, etc.  
Brightly colored acrylic paints  
Several paintbrushes in assorted  
sizes.

Acrylic varnish

We all know how children love to paint and its even more fun and interesting to paint objects, especially if they are chosen by your child. Most of us have old clay pots, spare bricks, tiles and other items hiding around the house just waiting to be beautified by a young artist. The painted tiles make great trivets, the bricks and rocks are lovely paper weights and door stops. Most importantly – It's Fun!

Just cover your work area with an old plastic table cloth or newspaper and cover yourself in smocks and let the creative juices flow. You'll have a great time!

Remember to display your treasures after you have sprayed them with acrylic varnish. If you are like me, these items will become permanent decorator items around your house and probably your favorite. I'm not sure an interior decorator will appreciate their value nearly as much as your family does though. Have fun and enjoy...you are making memories.

## POTTY LANGUAGE

How many of us have struggled with "potty" words from our preschoolers? It seems that the more the bad words are addressed, the more frequent they become.

Well, it is very common for three and four year olds to become fascinated with "potty" words. (They also like to stick the word "head" on to any insult they can think of!) The more attention that is paid to the misbehavior the worse it becomes. Frequently, kids seem to enjoy, misbehavior. Imagine how powerful he must feel when he uses "potty" language and you jump into a parental discipline frenzy. These phrases tend to last about three weeks. During this time it is important that you curb your reaction. Remember that which we pay attention to will grow! In the meantime, quietly state the appropriate behavior and give him permission to use "potty" language in an appropriate way. One friend of mine, who really struggled with this issue, finally surrendered and gave her daughter permission to use "potty" words but only while in the bathroom. She also would ask her daughter periodically what her favorite words were. Of course, her daughter replied with, "Pee pee, poo poo and butthead." By giving her daughter an appropriate outlet for their desire to use these words, my friend effectively removed the "charge" that her daughter was receiving from using these words. The behavior soon disappeared and peace was restored in her home! Try it! In the meantime, reassure yourself that this IS normal and will pass!

## All Children Need Special People In Their Lives

Your growing child needs people. He needs to see, listen to and spend time with people as a natural part of the world around him.,

In addition to his parents, who are the most important people in his world, there are other special people who are very important: grandparents and other relatives, friends, and caregivers. From them – and his parents – he learns that he belongs and that he matters.

Parents and other special people provide an atmosphere in which a young child learns he is important. These people notice the child, talk to him, laugh with him when he is happy, and show their concern when he falls and hurts himself. They are interested in what he is interested in: they like to know where he's been and what he's been doing.

These special people in a child's life say "hello" to him in a special way because he belongs to them and they belong to him. In all these interactions their behavior sends a message to the child: "You are important. You matter. We care. You belong." Long before a child can understand specific words, he gets this message.

But it is a fact of modern life that in today's world, families get scattered. Most often children live in one community while their special people may be scattered from coast to coast.

When this happens, the child doesn't get all the messages he needs because his special people simply are not part of his daily life.

If this is the case for your family, you may well protest "But what can I do? There are no special family people here."

One simple solution is to try for regular visits to your child's special people so that he has a number of contacts with them. Such visits are extremely important, and they are well worth the time and effort they require.

Another solution is to find substitute "special people" among your own circle of friends. Each time they are in your house, they would be especially aware of ways they could pay attention to your child.

You might also have a relationship with one or two older people who could serve as substitute grandparents – and you might be pleasantly surprised at how delighted such older couples would be to play the role!

Don't forget that in the same way, each one of us can be a special person to someone else's child.

## Start 2012 Off with a Healthy Beginning!!

It doesn't matter if children are preschoolers; first-graders, or freshmen, breakfast gives young people an energy boost and improves classroom behavior, overall attitude, and mental and physical performance.

Early morning can be a hectic time for households, but finding an extra 10 to 15 minutes for breakfast can give kids a classroom edge – and help them learn a lifetime of good eating habits.

A balanced breakfast should include a dairy produce such as low-fat milk or yogurt; a grain such as high-fiber bread or a cereal; a protein such as peanut butter, low-fat cheese or a lean cut of meat; and a fruit or 100 percent fruit juice.

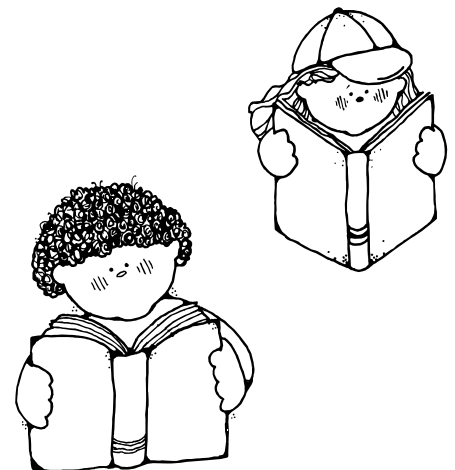
Sweetened cereals and convenience foods such as toaster waffles, breakfast burritos, and other frozen entrees can occasionally be served. But parents should carefully read labels because many of these foods contain high levels of sugar, salt, and fat.

Parents should also remember that they are important role models. Children are more likely to eat breakfast if their parents eat breakfast.

For parents and children who must eat on the road, have on hand plenty of breakfast items to eat in the car like low-fat breakfast bars, fresh fruit and cartons of low-fat milk or 100 percent fruit juice.

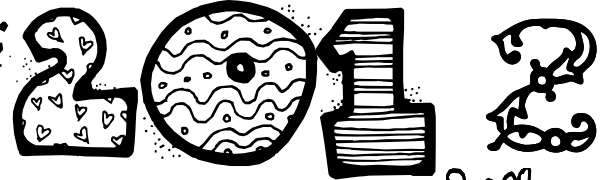
The important thing is for children – and their parents – to eat something nourishing for breakfast.

Remember to Read  
with your children  
everyday!!  
You will be glad you  
did!



# JANUARY

Out with the old...  
In with the NEW!



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <b>Happy New Year!!</b>	2 Welcome Back!!!!	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 ❄️	Special Epiphany Chapel			13 Holiday	14
15	16 Holiday	Snow Days!			20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 ❄️	28 ❄️
29	30	31	Turn in 2010-11 Registration ASAP!			2 