



Serra Preschool

*A Parent Participation Nursery School
Where Kids and Parents Learn Together.*

October 2017 Newsletter

Director's Message

~Chores For Kids ~

I often get asked what my opinion is on if kids should have chores and what age should a parent begin to expect that kids will help around the house.

Then there is always the big question of how do we get the kids to do chores consistently with out begging, bribing and yelling and then just giving up.

I wish I had a magic, one size fits all answer. One thing I do know is that sticker charts, rewards and bribes rarely work because the child is in total control. They can choose to not get a sticker or a reward or even money if they do not feel like doing the assigned chore.

I think kids need to get a message that at home like at school we take care of our things and each other. One way of doing that is helping around the house.

Kids need a lot of help when learning how to do chores. If a task is too big or a mess too messy to clean up kids will feel overwhelmed and give up. We want to set them up for success. That

means they will need a lot of adult help and support until they are older and have gone through "training."

If your child's room has toys all over it and you say you need to clean your room, chances are it will not happen because your child is easily overwhelmed by the enormity of the mess. You will need to be specific. "Pick up all your stuffed animals and put them in the basket." "Now lets pick up all the cars and put them in the red bin." "I will help you." "We can do it together." "You picked up all the stuffed animals and put them away." "You figured out what to pick up all by yourself." You are really learning how to pick up the toys." "You know how to take care of your toys."

I found a clever idea on "A magical Childhood" website. It's about making and using chore sticks instead of sticker charts, allowances and rewards.

Here's how it works:

~ Write some simple chores on one end of some Popsicle sticks. Also write some fun things and surprises.

~ If you have children with different abilities and a wide range of ages, you can add a colored dot to the blank end corresponding to each age. (Younger children would pull sticks with a red dot, older kids would pull sticks with a blue dot.) Or you could make a jar for each child.

~ Put the sticks, writing side down, in a mug or similar container.

~ Have the kids pull out a chore stick and do the job assigned. Make up a family rule together about how many sticks they should pull each day or week, and whether or not they could swap chores with a sibling.

~ As the kids do chores, have them put the sticks back upside down so that chore is not pulled again that day or week, depending on how you assign the chore sticks. I think it might be helpful to have a daily chore jar and a weekly one for those chores that only need to be done once or twice a week.

I think it might be fun to add chores that are not just house work, it could be anything that you would like the kids to do more of, like read



Serra Preschool Director
Mrs. Nowicki

ing for 10 minutes, practicing a musical instrument, taking a walk etc.. The possibilities for this are endless.

Don't forget to put in some treat sticks. Some examples might be, take a quarter, 15 minutes of play time with mom or dad, pick a prize from the treat drawer. Again use your imagination and come up with some fun surprises. Remember to keep the treats small and easy, you do not want to outweigh the chores sticks with treat sticks.

Here are some tips to keep chores fun and easy:

~ Make the chores small and relatively quick.

~ Create organized spaces for things.

~ Focus on chores that are pretty enjoyable. Kids

Director's Message Continued ...

often find that they do not mind chores if they get to use cleaning tools like, feather dusters, magic erasers, dust busters etc. Ask the kids for suggestions on what chores to add.

~ Make it a routine. Have the kids pull their sticks about the same time everyday.

Lastly I want to share my thought on allowance. I never tied chores to allowance. Chores and helping each other out was something that was expected and part of family life. Allowance was their spending money and I encouraged them to save 20 percent. The idea being that they should learn how to manage money and plan for what they might need or want to buy. Want being a new skateboard, need being a birthday gift for your sibling.

If you are going to entertain this idea you will have to give your kids enough allowance to actually use for buying, and saving for a "want" or "need" or going to the movies, etc. Of course it will depend on their age, their activities and on what you can afford to give. The trick here is that if your child runs out of money, you have to make them wait for the next installment of their allowance. Easier said than done, but worth the effort I think.

I know everyone has their own ideas for what their kids should or should not be doing around the house. There is no one "right" way to get kids to help out and if you believe kids should earn allowance that's perfectly ok to. These are just ideas and suggestions. I thought the chore stick idea was a good one and I would love to hear if anyone tried it and how it went.

Love, Mrs. Nowicki



President's Message

Hi Serra Families!

I had such a great time with you the few weeks I was in class as the substitute teacher. Thank you for all your patience, encouragement, and support, as I couldn't have done it without you. It really shows the greatness of our co-op spirit. And it doesn't hurt that your kids are precious and adorable!

The 2day class played many, many rounds of "firefighter," even before we had the Fire Safety day. They absolutely loved the squirt bottles, which lent itself really well to our "we take care of each other" class rule. Some kids didn't want to be squirted themselves while others did. It was a fine example of us working through our play with each other.

I asked the kids, "How does a firefighter put out a fire?" This is what some of them said:

Raef- "With water. He helps people."

Oliver- "He puts the fire out in the city."

Sylas- "They get water and they squirt it out!"

Andee- "They use a water hose, but they can't get phones wet or babies wet or strollers wet."

Camilla- "I think they call and do it and call on the phone."

Antonio- They put out fires the whole time."

Lily- "They have to water the fire."

Rivers- "The bell rings and then they come to the house. Then the people can go back in."

In the 3day class, the kids were busy playing "cops and robbers." Their play started with a simple game of chase, but it has expanded to include a robber hideout, a jail, an escape route, and they made handcuffs out of ropes and various plastic toys.

I asked the kids, "How does a cop catch a robber?"

Dylan- "By getting them and chasing them."

Addie- "You run and catch them by their arms or legs."

Luke- "You need to be really fast and sometimes you need handcuffs."

Jack- "The cop tries to stop him when the bad guys look around, and then gets him."

Cruz- "You get a rope and you tie him up."

Similarly, I asked them, "How does a robber escape?"

Bodhi- "You break off your handcuffs and move away."

Cruz- "He untied the rope and he ran away."

Wylan- "He goes out the window if the jail has a window."

Miller- "When the police are not looking, they escape out the door or out the window."

Sofia- "You climb out of the window or go out the door when the cop isn't looking."

One of my favorite things is listening to kids share their ideas about how the world works. So, ask your child what their thoughts are on how things work! Like, "How does Mom or Dad make your sandwich for lunch?" It'll take you back to that old tv show, Kids Say the Darndest Things.

Have Fun Listening!

□ Cori

Dates to Know:

- **Nov 1** | CUSD Conferences (No School)
- **Nov 4** | Dad's Pancake Breakfast
- **Nov 8** | Street Sweeping
- **Nov 8** | Board Meeting
- **Nov 9** | Street Sweeping
- **Nov 10** | Veteran's Day (No School)
- **Nov 11** | 6 Week Clean Up
- **Nov 16** | Stone Soup (2D)
- **Nov 17** | Stone Soup (3D)
- **Nov 20** | Thanksgiving Break (No School)
- **Nov 29** | General Meeting

Happy Halloween!



Thank You Cori!



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November Birthdays

- Nov 1 | Raef Boisseranc
- Nov 5 | Luke Preisler
- Nov 17 | Dane Long
- Nov 24 | Evie Powell
- Nov 26 | Isla Bickley
- Nov 26 | Camden Mervis

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