

Serra Preschool Newsletter - March 2015



a cooperative preschool in South Orange County where children and parents learn and love together



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Kids Birthdays

Grayson Flanigan turns 4 on 4/14
Hank Thrash turns 5 on 4/16
Liam Hussey turns 5 on 4/26
Arlo Frazier turns 5 on 4/28

Upcoming Events

Mon, Mar 30th – All School Nature Day at Cook Park in San Juan Capistrano
Wed, April 1st – Please send in 6 plastic eggs with a small treat. NO CANDY!
Wed, April 1st – Board Meeting 12:30pm
Thurs, April 2nd – Egg Hunt for 2-day class
Fri, April 3rd – Parent Teacher Conferences for 3-day Class/Egg Hunt for 3-day class
Mon, April 6th – Fri, April 10th – Spring Break Both Classes – NO SCHOOL
Mon, April 13th – School Resumes
Thurs, April 16th - Parent Teacher Conferences for 2-Day Class
Sat, April 18th – 6 Week Clean Up
Wed, April 22nd – General Meeting 6 PM Dinner 6:30 Meeting Starts
Thurs, April 23rd – All School Earth Day Fair
Sun, April 26th – Trike-A-Thon (Both Classes)

Director's Message

~The Power of Good Guy Versus Bad Guy Play~

The kids in the 3-day class have been busy creating in the creation station. Last week many of the kids decided to make guns. I sat back and watched and thought about how I was going to handle this. I wondered if I should allow it. I do know that many schools have a zero tolerance policy for any type of super hero or gun play. Something else I know though is that "good guy versus bad guy play" benefits children in a few good ways.

- It creates feelings of belonging and can lend itself to playing together to have a common goal.
- Kids try out both sides, being a good guy and being a bad guy.
- It helps develop problem solving skills.
- It gives kids an opportunity for attaining power and control.
- It allows them to use powerful and different vocabulary.

In a child's social and moral development, "good guy versus bad guy" play is normal and important. We need to give kids opportunities to obtain power or they will seek other experiences to attain it. So, what I decided to do was to tell the kids that if we were going to have any kind of gun play at school that we needed rules. I asked them what some good rules would be so everyone felt safe and that the play did not get out of control. This is what they came up with:

1. We do not play "shoot the girls."
2. Only shoot at things that are not living.
3. If you want to play "getting shot" you can play "getting shot."
4. If you don't want to get "shot", say, "don't shoot me", or "I don't want to play that game."
5. Don't shoot Buttercup.

I thought that these were very thoughtful and sensible rules, so I decided to allow the kids to make and play with the guns. We also talked about a consequence if the rules were broken. The kids decided that if anyone broke the rule that I would take their gun away and not give it back. We even had a discussion about real guns and pretend play.

I am happy to report that the kids seem to be following the rules. In fact now that we have discussed the rules and they know they have the power they do not seem to be playing it is much. Not today anyway!!!! If we had a zero tolerance policy at Serra then the above interaction would never have happened. The kids would have lost an opportunity to play what is important to them and to "self regulate" their behavior through the collective making of and following of the "rules".

I know as parents we all have a little anxiety about this type of play especially when it seems to spiral out of control, or when our kids say things like "I'm going to kill you". It can all feel very violent and leads us to wonder what is going on inside our kids' head. I assure you that much of it is very normal and I think the key is finding ways to let the kids have the power and to share our concerns with them while enlisting them to come up with solutions so they can still play but in a way that feels right and safe to you.

I won't say Happy Shooting, just Happy Playing!!!!!!

Fondly,

Mrs. Nowicki

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