

# Preschool Press

AAPS EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

NOVEMBER 2023

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Happy November Preschool Family!

On behalf of the preschool staff we want to thank you for your continued support! These last several weeks of school have truly been amazing. Whether we are creatively exploring our new nature playground or taking the time to examine the life cycle of a pumpkin, our 3 and 4 year olds are doing great. As we gear up for the new month, there are a few things we want to share with you.

- November 3rd (this Friday)-Parent-Policy Committee Meeting & Family Engagement Event.
- November 7th- Election Day- No School!
- November 22-24th- Thanksgiving Break (School Resumes Nov. 27th)

### Additional information

- The weather is beginning to get colder. Please be sure to send students to school in winter weather gear. If you have any questions or are in need of support, please reach out to your classroom teachers or FCRS lead.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences are beginning! Please look for more information to come from your classroom teacher.

We look forward to another exciting month together!

Sincerely,

**Natasha York**  
Principal  
yorkn@aaps.k12.mi.us

**Jo Ann Serafano Telfer**  
Assistant Principal  
telferj@aaps.k12.mi.us



### IMPORTANT DATES

11/03/23 Friday	School In Session
10/03/23 Friday	Family Engagement day
10/07/23	NO SCHOOL - Election Day
11/22/23 Wednesday - 11/24/23 Friday	Thanksgiving Break -NO SCHOOL-

### UPCOMING EVENTS

11/03/23 FRIDAY	Family Engagement Day <b>COMMUNITY FAIR</b> (pg: 2)
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### ANNOUNCEMENT

**Bus Transportation Form for CHANGE in Transportation or NEW Transportation is due on Friday, November 10th by 12pm**

# COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR

## Family Engagement Event

Friday, November 3, 2023

8:45am - 10:00am

## Westerman Preschool



Early On partners with families, using their daily routines to work on supporting the growth and development of their babies.

Early Head Start (EHS) programs provide intensive comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income infants and toddlers and their families, and to pregnant women and their families.



Build Up helps parents and their children, ages 3 through 5, get additional educational support as they begin and continue to learn the skills needed to enter kindergarten.

First Steps's purpose is to create a positive community for families with young children. Fun and exciting classes offered year-round to help children socialize with others.



Ensures that every Washtenaw County family has access to a comprehensive and collaborative system of community-based early childhood programs, services and supports.

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a health and nutrition program that provides a positive effect on pregnancy outcomes, child growth and development



Work and Play Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing a safe and supportive environment for individuals with special needs.

Provides support and emotionally safe environment for grieving children, teens and their families.



HOUSE BY THE  
SIDE OF THE  
ROAD

Provides clothing and small household items at no charge to children and adults in Washtenaw County.

Provides information, support, and education for families who have children and young adults who receive special education services.





# THANK YOU PRESCHOOL FAMILIES !!

Your participation in our FAMILY ENGAGEMENT - Preschool Curriculum Exploration is greatly appreciated.



## HEALTHY EATING HABITS ARE IMPORTANT FOR PRESCHOOLERS!

Once a child starts preschool, life takes on a new routine. A regular intake of food is

needed throughout the day to keep children active and help their concentration while

learning. Children need the guidance of adults to continue to develop eating skills and food habits. At times, children can be erratic eaters, they love a certain food one day and dislike it the next. The meal they refused to eat at home is eaten happily away from

home. This can frustrate and baffle parents and guardians, but it is a common pattern of eating for a healthy and active child. Rest assured, very few children pass through these years without creating some worry and concern about eating to the adults in their lives. Children are actually pretty good at judging how much food they need for activity and growth if allowed to eat according to their appetite. Resist the urge to “force a child” to clean their plate or giving them sweets as a reward, as this may lead to problems with overeating later in life.

At Westerman, children are offered a balance of grains, proteins, fruits, and vegetables at each meal, in an effort to promote healthy habits. At home, if you are able to model eating healthy foods with children, they will usually follow your example. As with all aspects of parenting young children, they are watching the adults in their lives and absorbing what they are observing. Promoting healthy eating habits is a positive, lifelong gift that you can give to children.

**Laura Dills**

*Family and Community  
Resource Specialist*



# HEALTHY EATING



NATIONAL CENTER ON  
Early Childhood Health and Wellness

Tips for Families from the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness

## Healthy Habits Start Early



Good eating habits begin early in your child's life. As early as infancy, you can help your child grow lifelong healthy eating habits. You are your child's best role model so while you help her to eat healthy, try to do the same too!

### Healthy Feeding and Eating

#### For Your Infant

- It is important to breastfeed for at least 6 months. She will be more likely to have a healthy weight as she gets older.
- Put breast milk or formula, not cereal, in your baby's bottle. Cereal adds extra calories that she doesn't need.
- Try to wait until your baby is around 6 months to start healthy solid foods like pureed vegetables, jarred baby foods, and infant cereals. Starting solid foods too early can lead to problems with overweight and obesity later.
- Around 8 or 9 months try offering your baby small amounts of healthy finger foods like grilled chicken, cooked carrots, and cut up strawberries. This will help your baby learn to eat healthy.
- Breast milk, formula, and water are the best drink choices for your baby. Soda pop, 100% fruit juice, and sport drinks add extra calories to her diet and can harm her new teeth.

#### For Your Toddler

- Offer your toddler healthy snacks like small cubes of cheese, sliced banana, or whole grain crackers two to three times per day. This will help him stay full in between meals and reduce hunger-related temper tantrums.
- Try to be patient with picky eaters. He may need to try a food 10 to 15 times over several months before he will eat it.
- Try giving your toddler a choice between two healthy options. He will be more likely to eat healthy food if he picks it out.
- Milk and water are the healthiest drink choices for your toddler. Soda pop, 100% fruit juice, and sport drinks add extra calories to his diet and can harm his teeth.

#### For Your Preschooler

- Let your child help you in making healthy meals and snacks. She will be more likely to try healthy foods if she helps out.
- Try to keep your kitchen stocked with simple, healthy snacks like carrots, sliced apples and peanut butter, or string cheese. This will help you and your preschooler eat healthy, even on busy days.
- Milk and water are the healthiest drink choices for your preschooler. Soda pop, 100% fruit juice, and sport drinks add extra calories to her diet and can harm her teeth.

#### For Yourself and Family

- Your child is learning healthy habits by watching you. Try to eat healthy too.
- Set playtime, mealtime, and bedtime routines to make day-to-day life less stressful.
- Talk with your child's doctor, Head Start staff, and other parents to get healthy eating tips.



NATIONAL CENTER ON  
Early Childhood Health and Wellness



Upcoming  
Events:

## SPECIAL FRIDAY EVENT FOR WESTERMAN PRESCHOOL STUDENTS

Special Friday Music  
**Beverly, The Music Lady**

WESTERMAN PRESCHOOL AND FAMILY CENTER

Friday, November 3 at 10:00, 10:45 and 11:30

visit my YouTube Channel



Visit my website



## OCTOBER 12TH PRESCHOOL CELEBRATED "THE GREAT LAKES APPLE CRUNCH"

AAPS participates in this regional event held each October to celebrate National Farm to School Month. Locally grown apples were provided by Chartwells to all the students.

All classrooms enjoyed a CRUNCHY apple and teacher's led special activities in the classrooms.







# Classroom Spotlight Westerman Ms. Courtney and Ms. Lucia



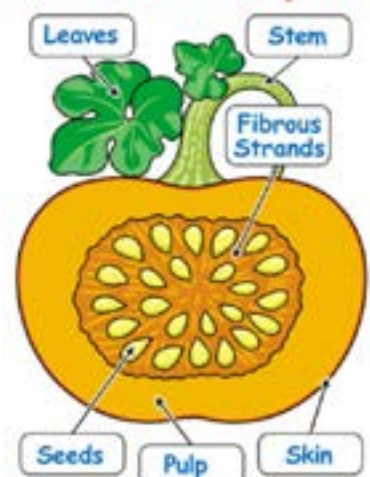
## Exploring Pumpkins



We hammered  
golf tees into  
our pumpkins.



### Parts of a Pumpkin





What is inside a pumpkin???



We practiced  
number  
recognition and  
counting with  
pumpkin seeds.



The life cycle  
of a pumpkin.



## **LOOSE PARTS, WHAT IS THAT?! PRESCHOOL @ PITTSFIELD**

“Loose parts are any collection of open ended natural or manmade objects that children can move, combine, transform, take apart, redesign, and line up in ways that support, extend, and further their ideas while working” (wunderled blog). This year we decided that loose parts were the way to go in our house area. Instead of the traditional plastic food, we have only used loose parts.

Some of the loose parts that we have in the house area are: glass beads, wool balls, corks, rocks, sticks, flower petals, fresh herbs, and playdough. The majority of the loose parts have come from the children’s ideas or collections (rocks, sticks, leaves) and bringing playdough from the art area to the house area. We have seen an increase in creativity, more foods are being made that the children have in their homes, and the materials are on a constant rotation.

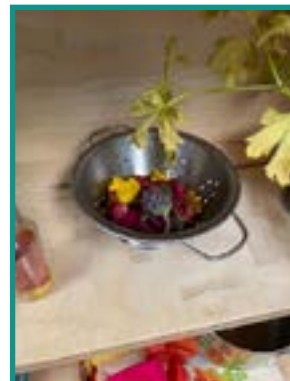


**Mahfuza Khan**  
*Co-Teacher*

**Rachael Bergren**  
*Teacher. GenEd*

We have also brought loose parts into the toy and block areas. During work time, is the prime time we see the children in action with their loose parts play. We know that play (or as we call it with the High Scope curriculum, Work Time) is the most important work a child can do. Using loose parts with their imagination, opens up the door for them to improve their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical, critical thinking, and problem solving skills.

The children are natural “loose parts experts/ collectors” We know a few children that have rock or stick collections at home! This is a great way to have a school home connection by letting children use loose parts at home.

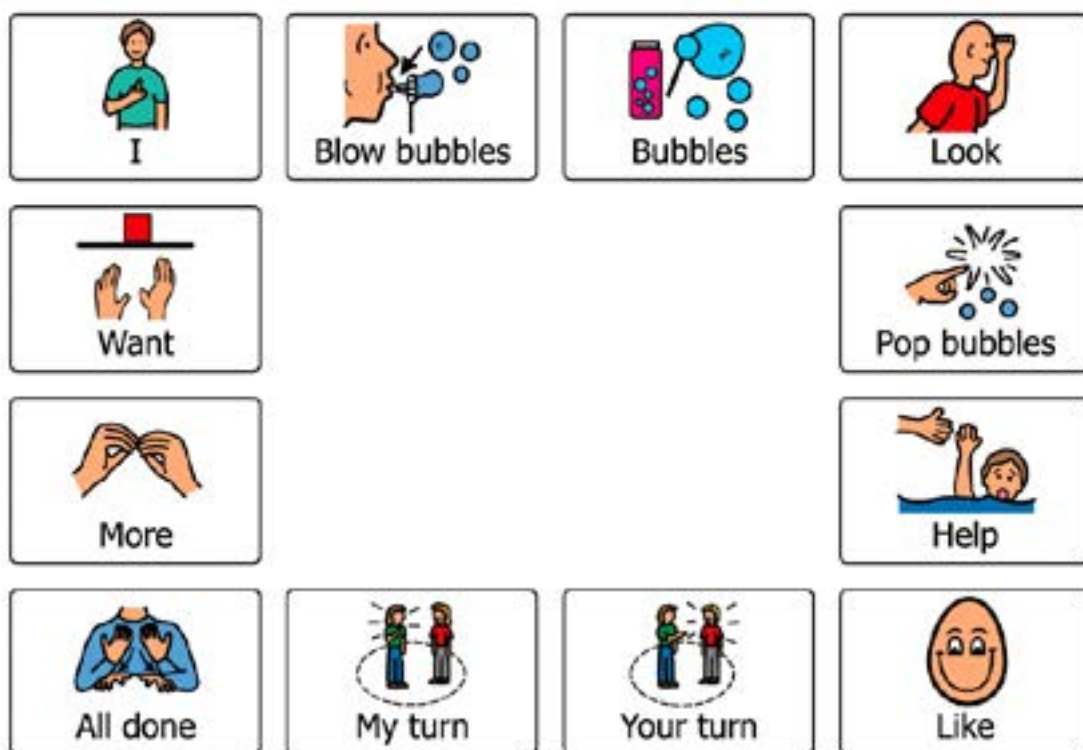




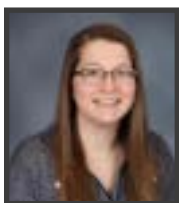
## LEARNING AND FUN WITH BUBBLES

Bubbles are a low cost and wonderful activity to keep kids busy and engaged in learning- inside or outside! Children of all ages love to play and explore with bubbles and we can use them as a great teaching tool at school or at home. Here are some fun ideas to try with bubbles in the different developmental areas.

- **Math:** Count bubbles, talk about their size and shape. If you have several bubble wands you can do a sorting activity by different sizes and colors.
- **Early Literacy:** Use your words! Label everything and be descriptive such as large, small, tiny, huge, up, down, near, far, etc. While talking also pause and allow your child to finish the sentence. For example, you can say “time to pop the bubble! Let’s (pause and wait several seconds to allow your child to respond) pop the bubbles!
- **Science:** Talk about how the bubbles look and feel. Explore gravity and how wind, air and blowing changes the direction of the bubbles. Explore what happens to the bubbles if you blow them outside in the cold or into the freezer- do they freeze? Do they pop?
- **Sensory:** Add bubbles to bath time! Let children explore in a bubble bath. Add some dishes, sponges, turkey baster, spoons, etc. and allow children to play freely.



Use this communication board to help develop functional communication while playing with bubbles!



**Abigail Quinn**  
*ECSE Teacher*

naeyc®



MESSAGE IN A BACKPACK™

# Bubbles

## Family Play Plan

Bubble play is just plain fun. And it helps children cooperate, take turns, and solve problems.

Support your child's learning by talking about what's happening: "You blew a huge bubble," "The bubble floated away and popped," "You were very patient waiting for your turn." Ask simple questions: "Can you make it bigger?," "What is the wind doing to the bubbles?" Watch your child play to see what interests him. It'll also help you figure out what questions to ask to expand his learning.

Make your own bubble mixture or buy some. Use it with these bubble games.

Photograph: © Getty Images

### Bubble Solution Recipe

#### INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups of water
- 1 cup dishwashing liquid (Joy and Dawn work really well)
- 1/4 cup corn syrup or 1 tbs. glycerin (available at drugstores)

#### DIRECTIONS

Pour dishwashing liquid into water and slowly stir. Try not to let foam or bubbles form while you stir.

Add corn syrup or glycerin and stir gently until combined.

Now it's ready for blowing bubbles!

## Bubble Games

### Bubble relay

Use one plastic bubble wand and the bubble mixture. Family members stand in a line. The first person blows a bubble and passes the bubble and wand to the next person. (If the bubble pops, the child blows another bubble and passes it again.) Ask your child to predict how many times your family can pass the bubble without popping it.

### Bubble tag

Use one plastic bubble wand and the bubble mixture. The person who's *it* uses them to tag others with bubbles instead of hands. Bubbles must land on another player to count. Play in a small space so children are able to tag others.

### Bubble obstacle course

Make a start and a finish line and create a course using milk jugs. Have family members line up on either side of the course. The child who is *it* moves from start to finish dodging bubbles, trying not to let any bubbles touch him. First, one person blows bubbles. If the *it* child successfully reaches the finish line without a bubble touching him, then two people blow bubbles, then three, etc. The more bubbles, the harder it is to make it to the finish line.



This information has been adapted from Family Play Plans by TRUCE (Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment). A variety of materials are available on the TRUCE website ([www.truceteachers.org](http://www.truceteachers.org)) that will help parents and teachers counteract the negative impact of media and marketing on children and promote positive play activities.



## BREAK TIME - LET'S MOVE TOGETHER!



**Kathy Gaines**  
*Physical Therapist*

As we enter the season of holiday breaks from school, it's a great time to think about how to fill some of those long days at home with your preschooler. There are so many fun activities for family time, and incorporating movement can help not only by providing exercise and learning opportunities, but also getting your child's "wiggles" out in a productive way.

Think of different ways to incorporate movement into the day, with both structured and less structured activities.

If you have time to "play a game", you could try...

- Making an obstacle course with stepping over cushions, crawling under chairs, making a balance beam out of big books, jumping over small stuffed animals, etc.
- Hide puzzle pieces around the house and have your child bring them back to put them in the puzzle.
- Simon Says or Follow the Leader
- Playing catch with a soft ball or stuffed animal
- Ripping pages out of old magazines, crumpling them into a ball, and throwing them into a bin.
- Finding [movement songs](#) online to do with your child.
- Having a "snow ball" fight with rolled socks over the back of the sofa.

If you have less time and want to incorporate activities into the regular routine, you could try...

- Having your child toss their clothes into the hamper or laundry basket from far away.
- Coming up with different animal walks to get to their room at night (stomp like an elephant, hop like a bunny, waddle like a penguin, swim like a fish, crawl like a bear, etc.).
- Cleaning their room with a [fun timer](#) to move quickly, or make a game by picking up all the "blue" toys, "yellow" toys, etc.

And, of course, playing outside is the easiest way to give your child movement and fresh air...and to tire them out for naptime or bedtime!

## TIPS TO MAKE DRESSING FOR WINTER WEATHER EASIER

It's getting colder outside and before we know it, we'll be bundling up in our winter gear before going outside to play. A lot of our children are still working on becoming more independent with dressing and so now is the perfect time to practice putting on coats, boots, and (snow) pants. Make dressing practice fun! You can help your child practice in front of a mirror, practice by dressing up dolls or stuffed animals, or turn it into a race to see who can dress the fastest. There are a lot of steps when getting ready to play outside in the snow, a visual of the different steps can help your child remember in what sequence they should put on their winter gear.



**Katharina Bragalone**  
*Occupational Therapist*

Let's get ready to play in the snow!

1	2	3	4	5
				
snow pants	boots	coat	hat	gloves

Here are some more tips that can help make it easier for your child to dress themselves:

- There are two popular methods when it comes to learning how to put on a coat. If your child is just starting to learn how to put their coat on independently, check with your child's teacher to see what method they are using in their classroom.

1. **Flip-Over Method:** Place the coat on the floor with hood and sleeves open and have your child stand behind the coat's hood. Have your child put their arms into both sleeves and then flip it over their head. A visual sequence like the one provided by Connectability can help remind your child what to do <https://connectability.ca/2011/07/25/flip-flop-over-the-top-sequence/> (available in different languages)



2. **Regular Method:** You can sew a small piece of fabric or colorful patch on the inside of the coat's right sleeve (next to the opening of the right sleeve) and teach your child to hold on to the fabric/ patch with their left hand while putting the right arm in the sleeve. The piece of fabric/ patch will give your child a visual cue, so that they are able to orient the coat correctly when putting it on.

- **Practice Zipping:** Zippers are often made quite small, which can make zipping challenging for young children. One way to help is by adding a larger zipper pull to make it easier for your child to grasp. You can make your own by attaching a key ring or ribbon to the zipper. It is often easier to practice this skill when the zipper is placed in front of the child rather than being on their body. Practice by zipping clothes for dolls/ stuffed animals/ zipper pouches, etc.



- **Stickers on Boots:** Children often have a hard time figuring out which foot goes in what shoe/boot. To help your child, cut a sticker in half or paint a dot on the inside part of the sole and have your child line them up before putting them on.



Be ready for your child to tell you – “Look I did it myself”



# A MINDFULNESS ACTIVITY TO WAKE THE SENSES

Teaching mindfulness to kids can help shape three critical skills developed in early childhood: paying attention and remembering information, shifting back and forth between tasks, and behaving appropriately with others. These abilities are known as executive functions and they are essential for more advanced tasks like planning, reasoning, problem-solving, and positive social relationships.

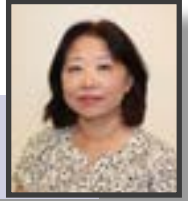
Fall is a great time to introduce the idea of mindfulness more directly to your kids, you can use outdoor activities that encourage them to tune into their 5 senses. Here is an activity that will wake their 5 senses, giving them an opportunity to take in the moment and be mindful of their environment.

- **SMELL** the changing leaves. What does it smell like?
- **TOUCH** the fallen leaves, notice some are “crunchy” while others are “soft.”
- **LOOK** at the different colors of the leaves. How many colors can they identify?
- **LISTEN** to the rustling of the leaves. Is it loud? Is it soft? What does it sound like?
- **TASTE** the fresh apple or a fall treat. Enjoy the harvests of Fall!

Happy Thanksgiving!

Source: <https://www.mindful.org/mindfulness-for-kids/>

**Yung Hwang**  
*Social Worker*



# ***Time to Celebrate!***



## **Main Shop and Showcase Open House!**

**Sunday, November 12!**

**30% Off Sale\*** (10am – 6pm - some exclusions)

**Meet Greet, & Treats 11am – 3pm**

**Prizes and Light refreshments**

**Celebrate and commemorate with us!**

**Tell your Friends!**

**Supporting AAPS students since 1993  
with generous community donations  
and savvy thrift shoppers!**

**Our sincere thanks for your part in our success!**



# Mental Health

## Parent Education Series

Join community partners to discuss mental health topics such as:

- Mental Health 101
- Resources in the Community
- Resources in Schools
- Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth
- What to do in a Mental Health Crisis
- Co-occurring Mental Health and Substance Use
- Social Media
- Self Harm
- Mindfulness



Scan the QR  
Code for Dates &  
Registration



Webinars are on the Second Tuesday  
of each Month, 7:00pm – 8:00pm

If you're interested in attending a webinar, please complete the [registration form](#) and we'll send you a Zoom link prior to each webinar. If you have any questions, please email Shannon Novara at [snovara@washtenawisd.org](mailto:snovara@washtenawisd.org).

# FREE FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS

Need food? Food Gatherers has a network of food pantries and meal programs that are ready to help!

- ✓ Items available include fresh produce, dairy, meat, and pantry staples like canned fruits and vegetables, pasta, peanut butter, and more!
- ✓ Available to anyone in need, no proof of need required.
- ✓ Low-contact "grab and go" distributions
- ✓ This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Township,  
Chelsea, Dexter, Manchester, Milan,  
Saline, Whitmore Lake.

## WE'RE HERE TO HELP

### Quick Links

Food Gatherers' website has updated information on food distributions, school meals, and SNAP benefits.

- ➔ Need food map and list:  
[www.foodgatherers.org/needfood](http://www.foodgatherers.org/needfood)
- ➔ School meal updates:  
[www.foodgatherers.org/covid19](http://www.foodgatherers.org/covid19)
- ➔ SNAP updates:  
[www.foodgatherers.org/snap](http://www.foodgatherers.org/snap)

### Questions?

Are you homebound and need grocery delivery? Don't know which program is best for you? Call Food Gatherers to find which of our partner programs can best serve you: 734-761-2796

For help outside Washtenaw County, call 2-1-1

For help with new or current SNAP (food stamp) cases, call the Food Bank Council of Michigan helpline 1-888-544-8773

CLICK HERE FOR:

[ESPAÑOL](#)

[ARABIC](#)

[CHINESE](#)

[KOREAN](#)

### NEED FOOD MAP AND LIST:

[www.foodgatherers.org/needfood](http://www.foodgatherers.org/needfood)

### SCHOOL MEAL UPDATES

[www.foodgatherers.org/covid19](http://www.foodgatherers.org/covid19)

### SNAP UPDATES

[www.foodgatherers.org/snap](http://www.foodgatherers.org/snap)

Call Food Gatherers to find which of our partner programs can best serve you: 734-761-2796

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