

FEBRUARY 2012

# SONSHINE TIMES

Sonshine Christian Preschool  
Harvey Oaks Baptist Church

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## Before Handwriting

By Ellen Javernick

Children have long been taught to write their names by parents who find their children highly motivated to acquire this skill. But it is wrong to assume that children who proudly write their names are ready to learn to write other letters and words.

When should formal handwriting begin? Most experts agree that children are not ready for handwriting until they have acquired six prerequisite skills. Parents can help their children develop these skills so that they will be ready for handwriting when they enter school. Here are some suggestions...

**\*Small Muscle Development--** Children need to develop fine motor coordination before they can hold and manipulate a pencil. Activities that involve puzzles, snap beads and pegboards are excellent for small motor development. Provide preschoolers with little cars, people and animals give them opportunities to use small muscles. Modeling with playdough, screwing jar lids, lifting beans or sand with small spoons, painting, cutting and tearing can all enhance small muscle development.

**\*Eye-Hand Coordination--** These skills are closely related to small muscle development skills, since children need muscle control to accomplish tasks that the eye and brain want done. In addition to the activities suggested above, provide children with opportunities for construction with a variety of blocks and with hammers and nails. Following dots, pasting, and finger painting also enhance eye-hand coordination.

**\*Holding Skills--** Children must be able to hold a writing tool before they can write. Before they are ready to learn how to grip a pencil, they can learn how to grip other objects. Provide children with objects for sand and water play. Give them gardening tools and kitchen utensils to play with to help them prepare for holding a pencil.

**\*Ability to Make Basic Strokes--** Most children learn early to make lines and circles necessary for handwriting, but these strokes need to be refined. Circles need to be round and closed. Lines need to intersect properly. Activities such as drawing, painting and stirring give children the opportunity to develop these basic strokes.

**\*Perception of Letters--** Before children are ready for formal writing, they need to be able to recognize letters and notice the likenesses and differences. To help children develop this skill, play recognition games with them. Label their clothes. Together look for signs, "read" boxes in the store and play games.

**\*Understanding Language--** An understanding of what written language stands for and how it is used to communicate is essential prior to formal handwriting instruction. Encourage children to "write" such things as lists, letters, books and signs. Have them dictate songs and stories and then read them together. Read stories from their favorite books. As they memorize the words, point out the words on the printed pages.

By Helping children acquire prewriting skills, parents can make formal handwriting easier and more fun for them when they are ready for it!

**Christmas Program Photo's!**  
**We want to thank Mr. Jim Redelfs for taking some amazing photo's during the christmas program. You can see his amazing skills and our Sonshine smiles at**

**[gallery.me.com/jimredelfs](http://gallery.me.com/jimredelfs)**

**Thanks again!**

**Mom's Afternoon Out!**  
Mom's afternoon out has moved to Wednesdays! For just \$17, your child can enjoy an afternoon of fun!

**11:30-2:30**

**Please sign up early to reserve your spot!  
Sign up is posted in the front entryway!**

**2012-2013 School Year**  
Registration opens to the public on the 9th and spaces are filling quickly. If you'd like to join the Sonshine family for another year, send in your registration form and deposit to secure your spot!

### **Thank You! Thank You!**

Thank you to all who have purchased items off our giving tree, we all greatly appreciate your generosity!

### **Parent Teacher Conferences**

Friday February 10 is conferences for all MWF and 5 Day Classes. Sign up times will be posted on the classroom door! We will have Mrs. Huntington in the big room to watch your child/children, so feel free to bring them along.

### **Contact Information**

**Please be sure that the preschool has your current contact information. If you have moved, changed jobs, changed numbers or have someone new to add to the child release form, let us know and we'll update your file!**



Dillon Michael Hayes (6/10/94 - 2/6/10) was a 15 year old student at Millard North High School who, in his own words, had a great life.

"Dillon left us far too soon and not a day goes by that we don't miss and remember him as we see the lives he's touched in his short time with us," said David Hayes, Dillon's father. "His laugh and smile will always be a fond memory."

In memory of Dillon, "Dillon's House" located on the playground of Sunshine Christian Preschool was dedicated on Sunday, October 9, 2011.

"Dillon's House is and will be a vivid reminder that the ministry to children is not only important but it can change the world around because young hearts and minds are transformed by the power and love of Jesus," said Pastor Bryan Galloway of Harvey Oaks Baptist Church, who presided over the dedication.

"Dillon's House provides a unique and important part of our preschool morning where children can work out the important issues of their daily lives through play," said Mrs. Carey, director of Sunshine Christian Preschool.

## **February Calendar...**

**February 6 : Dillon's With a Purpose!**

**February 9-10 : No School**

**February 10 : Parent Teacher  
Conferences for MWF and 5 Day**

**February 13-17 : Valentine Week**

**February 20 : No School, Presidents  
Day**

**February 29 : Leap Day!**

## **Look ahead to March...**

**March 11 : Daylight Savings**

**March 16 : No School**

## A CLASSROOM GLANCE!

### TODDLER CLASSES...

We had a great time in January, talking about some toddler favorites such as dinosaurs and bears. There was such excitement about the little bit of snow that fell in the middle of the month that we made that part of our morning as well by bringing some snow inside, doing some cold and snowy art and reading books such as The Snowy Day. Although we've been lucky to have some nice mornings that let us go out to the playground, we also are enjoying the Big Room for some large motor activity. I see the kiddos riding on the scooters and bikes as well using the basketball hoop and on the balance beam. At circle time this month we've been using instruments, playing tambourines, triangles, and jingle sticks as we sing some of our favorite songs!

I am excited for what's in store for February. We'll be talking about different types of transportation and doing some fun art activities that go along with things that GO. You are also sure to see a lot of hearts and pink, as those are the shape and color highlighted this month. We'll also be discussing our five senses with the Tuesday class doing a texture collage that they can feel, Wednesday doing Kool Aid painting that they can smell, and Thursday making pudding that we can then taste for snack! We'll be reading Llama, Llama Red Pajama and The Little Mouse, The Red Ripe Strawberry and The Big Hungry Bear.

A reminder that there is no school on Thursday 2/9. Also, Valentine's Day falls on Tuesday this year, so we will be having little Valentine's parties in class on Tuesday 2/14, Wednesday 2/15, and Thursday 2/16 so that all of our children can participate. Should you choose to send Valentines for your child's friends those mornings, please sign your child's name, but do not address them so that the children can pass them out themselves. Thank you!

### 2 DAY A WEEK CLASSES...

Red light, green light...who doesn't like that game? We have been so lucky this year, we even played that game outside! As February sneaks up on us, we start to wish for spring and Phil and his shadow will decide that for us! Hopefully, he doesn't see his shadow because we have been noticing our shadows following us everywhere! We will also be mailing a letter...watch your mailbox for those Moms and Dads! One of our Bible stories is about Daniel and the lions den and how he just had to trust God. Not an easy task when you have those lions looking across that cave. We will "look" just like a lion when you pick us up that day! Valentines day is another day we look forward too! Your child may bring valentines for each classmate. We have 7 friends in our class. If your child wants to write their own name on them that's great but otherwise they do not need to write each child's name. Looks like a busy month!

## M/W/F CLASSES...

The first month of the year has flown by. We continued our alphabet adventure learning about the letters L, M and N. One of our favorite adventures was our Monday morning mystery. Mrs. Carey was missing and we spent the morning looking for clues and working together to solve the mystery. We ended the day with the story *Mortimer* read to us by Mrs. Carey (we found her!!). We read the story *If You Give a Moose a Muffin* and made our own muffins. The class wrote and illustrated their own stories about what they would give a moose. I will share these with you at conferences. We have resumed Chapel on Wednesday morning where we hear a bible story and sing some songs. The class enjoys going to "God's House" and ask daily if we get to go to Chapel. We are talking all about numbers and have enjoyed counting a variety of things in our classroom. We continue to work on the sound that each letter makes, our cutting and writing our names. In the weeks to come we will be learning all about names and the letter o. Be on the look out for our office of odds and ends. This is sure to be fun for the class.

## 5 DAY CLASS...

### From Mrs. Waller

What a fun time we have had with silly science and cooking. In science the class continued to develop skills in discovering, observing, predicting and communicating. We learned all about our noses and our sense of smell. We put our sense of smell to good use by guessing what we smelled in some smelling jars. Be sure to check out the answers posted outside the classroom. The class also got to make liquid jars using soap, vegetable oil and colored water. This was a project the kids loved. They were amazed by what happened when they shook the jars and then let them sit for awhile. In the kitchen we cooked up *Monkey Bread*, *Noodles*, *Smoeres* and *pancakes*. We continue to practice measuring, stirring and following the recipe.

### From Mrs. Logan

What a great start to the new year we have all had! We are half way through the alphabet and everyone is starting to learn the letter sounds. Working on those fine motor skills have been a focus in our class, getting those little hands ready to write! We have been cutting, lacing beads, and sculpting with clay (just to name a few). I have been thrilled to see how many of them are excited when it comes to writing our letters, they work hard at it! We've started our early reading unit and everyone is eager to learn, it is amazing! In large group we talk about each letter, the sound that it makes, and then adding those sounds together to make a word (phonics). In the next few weeks I will be introducing site words to this unit as well. I look forward to seeing where these next few months take us :)

*"They may forget what you said but they will never forget how you made them feel." - Carol Buchner*