

East Andover Village Preschool: April 2016

Spaces still available for 2016-2017

Lawre Goodnow, EAVP

East Andover Village Preschool is a play-based program, so when the children were recently asked by the Proctor Project Period students and their teacher, Adam Jones, "What do you do at school?", the children exclaimed, "We play!"

How play translates into learning may be a mystery to some people. Through this descriptive snapshot of our recent Pet Shop play, the work of the teachers and the children may be demystified.

Our Pet Shop play lasted for several weeks and emerged during the "free play" portion of the day. The teachers watched as the children became pets, mostly dogs. Others were their owners who strived to keep pets fed and behaving properly. They asked the teachers for materials or improvised with imaginary props.

The teachers talked with one another about their observations and decided to use this interest in animals and pets as a learning opportunity.

The idea of a pet shop was presented to the children during our small-group time. The children were asked the question, "What is a pet?" Through conversation, the teachers found out what the children already know about the subject. Activities and read-aloud stories about the meaning of the words "tame" and "wild" provided opportunities for the topic to be practiced or refined.

The children were thrilled about the idea of the pet shop, so we set to work transforming the dramatic play area. We created a list of animals, the roles people will play, and the items to be sold. Some of the children wrote the list, while others drew pictures. Others collected props such as small blocks to represent food and treats. They even created their own packaging for each type of pet, with pictures and words.

Meanwhile, the teachers brought out a variety of pets (all pretend, of course) for the shop, including a bunny, two hedgehogs, a gecko, several snakes, kittens, and of course puppies, since this is where it all started. Some children worked the cash register, others cared for the pets, while many came as interested customers.

Using art materials, we created a virtual fish tank and a variety of birds. This launched an investigation into the different types of animals. They identified the characteristics of mammals, birds, fish, and reptiles.

Teachers continued to talk with one another about the children's play. The teachers determined ways to incorporate learning of numbers, letters, scientific concepts, and interpersonal skills. Teachers documented individual skills being used and shared them in real time with parents through an online application called Seesaw.

Books, video, and art materials were



Pete the Parrot, pictured here with Freya Grunewald, was a resident of EAVP's Pet Shop and received a lot of love and medical care.

provided to help the children research and create new props as needed. Soon the Fishy Pet Shop included pet grooming and veterinarian services. Children played and learned across all of the educational domains, because the teachers were intentional about offering opportunities that invited their participation in a wide range of skills.

More observing, talking, researching, and play kept the topic alive. Classroom bulletin boards were filled with displays of their work and play in celebration of their efforts. Mr. Rogers, creator of the TV program Mr. Roger's Neighborhood, said simply, "Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning."

In May, parent-teacher conferences will provide the teachers and families time to talk about the growth of each child.

The children and teachers are very grateful to the families who drove us to AE/MS to see the fantastic performance of *Suessical the Musical*. Beyond the wonders of the "big school," the singing, costumes, and meeting of the actors, the children saw a disco ball. That launched us into another chapter of our pet shop saga. More about that, perhaps, another day!

A limited number of spaces for the 2016-2017 school year are available. Give the school a call at 735-5105 and set up a visit. We would love to meet you and show you the school. 



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PUBLIC NOTICE

**ANDOVER SCHOOL DISTRICT
KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION**

There will be kindergarten registration for the 2016-2017 School Year on Monday, May 9, 2016.

To enter Kindergarten, your child must be five (5) years of age by September 30, 2016. You must bring a birth certificate for your child to verify his/her date of birth AND a current utility bill as proof of residency (driver's licenses will not be accepted as valid proof). Parents who are not custodial parents need to provide proof of guardianship, or at the very least, a court ordered docket number indicating guardianship is in process.

For your convenience, registration packets and appointment details will be mailed prior to registration day. If you do not receive a packet by April 22, 2016, please call Gail Parenteau, Administrative Assistant at 735-5494.



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