

# Early Learning Center February Newsletter

## Director's Corner

*In the next couple of months we have some very big events happening at ELC and I want to make sure everyone is aware of them.*

*We are closed for a week February 20 - 24, due to mid-winter break for the Ann Arbor schools. Hopefully we will have a little snow for the children to play in during that time. If not I have included some websites in the box below that have a lot of great activities that are appropriate for a wide range of ages. There are cooking, art, science, math, and social-emotional activities, and they are low cost or free and can be done at home.*

*Saturday March 10<sup>th</sup> we will be having the second annual ELC Silent Auction at Zingerman's Catering and Events. This is a great adult event where you can enjoy great food, drinks, meet other ELC families, and support a very worthy cause - The Early Learning Center. There will be a variety of items up for auction, including items made by the children of ELC. If you know of someone who would like to donate an item or service to the auction please let Genevieve know. This event is open to current ELC families, grandparents and other close family members, and alumni. We hope to see everyone there!*

*Thursday March 15<sup>th</sup>, and Wednesday March 21<sup>st</sup> we will be closed for Parent-Teacher conferences. This is a excellent opportunity for you to meet with your child's teachers for some one-on-one time talking about your child's development. Please see your child's teacher for information about signing up, or any questions you may have.*

*Lastly on Monday March 26<sup>th</sup> from 5 - 6:30 pm we will be hosting an open house at ELC. This is a time for people in the community to come see what ELC is all about. We are encouraging anyone interested in preschool in the next year or two should come by and meet the teachers, take a tour of the building, pick up an information packet, and get the opportunity to speak to currently enrolled ELC families. Please let your friends and family members know!*

## Parenting & Home Websites

Here are a couple of websites I have found that have tons of great ideas and activities.

<http://playathomemom3.blogspot.com/>

[www.familyfun.go.com](http://www.familyfun.go.com)

<http://www.jeffajohnson.com/>

<http://thethriftycouple.com/>

<http://flylady.net/>



### FEBRUARY

13<sup>th</sup>: Pizza Play Shop

13<sup>th</sup>: ELC Valentine's Day Party

14<sup>th</sup>: ELC Valentine's Day Party

15<sup>th</sup>: Tuition Payments Due

20<sup>th</sup>: ELC CLOSED

21<sup>st</sup>: ELC CLOSED

22<sup>nd</sup>: ELC CLOSED

23<sup>rd</sup>: ELC CLOSED

24: ELC CLOSED

24<sup>th</sup>: Scholastic Book Orders Due

27<sup>th</sup>: School Resumes

29<sup>th</sup>: Last day to order class composites or group pictures.

29<sup>th</sup>: ELC Board Meeting

### MARCH

10<sup>th</sup>: ELC Auction

12<sup>th</sup>: Pizza Play Shop

15<sup>th</sup>: Tuition Payments Due

15<sup>th</sup>: Parent Teacher Conferences - No Classes

21<sup>st</sup>: Parent Teacher Conferences - No Classes

23<sup>rd</sup>: Scholastic Book Orders Due

26<sup>th</sup>: ELC Open House

**TAX INFORMATION**

For those of you claiming child care on your federal tax return, ELC's Federal ID# is **38-2060-915**.

If you need a summary of your child care payments for 2011, and did not receive it yet please email Genevieve.



## Valentine's Day Parties

We will be celebrating Valentine's Day with ice cream sundae parties on Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. If your child would like to exchange cards with the other children in their class, please help them to write their own name on the cards (start now—it takes time for children to sign that many cards!), but please do not write the other children's names on the envelopes. The children will make cardholders in the classrooms.

### # of Children In Classroom

Monday	Rainbow Room 15 Teddy Bear 13
Tuesday AM	Rainbow Room 14 Teddy Bear 9
Tuesday PM	Rainbow Room 10 Teddy Bear 11

## Hat & Mitten Fundraiser

What a success our first hat and mitten fundraiser was! We collected thirty pairs of mittens/gloves, thirty-one hats, seven hat/mitten combinations, one jacket, and one snowsuit. These items were donated to the SOS crisis center in Ann Arbor. Thank you to all our families who were able to donate it was so generous! The children were able to count, graph, and pattern the items before they were donated, and learned a valuable lesson about helping others in need!



## 2012-2013 Enrollment

In-house enrollment for Fall 2012 has ended and we are now enrolling children from the community. For those of you with children at ELC, we know you recognize the benefit of a *quality preschool* experience! As current ELC parents, you are our most powerful marketing tool. Many prospective parents rely on word of mouth when choosing a preschool. Please help us continue to keep our enrollment levels high by sharing your enthusiasm for ELC to family, friends, neighbors, acquaintances, and even strangers - you never know who might be looking for a preschool! Suggest they check our fantastic website at [www.elcpreschool.com](http://www.elcpreschool.com) and call or email for more information and an appointment to visit.

### OPEN HOUSE

ELC will be hosting an open house on Monday March 26<sup>th</sup>. If you know anyone who is looking for preschool in the next year or two invite them to join us at our open house from 5 - 6:30 pm. They will be able to see the center, meet the teachers, take home an information packet, and speak to currently enrolled families about their experience at ELC!!!

In this section we will give a monthly overview of what happened at the previous monthly meeting.

- The second annual ELC silent auction is going to be held at Zingerman's Catering and Event on March 10, 2012
- We had a staff member and a parent attended the Ann Arbor Library Preschool Expo on January 29<sup>th</sup>. We had many people stop by to pick up information packets and set up half a dozen tours.
- We have turned in our renewal packet to NAEYC and are currently waiting for them to visit the center.
- We are reviewing and starting a new advertisement campaign.
- The next board meeting is to be held on February 29, 2011 at 7:30 pm and all families are invited to attend.

### [A Letter from Play to Parents](#)

Dear Parents,

It's me, Play. We have not spent much time together lately. When you were a kid, we were together all the time: riding Big Wheels, sculpting stuff out of play dough, building moon bases out of blocks, and squishing mud.

Heck, we were together all the time.

Remember when you were told to "quit playing with your vegetables and eat them"?

How about all the times you heard someone yell that "goofing around with those toys is *not* going to get that pigsty-of-a-mess you call a bedroom cleaned up!"

Or how we had so much fun on car trips—until the order to "stop the silliness back there!" boomed from the front seat?

Back then, all you wanted to do was hang out with me. Those were good times. Remember how that big slide burnt your legs, but you could just not stop going down over and over again?

Anyway, I'm not writing to relive old times (although it would be great to get together some time).

I'm writing about your kids. I don't see them that much and I'm worried. They're MIA. From what I hear, their days are full of adult-led activities, screen time, and academics. They don't even play in the back seat like you used to—they're plugged into a DVR watching something "educational". I know you want the best for them—you want them to get ahead in life and be ready for whatever it tosses at them. You're scared that if you don't push them a bit they will not "be read". You feel there is learning to be done and that there is not time for your old buddy, Play.

You're also under a lot of peer pressure to do what other parents are doing. If the kid down the street can't climb trees or get messy and is shuttled between academic preschool, dance, karate, a traveling soccer team, and a foreign language class you'd look like a bad parent if your kid just ran the neighborhood half naked and covered in mud having adventures the way you did back in the day.

I get the Fear and the Pressure, but it's getting a bit intense. You're expecting things out of your kids that are not developmentally appropriate—things most of them are not cognitively or physiologically ready for. You're expecting *them* to do things at the age of 3 that *you* did not learn to do until the age of 5 or 6.

The thing is, *I'm* the answer. If you want your kids to be ready for whatever life throws in their path, if you want them to be able to thrive in an ever-changing world, if you want them to be creative, and knowledgeable, and well-adjusted-- *I'm the answer*.

Me, you're old buddy, Play.

I don't want to brag, but the fact is I'm an evolutionary strategy that lots of creatures use to learn about, and survive in, their worlds. Puppies, chimps, whales, elephants, tigers—the list is huge. They all use me; Play, as a strategy for gathering information about their surroundings, sorting things out, gaining understanding, and so much more.

Don't take my word for it; there is plenty of research showing that I'm a better choice for young kids than learning videos, flashcards, worksheets, and adult-led academic settings. Here's a [link](#) to a list of resource my buddies Jeff and Denita compiled for their book, *Let Them Play*. Check it out when you have time (and *please* make the time).

Right now, I'm just asking you to relax a bit. Let them play. Let them enjoy their childhoods. Stop rushing them. Stop pushing them.

And you...you could use some more of me too. How about right now? Go on, grab that big fluffy towel from the bathroom, tie it around your neck, and see if you can still fly off the third step the way you used to. It'll be fun.

Hope to see you (and your kids) soon!

You're Buddy,

Play

PS--If you've got a minute, share your favorite moment we spent together when you were a kid.