

# The Dick Howser Center Post



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# 3rd QUARTER

# 2015-16

July/August: *Trees Study*  
August/September: *Beginning the Year*  
September/October: *Balls Study*



Welcome to  
Preschool

## Parent Reminders

### JULY

#### Friday, July 3, 2015 ~ PRESCHOOL CLOSED

The Preschool is closed for the observance of Independence Day.

#### Monthly Parent Meeting ~ Thursday, July 30, 2015 from 6 – 7pm

### AUGUST

#### Monday, August 10, 2015 ~ Summer VPK Ends

#### Friday, August 14, 2015 ~ Professional Development Day

Preschool is closed for teacher in-service. However, we hope to see you back at 6pm for VPK Orientation and our School-Wide Open House.

#### Friday, August 14, 2015 ~ VPK Orientation and School-Wide Open House at 6pm

We hope to see you and your child at VPK Orientation and our School-Wide Open House. Children will get the chance to meet their teacher, spend time in their classroom, learn where their cubbie is and much more. For children already enrolled and not in VPK, this is your chance to speak to your child's teacher, ask questions, explore the school, speak to administration and much more.

#### Monday, August 17, 2015 ~ First day for VPK

VPK hours are from 9am – 12n. If your child is staying for "wrap-around" care, they can arrive as early as 7am and must be picked up by 6pm.

#### Friday, August 21, 2015 ~ VPK Supply Fee Due

The Fall VPK Supply fee of \$50 is due. This fee can be paid by money order, check or debit/credit card.

#### Monthly Parent Meeting ~ Thursday, August 27, 2015 from 6 – 7pm

### SEPTEMBER

#### Labor Day ~ Monday, September 7, 2015 ~ PRESCHOOL CLOSED

#### Spirit Week ~ Monday, September 14 - 18, 2015

Monday, September 14 – School Shirt Day

Tuesday, September 15 – Favorite Hat/Tiara or Crazy Hair Day

Wednesday, September 16 – Favorite Character Day

Thursday, September 17 – Wacky Tacky Day

Friday, September 18 – Pajama Day

#### Parent's Night Out Babysitting Service ~

Friday, September 18, 2015 from 6 – 11pm

#### Monthly Parent Meeting ~

Thursday, September 24, 2015 from 6 – 7pm



# Parent Information...

## Parent's Night Out Babysitting Service

This is your opportunity to have dinner and a movie, rest and relax at the house, run errands...basically whatever you want to do while your child has a BLAST at preschool. We're serving dinner and have planned lots of fun arts & crafts, activities, and a G-rated movie. There is a sign-up sheet at the front desk. The cost is \$25 for the 1<sup>st</sup> child and \$15 for each additional child. Children from infants – school age who attend our school, their siblings, family members or friends of the family are welcome to attend.

Friday, September 18 – 6 – 11pm

## From the Suggestion Box

Reminder that there is a suggestion box located on the sign-in/out table. We hope that you use this box to give all types of input and feedback to the teachers, the Preschool and the PTO. The suggestion box is intended to open a door for communication, allowing you to provide comments, concerns, compliments, suggestions, pose questions, propose solutions or even just provide a teacher with an encouraging word.



## VPK 2015 - 2016

### Friday, August 14 at 6:00pm ~ Orientation

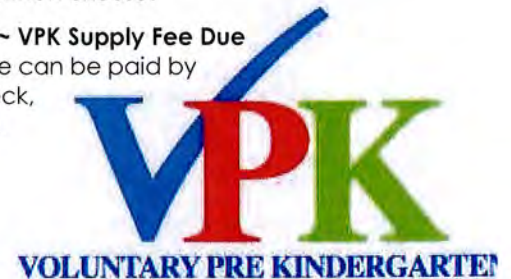
Orientation is a great way to transition your child to VPK. Stop by and take a tour, meet your child's teacher, ask questions and help your child transition to VPK.

### Monday, August 17 ~ First Day of VPK

VPK hours are from 9am – 12n. Please don't be late because learning time begins promptly at 9am. For children staying for "wrap around" care, you can drop off as early as 7am and pick up by 6pm. Children dropped off after 9am, will only be accepted with a doctor's note or written excuse.

### Friday, August 21 ~ VPK Supply Fee Due

The \$50 Supply Fee can be paid by money order, check, debit/credit card.



## Spirit Week ~ Monday, September 14 - 18, 2015

Monday ~ School Spirit Day ~ Wear your school shirt.

Tuesday ~ Favorite Hat/Tiara or Crazy Hair Day

Wednesday ~ Favorite Character, Super Hero or Sports Team Day

Thursday ~ Wacky Tacky Day ~ Wear your weirdest, mis-matchiest clothes

Friday ~ Favorite PJ Day ~ Wear your most comfy, favorite pajamas to school



Crazy Hat Day Spring 2015

## Upcoming Preschool Closures

### ALL CHILDREN

Friday, July 3 ~ Independence Day Celebration

Friday, August 14 ~ Professional Development Day

Monday, September 7 ~ Labor Day

### Preschool Closures – VPK ONLY\*

Wednesday, Sept 23 ~ LCS Fall Holiday

Children who attend for "wrap around care" can attend school at no extra charge. Children who attend for VPK ONLY can attend for a \$35 fee.

## Monthly Parent Meeting

We have scheduled a monthly Parent Meeting for the last Thursday of every month. Each meeting is scheduled from 6 – 7pm. We will be discussing a variety of subjects, invite guest speakers, and more. We hope that you'll attend.

### July

Thursday, July 30, 2015 from 6 – 7pm

### August

Thursday, August 27, 2015 from 6 – 7pm

### September

Thursday, September 24, 2015 from 6 – 7pm



# Parent Information...

## Just a reminder...

Our operational hours are from 7am to 6pm.  
All children must be at school by 9am.  
Children being dropped off after 9am must have a doctor's note or other excused tardy.

Why? Because at 9am, we start circle time. Circle time is a critical focused learning time for our children. Arriving during circle time disrupts learning for everyone else. Arriving after circle time means that your child just missed a rich learning time and is not prepared for the day's activities.



Is your child new to preschool? Do you want a new school shirt? We'll be tie-dyeing school shirts on Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>. Please bring a plain white t-shirt with your child's name on the tag by September 4<sup>th</sup>. Shirts will be returned by Friday, September 11<sup>th</sup>.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

### JULY

Analeigh 7/7	Janiyah 7/11	McKenzie 7/19
Kash 7/23	Shepherd 7/21	Will 7/29
Ms. Shemika 7/25	Ms. Kathryn 7/31	

### AUGUST

Noah 8/3	Omari 8/4	Chyla 8/17	Gavin 8/20
Harmony 8/18	Jaxon 8/23	Millie 8/25	Paislee 8/26
Ms. Ella 8/23	Ms. Michelle 8/27		

### Anniversary

1 year: Kristen, Jennifer, Shemika, Jessica, Rebekah, Kathryn and Smita  
2 year: Claire and Ivory

### SEPTEMBER

Grey 9/2	Rhiley 9/5	Jasmine 9/9	Grimm 9/9
Taylor 9/12	Grayson 9/13	Luis 9/24	Nolan 9/24
Ms. Claire 9/24	Ms. Kristen 9/28		

### Anniversary

1 year: Ms. Bernadette 9/15  
2 year: Ella 9/13

**10 YEARS!!!**  
**Ms. Doris 9/6**



# July/August ~ TREES

## Why Investigate Trees?

Trees fascinate children and spark their curiosity and wonder. Close your eyes, and think of your childhood memories that involved trees. Did you ever climb a tree? Did you play chase and hide behind a tree? Did you lie down under a tree and wonder whether it touched the sky? Did you ever try to wrap your arms all the way around a tree? Did you wonder why there are holes in trees and what's inside them? Did you ever imagine what the world would be like without trees?

This study builds upon children's interest in trees to help them explore science and social studies. Rather than emphasize naming different trees, this study focuses on helping children develop an understanding of the characteristics of trees and their role in our natural and man-made worlds. During the study, children use skills in literacy, math, technology, and the arts to investigate and represent their knowledge about trees.

**Exploring the Topic:** What do we know about trees? What do we want to find out? We'll be reading [Our Tree Named Steve](#), [Abiyoyo](#) and [Chicka Chilcka Boom Boom](#)

**Investigation 1:** What are the characteristics of trees in our community? We'll practice sorting and classifying our classroom collection of leaves and other tree parts.

**Investigation 2:** Who lives in trees? We'll read books and play games involving bugs, monkeys, birds and other wild life that make their homes in trees.

**Investigation 3:** What food comes from trees? We'll make lists of different fruits and nuts that come from trees and we'll watch an eBook version of [Henny Penny](#).

**Investigation 4:** Who takes care of trees? We'll practice measuring spherical objects using yarn. Children will have the opportunity to measure some of the trees around our building.

**Investigation 5:** How do trees change? We'll work on a class discussion and shared writing – Seed, Seedling and Sapling.

**Investigation 6:** What can we do with parts of trees? We'll create a classroom guessing jar filled with tree parts and wooden and non-wooden objects.

**Celebrating Learning:** We'll culminate our Tree Study by making applesauce or applesauce bread, completing a discussion and shared writing about our memories about trees, and planting a tree at the school.

## Family Participation

- Take a "tree walk" with your child to collect tree parts to investigate. Bring these items, such as leaves, bark, acorns, twigs, flowers, fruit, or cones for the class to investigate.
- Do you have knowledge about gardening, forests, tree trimming, tree farming, or with working at plant nurseries? You can be involved in our study...extra hands always help!

### Nature Walk

Take time out of your busy schedule and take a purposeful walk with your preschooler. Take a bag with you and collect "tree" items (pine cones, acorns, leaves, sticks, etc). When you get them home, talk about them, sort and classify them and count them!

When you're done with them at home, bring them to school to share with friends!

### Songs, Fingerplays and Movement

#### Autumn Leaves (tune: London Bridge)

Autumn leaves are  
falling down, falling down  
Autumn leaves are  
falling down, all through the town.  
Rake them up into a pile  
into a pile, into a pile  
Rake them up into a pile  
Before they blow around.

### At Home Activities



#### Five Little Leaves

Five little leaves so bright and gay, were dancing about on a tree one day  
The wind came blowing through the town (make a big whoosh sound)  
Whoosh! (have the kids say it with you)  
One little leaf came tumbling down (remove one leaf from the tree)  
Four little leaves so bright and gay.... (repeat poem until you get to one)  
One little leaf so bright and gay, was dancing around on the tree one day,  
That one little leaf came tumbling down,  
All goooooone! (Shrug shoulders)

### Leaf Rubbings

After you've collected leaves during your nature walk, lay them out on newsprint paper and place another piece over the leaf. Children use a crayon to color, exposing the leaf shape, veins and stem.

To extend this activity for older children, encourage them to cut out their leaf rubbings. You can help them make a chain by taping, gluing or stapling the leaves together or you can make a mobile using yarn and a clothes hanger.

# August/September ~ Beginning the School Year

The beginning of the school year is an exciting time! During the first several weeks of the school year, our teachers will be busy supporting children as they say good-bye to their families, become familiar with their new classroom and school routines, and learn to find comfort in being a member of the classroom community while maintaining a secure connection to home.

Whether children are new to preschool or not, expect that many will experience strong emotions – fear, anxiety, extreme excitement, sadness, or frustration. Our teachers will be focusing on finding strategies for supporting each child's social-emotional development as they become comfortable in their new environment. Our priority is building relationships with the children and their families.

The Beginning the School Year study, focuses lessons around the many questions children have as they navigate their new surroundings.

**Focus Question 1:** What names do we need to know at school? Teachers will promote Active Listening during focused learning times, incorporate family names during writing and learning about families through discussion and our books.

**Focus Question 2:** What should we do if we get sad or scared at school? We'll read Wemberly Worried – a picture book about a little mouse that worries about almost everything, but is very worried about starting nursery school. Our children will explore new vocabulary – worried, "go with the flow", especially, make fun of, peeked and usual. Teachers will support children in their social-emotional development by processing why Wemberly was so worried, explore what they would do if they were Wemberly and more.

**Focus Question 3:** What are our rules? We'll work on a cooking activity – modeling clay or black bean corn salad. Children will also have the opportunity to play a classroom scavenger hunt, looking for common classroom objects.

**Focus Question 4:** When do things happen at school? Our teachers will create and review a picture daily schedule with the children each day.

**Focus Question 5:** Who works at our school? We'll share a discussion and writing activity about the people that work at our school and what their jobs are. Children will get a visit from someone who works at the school – Ms. Kim, Director, Ms. Claire, Accounting Assistant, Ms. Amber, Center Coordinator, Ms. Kathryn, Curriculum Coordinator, Ms. Sam, Cook or maybe even someone from our janitorial, landscaping or Goodwill staff that work behind the scenes to help our school.

**Focus Question 6:** How do we make and keep friends? How can we be part of a group? Children will play the "Name Cheer" game that celebrates all of our friends. Teachers will discuss and assist with a shared writing about friendship and we hope to have enough time to make a book about being friends at school.

**Mini-Study:** What sounds do we hear at school? Where do they come from? We'll play Simon Says and focus on good listening skills and following directions. Teachers will lead the children in a shared writing and discussion about the sounds we hear at school. We'll explore scientific and critical thinking skills, playing "Name the Sound" games.

**Family Participation:** Many times at the beginning of the school year, parents of children who are just starting school for the first time inquire about volunteering their time. We would love for you to spend time assisting your child's teacher in the classroom. To volunteer, please see Administration. They'll get you set up as an approved classroom volunteer. If you can't volunteer during the school day, don't worry, we've got lots of other volunteer opportunities that don't require you to be at the school – cutting letters for bulletin boards, cutting shapes for art projects, bringing supplies/food for festivals and more!

## All About Me Photo Book

Even if your child is not new to preschool, they may have recently transitioned to a new group, teacher, or classroom. This can be a stressful time for both children and parents. To help ease this stress, make an **All About Me Photo Book**.

### Directions:

- (1) Print pictures of your child from infancy to current.
- (2) Add photos of other family members, pets, extended family.
- (3) Glue to a piece of poster board or stiff paper that has been cut to fit inside a Ziploc baggie.
- (4) Place photos in baggies and staple together with the zipper side out, so that you can switch out photos when needed.
- (5) Place tape over the staples for added safety and send to school with your child and review often.

## At Home Activities



## Keepsake

It's never too late to create keepsake memories.

Encourage your child to draw a self portrait each year. Record their answers to questions such as, what's your favorite color, food, animal, activity at school or what do you want to be when you grow up.

Keep these and look back often. Before you know it, you'll be helping them pack for college.

# September/October ~ Balls

## Why Investigate Balls?

Children love balls. They play with them in many different ways. They throw them, catch them, kick them, and roll them with seemingly endless delight. Children learn how natural forces, such as gravity and friction, affect the movement of balls, and they enjoy making balls, marbles, and other rolling objects change speed and direction. The universal and enduring appeal of balls is evident in the traditional games children play with them and in the ways they invent their own ball games.

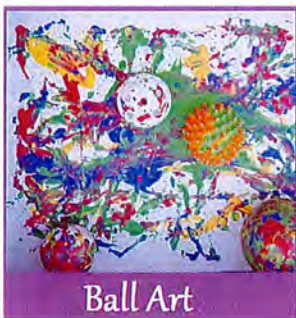
This study shows how to use children's interest in balls to help them explore social studies and science concepts related to the features and nature of balls, and to use skills in literacy, math, technology, and the arts as they investigate.

## Introduction to Balls

As we study balls, we will learn concepts and skills in literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology. If you can, we would like you help in gathering a collection of balls to investigate. We'll need many different types of balls (baseball, basketball, bowling ball, football, golf ball, koosh ball, marble, ping-pong ball, billiard ball, racquetball, soccer ball, tennis ball, volleyball, whiffle ball). We'll take good care of them so we can return them to you at the end of the study.

Throughout the Balls Study, we'll incorporate indoor and outdoor activities about the scientific properties of balls – why they bounce, roll, and move – and opportunities for children to cooperate. Some of the investigations also include an on-site visit, as well as demonstrations of the use of balls in sports and exercise by family members and friends.

**Exploring the Topic: What do we know about balls? What do we want to find out?** We'll use our classroom balls to learn about size (small, smaller, smallest and big, bigger, biggest). Children will be encouraged to "vote" for their favorite type of ball. Teachers will record their answers on classroom charts and graphs.



**Investigation 1 – Why do balls bounce?** We'll play with imaginary balls. Children will also get the chance to use math skills by measuring the height and bounciness of classroom balls.

**Investigation 2 – Do all balls roll?** Children will explore geometric shapes and look for spherical objects in the classroom.

**Investigation 3 – What makes balls move?** During our outdoor experiences, children will play "balloon catch" for gross motor development, eye-hand coordination, team work and critical thinking – why do balloons float?

**Investigation 4 – Who uses balls?** We'll read [Play Ball!](#) and explore all of the different ways people use balls during sports events.

**Investigation 5 – What are balls made of?** Children will have the opportunity to use classroom collections to attempt to make a ball. Children will use scientific thinking to determine their ball's properties – does it bounce, can you roll it, is it soft or hard, etc.

**Celebrating Learning** – As a culminating activity, we'll plan snack time with foods that are ball-shaped. Parents are welcome to join us at 3pm for the fun! The date will be announced as we get closer to completing this study.

## Sorting Balls

Children of all ages can have fun sorting balls at home on a rainy day.

Pick up inexpensive plastic bowls in lots of different colors or paint paper grocery bags or shoe boxes. Find balls in those colors, or ball up colored paper and encourage your child to place the balls in the corresponding bowl.

To create this activity on a smaller scale, use a muffin tin with colored construction paper circles at the bottom of each mold. Children can sort pom-poms.

Try also sorting balls by type, texture, how high they bounce, etc.

## At Home Activities



## Fruit Balls

Cooking with children helps develop their math skills and helps them to learn how to follow directions.

It also allows for some great conversation!

### Directions

Using a spoon or melon scooper, have your child help scoop ball shapes out of watermelon, honey dew or cantaloupe. Don't worry if they don't actually create a perfect "ball". Focus on what they're learning/developing – fine motor skills, perseverance, math and critical thinking skills.





**JULY**

Sun      Mon      Tues      Wed      Thurs      Fri      Sat

1

2

3

4

PRESCHOOL  
CLOSED



**MENU: Week 1**

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

Staff Meeting  
6 – 7pm

**MENU: Week 2**

12

13

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16

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**MENU: Week 3**

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**MENU: Week 4**

26

27

28

29


30

Parent Meeting  
6 – 7pm

**MENU: Week 1**



# AUGUST

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5 Staff Meeting 6 - 7pm	6	7	8
<b>MENU: Week 2</b>						
9	10 Summer VPK Ends	11	12	13	14 PRESCHOOL CLOSED  VPK Orientation and School-Wide Open House 6 - 7pm	15
<b>MENU: Week 3</b>						
16	17 1 <sup>st</sup> Day of VPK	18	19	20	21 VPK Supply Fee Due \$50	22
<b>MENU: Week 4</b>						
23	24	25	26	27 Parent Meeting 6 - 7pm	28	29
<b>MENU: Week 1</b>						
30	31					
<b>MENU: Week 2</b>						







# SEPTEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
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		1	2	3	4	5
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Bring in a new white t-shirt for your child to tie-dye as their "school shirt" to be worn on 9/14.

## MENU: Week 2

6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	PRESCHOOL CLOSED Labor Day	All teachers will be tie-dying t-shirts and send them home to be washed.	Staff Meeting 6 – 7pm			

## MENU: Week 3

13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	←-----SCHOOL SPRIT WEEK-----→					
	School Shirt Day	Favorite Hat / Tiara Day or Crazy Hat Day	Favorite Character/Super Hero/Sports Team Day	Wacky Tacky Day	Favorite PJ Day	Parent's Night Out 6 – 11pm

## MENU: Week 4

20	21	22	23	24	25	26
				Parent Meeting 6 – 7pm		

## MENU: Week 1

27	28	29	30
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## MENU: Week 2

