

St. Peter's Preschool Newsletter

November 2021



From the Director's Chair – by Rita Dai Wang

The season for giving thanks is upon us. I am so thankful for our St. Peter's family: teachers, church staff, and you -- our families! I love playing with your children. The things they say and how they see the world remind me to be present and enjoy every moment. Thank you for sharing them and entrusting them to us.

Mittens, Hats, and Boots: As long as the temperatures are above freezing after taking into account the wind chill, we plan to go outside every day, even in the rain/snow. Please remember to dress your children accordingly and to send in mittens, hats, and boots (labeled please). Thank you in advance!

Tacobird Fledgling's Artistic Gifts: We are hard at work on special art projects that you can turn into mugs, magnets, trivets, etc. The artwork and order form will come home 11/11-12. Please return both the artwork and order form by 11/15-16 so we can ensure the products arrive in time for Christmas. If you have other children at home who would like to participate or if your preschooler would like to make a different picture, please let me know, and I can give you extra paper and order forms. These make great grandparent presents, hint hint!

Thanksgiving Travel: As you are no doubt making Thanksgiving plans, I wanted to remind you of St. Peter's travel policies. I have attached the full Thanksgiving and travel guidance below.

Tuition Refund Policy: I am sending home the St. Peter's Preschool Tuition Refund Policy in a separate email. Hopefully we will be able to stay open, and it won't even be an issue, but I wanted us to be ready just in case. Please let me know if you have any questions.



Dates to Remember

- 11/3 Nature Center Christening 10:30
- 11/7 St. Peter's Church Stewardship 9:45
- 11/10 HoCo Conservancy field trip – 3's/4's 9:45
- 11/15-11/16 Tacobird Fledgling's Artistic Gifts orders due
- 11/24-11/26 Thanksgiving Break – No School



- 11/3 Ms. Rebecca
- 11/15 Caroline Williams
- 11/21 Rocco Kahl
- 11/23 Emilia Kessler
- 11/29 NoellaGrace Abong

Risk vs. Hazard

One concern many parents have about outdoor learning is risk, whether it be from insects or falling. Nancy Striniste discusses the difference between risk and hazard in her book "Nature Play at Home." I have attached some of her thoughts below.



Fun Thanksgiving Activities to Try at Home

Count your blessings together.

Make a thankfulness tree together! Trace your child's hand in different colors for leaves and write what they are thankful for on each one. You can invite everyone in the family to trace their hands!



Find a kid friendly recipe:

Assist your child in mixing, pouring, measuring, etc...One of my favorites is a No-Bake Pumpkin Chocolate Pie with whipped cream:

<http://chocolatecoveredkatie.com/2011/11/21/no-bake-chocolate-pumpkin-pie>



Maryland STEM Festival

The 7th annual MD STEM Festival has begun! While many of these activities are geared towards older kids, there are many suitable for preschool or elementary school kids as well. Both in person and virtual events available.

<https://marylandstemfestival.org/>



St. Peter's Preschool Travel/Visitor Guidelines 2021

St. Peter's Travel Policies

- Unvaccinated individuals who travel to a state with a test positivity rate higher than 10% per the CDC website https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_positivity7day must present a negative COVID test result (taken 3-5 days after return) and quarantine for 7 days to come back to school.
- Vaccinated individuals who travel within the US will not need to present test results.
- All individuals who travel out of the country, regardless of vaccination status, will be required to present a negative COVID test (taken 3-5 days after return) as well as quarantine for 7 days to return to school.
- Travel to the following states is exempt from these restrictions: DC, VA, WV, PA, DE.

St. Peter's Visitors Policy

- Families who host out-of-town guests who are vaccinated do not have any restrictions before students can return to school.
- Families who host out-of-town guests who are unvaccinated from a state with a test positivity rate lower than 10% per the CDC website https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_positivity7day do not have any restrictions before students can return to school.
- Families who host out-of-town guests who are unvaccinated from a state with a test positivity rate higher than 10% have 3 options for their child to return to school:
 - They can present a negative COVID test result from their visitors (taken 1-3 days before student's anticipated return to school) .
 - They can present a negative COVID test result from their child (taken 1-3 days before anticipated return to school) .
 - Their child can quarantine at home for 7 days after the visitors leave.
- Visitors from the following states are exempt from these restrictions: DC, VA, WV, PA, DE.

CDC Travel Guidelines and COVID Data Tracker

- CDC Domestic Travel Guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html>
- CDC International Travel Guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/international-travel-during-covid19.html>
- CDC Data Tracker https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_positivity7day

The Risks of Eliminating Risks

from “Nature Play at Home” by Nancy Striniste

It can be scary to see your child doing something that seems dangerous. However, it is important for parents to realize that kids need opportunities to make choices, take risks, and do things that are challenging and exciting in order to grow into resilient human beings. Having active-play elements in a natural play space communicates to children that we trust them and want them to get to know themselves, to develop confidence in their abilities, and to learn to make good decisions.



As we build adventure into the design of an outdoor space, we give our children the chance to confront and master their fears and to build self-confidence and self-sufficiency. When children confront risk together, they learn to cooperate and develop empathy and caring. The opposite is also true, as a study from Denmark demonstrates. Children who *don't* have the opportunity to participate in adventurous, somewhat risky play may become irrationally fearful and anxious. They may grow up to be less creative and lack confidence.



What is acceptable risk? It is important to think about what is required for a child to manage and overcome risk, and this varies with age and experience. This is sometimes described as the difference between a hazard and a risk. A hazard is a danger a child cannot see or understand, versus a risk, which can be seen and understood.

Risk is everywhere. There is a risk of injury even walking along paved sidewalks. In a natural setting with trees to climb, pointy sticks, slippery rocks, and the unexpected holes in the ground, we worry that “something might happen.” Instead, the scrapes children acquire should be acknowledged proudly as proof that “you tried to *do something*.” At its most basic level, pain is a signal from the environment that leads children to learn how to keep themselves safe. Each bump and bruise is a step in developing resilience. It is through play that children should have the opportunity to test themselves and to learn to respond to the environment.

The job of parents, teachers, and caregivers is not to succumb to every worry, nor to put their anxiety ahead of what is good for children. Parents need to say yes to outdoor play: yes to running, climbing, getting dirty, and staying outside longer, all in order for our children to grow up with healthy bodies and brains. Sometimes parents just need to sit on their hands, look away, and let children try it.



The International School Grounds Alliance (ISGA) has created the *Risk in Play and Learning Declaration*. It states that play spaces should be “as safe as necessary, not as safe as possible.” It can be found at <http://www.internationalschoolgrounds.org/risk>.

Nancy Striniste has also written a blog entry titled “Child’s Right to Risk,” which can be found on her website at <https://earlyspace.com/childs-right-to-risk/>.

