



NEWS FROM THE

Early Childhood Resource Center

at the Springfield City Library

Sponsored by the MA Dept. of Early Education and Care

<http://www.springfieldlibrary.org/ecrc/ecrcmain.html>

Fall 2011



Please call Rachel Keeler at (413) 263-6828, ext. 201 with any questions or to set up an appointment.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW ECRC RESOURCES

Alphabet Sounds Game

Players listen to tongue twisters to see if the words and sounds they hear match any of the pictures/letters on their card. If it does, they put a chip on the picture/letter. Fill the card to win!
Ages 3+

Jobs in Our Community Puzzles

These self-correcting puzzles illustrate different jobs around the community. Nine different locations including a grocery store, pet store, post office, and police station. Other puzzles available include Signs and Symbols (Stop signs), Holidays, and Changes Over Time (baby, boy, man).
Ages 3+

Magnetic Sorting Sets

Sort the magnetic pictures into different categories! Topics are Transportation, Properties of Objects, Five Senses, and Living Things. Set can be used on any magnetic surface--or borrow one of our magnetic display boards too!
Ages 4+

Parachute Kit

This multi-colored 12-foot parachute has handles around the edge and comes with the CD *Playtime Parachute Fun for Early Childhood* which offers songs and activity suggestions.
Ages 3+

Want to see what these resources look like?
Visit <http://www.springfieldlibrary.org/ecrc/ecrcmain.html>

New Books

The Kitchen Classroom: 32 Visual GFCF (gluten-free, casein-free) Recipes to Boost Developmental Skills by Gabrielle Kaplan-Mayer.

A School Like Mine: A Unique Celebration of Schools Around the World by Penny Smith.

Calendar Time Sing-along Flip Chart and CD by Paul Strausman.

Links to Learning: a Curriculum Planning Guide for After-school Programs by the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, Wellsley Centers.

Achieving Learning Goals Through Play: Teaching Young Children with Special Needs by Anne H. Widerstrom.

Any of these resources can be delivered right to your local library. Call us or ask your own librarian for help!

FOR KIDS

@ the Central Library

Preschool Storytime: Tuesdays at 10:30 through November 22. Registration is required if you are bringing more than 4 children.

Toddler Storytime: Thursdays at 9:45 am through November 18. Registration is required if you are bringing more than 4 children.

And on Saturdays...

Families Read! Drop-in between 1:15-2:30 pm to read a book and play board games with your family. A small snack is provided. Ages 5-12.
1st Saturday of every month.

Saturday Storytime at 1:30 pm. Ages 3-8, siblings welcome.
2nd-5th Saturdays of every month.

FOR PROFESSIONALS

WORKSHOP

Hands-On Science with Young Children

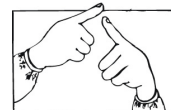


Learn how to explore science with young children! Jane Heinze-Fry, Program Director at MITS (Museum Institute for Teaching Science) will share strategies for hands-on, inquiry-based science activities that you can easily do with your kids. You will have the opportunity to try many of the activities yourself! This free workshop will be held **Wednesday, October 26, 2011 from 6-8 pm** in the Central Library Community Room. Free parking is available across the street. Registration opens October 17. Call 263.6828 x 201 to reserve your spot!

Curious about other workshops offered in the Springfield area?
Visit the Preschool Enrichment Team's web site at: <http://www.preschoolenrichmentteam.org> and click on Training, or call 413.736.3900.

Curious about other workshops offered in Massachusetts?
Visit the Department of Early Education and Care web site. Go to <http://www.mass.gov>

FALL FINGERPLAY



Falling Leaves

Little leaves are falling down, (*Wiggle fingers downward.*)

Red and yellow, orange and brown. (*Count on fingers.*)

Whirling, twirling 'round and 'round, (*Twirl fingers.*)

Falling softly to the ground. (*Wiggle fingers downward to the ground.*)

Las hojitas se están cayendo

Las hojitas se están cayendo (*Menea los dedos en posición hacia el suelo.*)

Rojas y amarillas, naranjas y cafés. (*Cuenta con los dedos.*)

Remolineándose, girando, dando vueltas alrededor, (*Da vueltas a los dedos.*)

Hasta que suavemente caen al suelo. (*Mueve los dedos en posición hacia el suelo.*)

Online Resources for Parents & Teachers

<http://www.teachersandfamilies.com>. This website has activities and reading lists for preschoolers and school-age children.

Lesson Plan Idea: Shadows

Books (Available through the Springfield City Library, as well as other libraries):

Guess Whose Shadow? by Stephen R. Swinburne

Whose Shadow is This?: a look at animal shapes-round, long, and pointy by Claire Berge

Bear Shadow by Frank Asch

Shadow by Suzy Lee

Shadows by April Pulley Sayre



Math Activity: Shadow Sizes

Go outside on a sunny day and draw the children’s attention to their shadows. Trace their shadows using chalk and have the children measure them. Children might use rulers, but they might also use blocks or even their own footsteps! Have the children stand in different poses and places and notice how the size of the shadows change.

Alternately, take the children outside every hour or two, have the children stand in the same spots and trace their shadows again with a different color. How are the shadows changing over the course of the day?

Science Activity: Guess The Shadow

Hang a sheet up in the middle of a room. Turn out all the lights. Remove several children and have one of them stand in front of a flashlight or other light. Have the other children guess whose shadow is on the sheet. You could also place a table behind the sheet and have children take turns placing different classroom objects on the table, while the other children guess what the object is.

Music Activity: Dancing Lights

Give the children flashlights and have them lie on the floor. Turn off the lights and have them point their flashlights at the ceiling. Play some music, asking the children to have their lights “dance” on the ceiling to the beat. Play a variety of different kinds of music to allow the children to try out different dances.

These activities (and many more!) can be found in *Daily Preschool Experiences* by Hastings, Clemons, and Montgomery. This book is available in the ECRC Collection of the Springfield City Library and through Interlibrary Loan. Call us or ask your local librarian to reserve it for you!



Did you know the Springfield City Library has a subscription to *The Mailbox* magazine? *The Mailbox* is an idea magazine for teachers featuring tons of lesson plans and arts and crafts. Issues are available at the Central Library, or can be requested through Interlibrary Loan.



Research Notes -

Children learn new things every day, but did you know how important it is for kids to make their OWN discoveries? A recent article discussed two studies that evaluated the difference between direct instruction (telling/showing the children exactly what to do) and allowing the children to discover things on their own. In each study, an adult presented preschool aged children with a new toy. In the direct instruction group, the adult showed the children only one way to use the toy. These children learned how to use the toy in the way the adult had taught them, but they did not discover any other ways the toy could be used. A different group of children was presented with the same toy, but they weren’t given instructions about how it worked. These children figured out many different ways to use the toy, discovering for themselves more than the first group had.

By preschool age, children understand how “teaching” and “teachers” work. When a teacher provides them with direct instruction, they use the information they were given, but they do not discover anything else. They assume that the teacher told them everything! This denies children the opportunity of figuring things out themselves. The act of discovery is important to developing their curiosity and creativity, and enables the children to learn more than they would through direct instruction.

As more and more schools feel the pressure of performing well on standardized tests, this article is cautioning against “teaching” young children too much. Allowing them to explore and develop their own solutions builds valuable skills for their future learning.

To read the article yourself, visit: <http://www.slate.com/id/2288402/>