

Parents as Teachers

Reflections from the Coordinator

PAT Families,

It is an honor to share thoughts and updates with you each month. We consider it a gift and a joy to walk beside you in your parenting journey. Thank you for entrusting us and opening your homes to us. This month I wanted to lift up the importance of celebrating holidays that are important to your family and why they are so important for our children. Throughout childhood, children are seeking the answer to 3 questions, "Am I safe, do I belong, and am I loveable". The conclusions they come to will become the foundation from which they interact with the world and people throughout their lives. When celebrated with intention, holidays present an opportunity to help a child feel connected to their family as well as their broader community and culture fulfilling a need to belong. It is easy in our current world to get caught up in the activities of the holidays and they can become stressful and rushed. I encourage you to take a few minutes this week to sit down and reflect on what holiday traditions were important to you as a child. What stories and values around different holidays have significant meaning to you and your extended family. What traditions would you like to carry on and what might you want to start. Drawing your child into holiday traditions and their significance helps your child to develop a sense that they belong, both to your family and to a larger culture. Ways to include your child could look like letting them help set a table, decorate, or cook part of a family meal. If you eat certain foods each year for a holiday, talk about why. Share whose recipes you use and why they are important to you. Share stories of holidays when you were a child. Read books and sing songs about the holiday together. Find a few ideas that can be repeated each year and then be intentional about repeating them and including your child. The most important part to remember is that your child will soak in the energy of the home. It is important that we create traditions that allow us to feel joyful, calm and present. To do this, we need to keep our expectations manageable. Social media can be a trap that makes us feel that we have to do all the things...you don't, I promise. Create the holiday season that you want for your family, it takes a lot of intention to not get sucked into the chaos. Your parent educator is a great resource to talk through ideas with and to help you set goals to manage your stress.

I wish for you a very enjoyable and present holiday season,

Michelle Kelly

Program Coordinator

Calendar

**No Playgroups
November 24th -
28th**

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Teachers

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DECEMBER PLAYGROUPS

BV PAT is excited to welcome families back to our playroom. In-person playgroups offer many benefits including connecting with other families, new activities for children to explore and children learning to interact with each other.

In order to help facilitate connections between children and families, we run playgroups in 2-4 week sessions. In December, families have the opportunity to sign up for a group that will meet weekly at the same time for 2 weeks. You can choose to sign up for a group with children that are similar age to your child (Baby Play, 1-Year-Olds or 2-Year-Olds) or you can choose our multiage group (birth to 36 months) if you have more than one child under 36 months of age or would like your child to be around children of all ages.

DECEMBER PLAYGROUP SIGN UP WILL BE EMAILED ON NOVEMBER 18TH

Each group will be limited to 10-18 children.

- Only one adult per child may attend. A nanny or grandparent is welcome to bring child in place of parent if necessary.
- No siblings are allowed in the Baby Play, 1-Year-Old or 2-Year-Old playgroups. Siblings under 36 months of age are allowed to attend the multiage playgroups, evening and Saturday playgroups. Non-walking/crawling babies are an exception.
- All adults must show a valid state issued photo ID or passport to enter any BV building. Please plan to bring ID with you every time you come to playgroup or you will not be allowed to attend.
- Strollers and car seats are not allowed in the playroom, please plan to wear or carry your baby while in the playroom when not on the floor playing.
- If a session is full please add your name to the waiting list. Waiting list families will receive priority registration for the next month.
- If you miss two sessions in a row, your spot will be given to the next family on the waiting list.
- Please stay home if you or your child is ill.

December Playgroups

Baby Play for non-walkers (4-12 months) - Tuesdays: 9:15-10am on 12/2, 12/9

Baby Play for non-walkers (4-12 months)– Thursdays: 12:15-1pm on 12/4, 12/11

Playgroup for 1-Year-Olds (12-23 months) - Wednesdays: 10:15-11am on 12/3, 12/10

Playgroup for 1-Year-Olds (12-23 months) - Thursdays: 9:15-10am on 12/4, 12/11

Playgroup for 2-Year-Olds (24-36 months) - Tuesdays: 10:15-11am on 12/2, 12/9

Playgroup for 2-Year-Olds (24-36 months) - Wednesdays: 9:15-10am on 12/3, 12/10

Playgroup for 1's and 2's (0 to 36 months) - Thursdays: 10:15-11am on 12/4, 12/11

Evening Playgroup Wednesday, 12/3 5:30-6:15pm

Introducing our New Administrative Assistant



We would like to welcome our new administrative assistant, Mandi Hjortshoj (pronounced “Yort-soy”). Mandi has worked in the district for 8 years as a Paraprofessional in Elementary & the 18-21 program. She has also taught dance at Blue Valley Recreation for over 16 years. Mandi & her husband, Will have been married for 27 years & together they have 3 children, Charlie (22), Zettie (19) & Annabelle (18). They have lived in Overland Park for over 18 years & have been actively involved in the Blue Valley School District. We are excited for her to join our team.

The Little Gym Playdate



Gym + Blue Valley Parents as Teachers = The Perfect Play Date! 🎉

We’re teaming up with The Little Gym of Leawood for a morning full of movement, giggles, and growth! Come see how they combine purposeful play and learning to help your little one build confidence,

strength, and big smiles.

You’ll get a sneak peek into a real Little Gym class while discovering how their core values align with those of Blue Valley Parents as Teachers — supporting your child every step, crawl, and tumble of the way!

We’ll have two awesome sessions:

Sunday, November 9th

👶 Non-Walkers : [9:00- 9:30](#)

🚶 Walkers: [9:40- 10:10](#) & [10:20- 10:50](#)

****For safety and liability purposes, we ask that children over the age of 4 sign up for a free trial class at another time. We can help set this up for you!****

If your child is **3 or 4**, they’re welcome to attend the walker sessions— we just ask that you keep a close eye on them during class. With all the exciting movement and developing peripheral vision at younger ages, this helps us keep everyone safe and collision-free! 💛

Blue Valley Early Childhood PTA

A note from the PTA Vice President:

Hello PAT families!! My name is Kristen Byers and I currently have a 19 month old who is participating in this incredible program. Last year we received an invitation to join the PTA (yep...same 3 letters in a different order) and it has been such a valuable experience for our family! The assumption is often that the PTA is for the Early Childhood side but nope! The PAT family is included in that fold as well.

Membership to be part of the PTA is \$30 for the entire school year. These dues allow you to access BONUS play groups in the playroom run by parent educators, music classes with music therapist, "Ms Rae" at least a handful of times throughout the school year and MORE! (Ms. Rae is joining us in November so this is a PERFECT time to sign up!) It also helps support our teachers and parent educators throughout the year. (One thing we do is stock their break room with yummy snacks!! What an easy way to say thanks...and who doesn't love snacks?? Your dues make some of that possible.) Participate in one event and you've made your \$30 worth it!

I would like to offer you a personal invitation to come join us. Connect with other caretakers and their littles! (As a full time mama, sometimes this is my adult interaction for the day...I need it!) You can sign up to join us [HERE](#)--your membership dues can be paid via PayPal or personal check. Details available on the website. (Know a family that isn't part of PAT but has a child under the age of 5 and lives in the BV attendance area?? They can join too!!!)

Please send me a note if you have questions about the PTA! I'm here to answer them!

Kristen Byers
parentsasteachersvp@gmail.com

Just A Friendly Reminder...

Due to the daylight hours shortening, we please ask to turn on your porch lights for your Parent Educator during evening home visits. And with winter around the corner, if you would please shovel & salt the sidewalks for them as well.



Tis the Season... Wellness Policy



We try very hard to keep the playroom germ free and safe for all children. Please help us by placing any toys that your child has mouthed in the tub provided so that they can be sanitized. We request that if your child is ill, has had a fever, vomiting or diarrhea within the last **24 hours** or has colored nasal discharge that your refrain from using the playroom that day.

PAT November Food/Supply Drive

As we enter the giving season, please join us in helping others. We are hosting a food/supply drive to support the Blue Valley Hilltop Food Pantry. See the attached flyer for a list of items they are collecting.

If your family could benefit from assistance, please click on the link for more information about the Blue Valley Hilltop pantry. Also, here is a list of other food banks in the area.

<https://www.bluevalleyk12.org/community/foodpantry>

<https://kansasfoodsource.org/category/help-agency/johnson-county/>

Let's Fill the Shelves Together!

SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY

BLUE VALLEY PARENTS AS TEACHERS

FOOD/SUPPLY DRIVE



Food insecurity affects so many in our community, but together, we can help alleviate hunger

We are hosting a food drive to collect essential items for local families and individuals in need. Every donation brings us closer to building a hunger-free future.

What We're Looking For	Where to Donate
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diapers Sizes 5, 6, 7• Pull-Ups any size• Powdered Formula• Baby Wipes• Baby Wash• Safety Proof Items	<p>Drop-off Location Hilltop Learning Center 7700 W 143rd St., OP, KS 66223</p> <p>Collection Dates November 1st - 21st</p> <p>Learn more at https://www.bluevalleyk12.org/community/foodpantry</p>