

K-Prep September in Review

And what's coming up

All the children have really settled into the **routine** of school. The children are familiar now with going to the library, gym, Mrs. LaVia's room for music, and finally the computer lab!

If your child is using a computer at home please encourage him/her to use the mouse. (If you have a laptop you can purchase a mouse to be used with the laptop.) We are focusing on mouse-skills right now in the **computer lab**.

A reminder that the K-Prep students go to the **library** every **Friday**! Please keep your child's library books at home until **Friday**. On **Friday**, send your child to school with his/her library books and plastic bag.

We all enjoyed seeing everyone's **Special Friends** this past Friday. I hope the friends enjoyed seeing a glimpse of our day.

The first **report card** for K-Prep students will not be sent home until January. I do not hold conferences with parents until the end of January. If you have concerns you would like addressed before then please let me know.

The children have had a chance to learn many things about apples! We will be learning all about pumpkins during the month of October.

Beginning October 5th we will be having gym class with Mrs. Engel (PE teacher) and Mrs. Stine's second grade class on the first Wednesday of every month. Be sure to send your child in **gym shoes** on these days (as well as on every Monday).

I'd like to remind everyone that the Halloween Party is for the K-Prep children and the parents who volunteered through the IEPTO to run the party.

As the weather cools we will continue to go outside as much as possible. Please send your child in appropriate clothes for the weather. Also be sure to encourage them to put their jacket on by themselves and try to zip it up! If purchasing a new winter coat be sure it is one they can zip up independently (try to avoid buttons)!

I've attached helpful hints for talking with your preschooler about death. It is not a subject many want to bring up, but it is easier to talk about it before it becomes personal.

The Flip Side

Physical Death: Death of a body: the body stops walking, doesn't eat, doesn't hurt, doesn't poop anymore.

Things to remember:

- Be sure to use the word **dead**. Make sure you do not say "lost" or "past on."
- Make sure the children know the person that died doesn't hurt.
- Make sure they know the following – Death is irreversible, permanent, painless
- Encourage children to ask questions
- Have books about death and be sure to read them already (read them before you need to relate this to your own life)
- Let children participate in closure/help set up ending practices
- Allow children to grieve in their own way
- Share feelings with the child
- Provide support for the child
- Maintain the child's daily routine
- Death can be a celebration
- Remember it is not the age of the child when deciding if the child should attend a funeral service, but rather the relationship between the child and the deceased.
- Describe the person in the coffin as "looks dead, eyes closed, mouth closed, in a box" Do not say, "looks peaceful."
- Answer honestly when asked if you are going to die, "No, I'm not going to die right now."
- Establish memories, "This is the first birthday since your father died."

Children's Understanding of Death:

At all ages, part of the fear of death, for children, is that they will be separated from their parents.

Stage I (ages 2-4)

At this stage children don't believe death is final. It is temporary and reversible. They attempt to equate it with something they know (sleep, parents going on vacation, etc). They are more interested in what death means right now (person is never coming back) rather than how it happened.

Stage II (ages 4-10)

Children at this stage understand that everything that lives will die, although they may or may not apply this to themselves. This is fine and normal. They play many imaginary games like ghost, superheroes, and role play in an attempt to understand death and to deal with their fears. Children will often play dead and pretend to have funerals and other practices.

Stage III (10...)

At this stage, children understand that death is personal, inevitable, universal and final. They may have fears related to this understanding.

Recommended books for children (all ages):

Tough Boris by Mem Fox

Wilfred Gordon MacDonald Partridge by

Mem Fox

Sophie by Mem Fox

You Hold Me and I'll Hold You by Jo Carson

The Very Best of Friends by Margaret Wild

Old Pig by Margaret Will

Go Tell Aunt Rhody by Alike

Everett Anderson's Goodbye by Lucille Clifton

Nana Upstairs and Nana Downstairs by Tomie dePaola

Yonder by Tony Johnston

Miss Tizzy by Libba Moore Gray

Remember Me by Margaret Will