



# Handprints



Greetings Co-op Families,

Welcome to our new home! We have our roots in a small group of parents whose goal was to offer their children opportunities to socialize and play in a safe and nurturing environment. More than forty years later we have not swayed from that mission. While we have expanded our learning opportunities and changed locations, we have always stayed true to our focus and purpose of allowing children to be children realizing that “play is the work of childhood” (Mister Rogers).

Thank you all for attending orientation. It was such a pleasure to meet so many of our members. I hope you will find joy working in your child's classroom. Laugh with your co-assisting parents when you dump that tray of glitter on the floor during clean up and beam with pride the first time your child confidently walks into the classroom door no longer clinging to your leg. (Don't worry new preschool parents, it will happen!)

As a member of the co-op you are an equal owner of the preschool with the other families enrolled for this school year. Your comments, suggestions, and efforts in your committee assignment will strengthen your child's preschool. As you are easing into your preschool routine, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your session representative, a board member or me. We are all here to help and support each other.

We are a community of families brought together in the best interest of our children, much like the families who came together in 1972 to form our founding class.

Our General Membership meeting is **October 1 at 7:00 PM**. This meeting is mandatory – at least one parent must attend and no children please. This is the business meeting we have with our members annually; you will also learn how our kids learn through play. I have had so much fun at the past few year's meetings. It just amazes me to watch and learn in those meetings!

Looking forward to seeing all of you on October 1<sup>st</sup>,  
Shasta Grifka

2014-2015 President

September 2014

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## “Don’t Leave Me”!

**Welcome to preschool!** For the first newsletter, we traditionally re-print a “start of school” newsletter article that Janie Brooks and Courtney Aldrich wrote a few years ago, but continues to be relevant. The article addresses separation anxiety – that phenomenon that breaks moms’ hearts, comes and goes without warning, and keeps the teacher from becoming too complacent. Even if the topic doesn’t apply to your child now, some of these ideas are very useful. You’ll want to file this away for future reference! - Claire

### *“Don’t Leave Me!”*

*Courtney Aldrich and Janie Brooks*

*Well . . . here’s the play . . . a comedy, I think. I’ll set the stage . . . There you are, standing confidently at the brink of freedom, that illusive gateway separating your child’s school from two and a half hours of blissful, uninterrupted, solitary grocery shopping. Fortified and strengthened by a momentary glance toward the childless world beyond the classroom door, you assume a staunch, rigid, and unrelenting position, bracing your legs and arms as you prepare for eminent combat with a worthy opponent; an opponent determined to undermine your escape. Your enemy . . . a twenty-eight pound miniature three year old war machine, programmed to utilize every conceivable line of defense in order to win the Battle of Wills. He’ll stop at nothing. No tactic is beneath him. His power unyielding. He won’t let you leave. It’s his mission. Negotiating skills have failed you as have your efforts at persuasion. Even bribery and trickery aren’t working. You beg and plead but to no avail. (It’s hard to imagine that this is the same pint sized kid who triumphantly marched into your bedroom with a pre-dawn proclamation announcing that he had successfully made “poo-poo” in the toilet. He dragged you from your comfy bed and insisted that you come take a look. All this before you and your spouse had a chance to coat your sensitive stomachs with morning coffee. Is this really the same individual who sat quietly and cheerfully at the breakfast table methodically spooning Cheerios into his smiling face while singing Barney’s favorite, “I Love You, You Love Me” song? Na . . . couldn’t be.) Back to the scene . . . Perhaps there’s a chance that you could secretly retreat and escape without being noticed. The school’s loaded with pleasant distractions: toys, lovable classmates, a science table, plenty of purple play dough, and a resourceful teacher who, for reasons beyond me, always appears stuck in “Jollyland”. Now’s your chance . . . just quietly sneak away. This just might work.*

*Then suddenly, from across the room you hear daunting screams and freeze as you helplessly watch this kamikaze soldier charge toward you and latch on to your vulnerable leg. At this point, you’re wondering if Target will stand behind the manufacturer’s guarantee promising a ruggedly constructed durable zipper. You’re positive that at any moment your zipper will give way, your pants will come crashing down (settling around your ankles) and reveal, to the captivated wide-eyed audience, mesmerized by this saga, the naked truth and white flag of surrender.*

Sound somewhat familiar? . . . I encourage you to read on.

Children’s separation anxiety is no laughing matter. In fact, it is serious business. It needs to be addressed promptly, compassionately, firmly, and consistently. Some children have a more difficult time separating than others, or some may have been fine last year and are now having difficulties this year. All of these anxieties are normal, common and understandable. Children can be so torn between wanting to be independent and explore and wanting to be safe with home and family. I remember being confused when my own daughter started having separation anxiety in January of her Kindergarten year, after two “anxiety-free” years of preschool and a smooth transition to Kindergarten. It helps to know that this is a developmental stage, and is largely based upon a child’s personality and temperament. As stressful as it can be on you as a parent, don’t fret, the separation issues do not mean that your child is not ready for preschool. In fact, preschool might just be the perfect setting to work through some of those anxieties!

Just so you know what to expect, children having adjustment problems may exhibit the following behaviors:

- Revert to earlier stages of development such as thumb sucking or bedwetting
- Cry about going to school or not wanting to stay without a parent
- Become more physically aggressive
- Withdraw from people or situations
- Complain about school, classmates, or teachers
- Become defiant and argumentative
- Attempt to manipulate and control parents by whining, pleading, and generally tugging on their “emotional apron strings”.

What follows are some helpful ideas and suggestions for parents who are faced with children who do not want them to leave:

- As a parent, analyze your own feelings about leaving your child. Children pick up on parents’ insecurities quickly.
- Talk to your child about what to expect. Some children may automatically resist something they do not understand, so talk about going to preschool, what they will do there, who will be there, etc.
- Find out who the assist parents are for that day, so your child knows which adults will be staying in the classroom with the teacher.
- Talk to school personnel to discern whether there is something particularly disturbing or frightening to your child at school. Work as a team to develop realistic objectives.
- If necessary, the separation can be gradual. There is no hard and fast rule that says you must leave after gathering time and come back after recess. If the separation is particularly difficult, work with your child on a plan where you will leave just for short periods of time to run an “errand”, gradually building up the amount of time you are gone (for example, leave just during snack on one day, during snack and story time the next, from free play through story time the next, and so on).
- Make sure to tell your child you are leaving. Sneaking in and out will only cause more anxiety for your child and teach her not to trust you or take her eyes off of you the next time.
- Tell your child in specific, concrete terms when you will be back and be prompt. It is easier for the child to understand that you will be back during story time (concrete) than “in two hours” or “after school” (abstract).
- Establish a ritual for saying goodbye and stick to it (for example, hug – kiss – hug and then leave). If you prolong the goodbye, or let your child see that you are wavering, your child will sense your vulnerability and become more persistent about not letting you go easily.
- Let your child bring a “lovey” or something special from home to school.
- Promise your child that you will phone the preschool later in the day to check in and see how he or she is doing (and follow through).
- Plan a special treat together following school.
- Help your child establish friendships by inviting individual children to your house to play.
- If the problem persists, consider setting up a reward system for smooth goodbyes such as a marble jar or sticker chart which when filled lead to special time with Mom or Dad.
- Encourage your child to express her concerns verbally as well as artistically. Use storybooks, such as Owl Babies, or The Kissing Hand to help your child work through his or her anxieties.

Probably the most important piece of advice is this . . . Once you’ve made the decision to leave, do it. The directions are easy. Tell your child goodbye, give her a hug, turn around, walk away and don’t look back. Implementing it could prove to be a bit harder. The tears, screams, and fussing resonating in your ears will most likely subside in a few minutes under the proper guidance of a sensitive caregiver. If your child’s actions and behaviors were successful in delaying your departure, she won’t hesitate to us

precisely the same tactics next time. Most of all, be consistent and be patient. This is normal preschool behavior, and is not anything you or your child should be embarrassed about, angry about, or ashamed of -- in fact, learning how to handle these transitions is one of the things preschool is all about!

(Source: T. B. Brazelton, Touchpoints, The Essential Reference – 1992)



## Publicity Notes

**\*Privacy** – Class rosters will be distributed soon. *Please* note who may not have his/her picture taken. Be respectful and mindful, especially before posting images to social media sites.

**Pictures** – Our website and other publicity materials need updated photos! Grab your camera, catch our kids in action\*, and send to [webbercouple@yahoo.com](mailto:webbercouple@yahoo.com). Have pictures from last year or Co-op summer activities? Please email them to the address above. Thank you!

**Facebook** – Did you know the Coop has a Facebook page? Join the Chelsea Children's Co-op Preschool on Facebook to stay in touch with the latest news and events.  
Friend “Misty N Pinecone” to be added to our group!

**Share on Social Media** – Please share information about events, fundraisers, and the great experiences your child(ren) are having at the Co-op on your social media pages.  
Our best publicity is by word-of-mouth!

**Co-op T-Shirts** – Order forms for t-shirts will be in your mailbox and on the website soon!

**Website** – Need information? Have questions?

Want to learn about the school’s philosophy, curriculum or history?  
*Curious to find out your teacher’s birthday, favorite color or favorite food?*

Visit our website!

[chelseacoop.org](http://chelseacoop.org)



## Ways and Means Welcome

Welcome aboard from your Ways and Means co-chairs! First, we want to quickly introduce you to our fundraising vision for the 2014-2015 school year.

### Our goals:

We're aiming for 4-5 community-wide fundraising events. We feel it is important that our events impact the greater community in a positive way. We also understand that the higher our profile in the community is, the more money we raise. We need to raise at least \$5,000 by the end of the school year, equaling roughly \$100 per family student.

### Communication to our membership:

We aim to communicate the details of each fundraising event clearly and with as much advance notice as possible so that you can do your part: contribute when you can, and publicize our fundraisers to the greater community. We're in this together!

Starting this year we have a dedicated Ways and Means bulletin board at the preschool. It is located outside the 3s and 4s classroom. You will be able to access order forms, information about upcoming fundraisers and view the fundraising thermometer tracking our progress. There will also be a dedicated Ways and Means mailbox in the 3s and 4s mailroom where you will leave completed order forms.

Over the past weeks we've gotten some great fundraiser suggestions from members. Please let us know if you have any ideas or, as the year progresses, suggestions for how we can improve. We're so excited to get started and to collaborate with you to reach our fundraising goals!

Tess can be reached at [tess74@gmail.com](mailto:tess74@gmail.com) and Jaime can be reached at [jaime\\_nicholson@yahoo.com](mailto:jaime_nicholson@yahoo.com).

## Fall Cheesecake Orders

It's delicious. It's easy. It starts October 1<sup>st</sup>. The cheesecakes are from the Cheesecake Shoppe in metro Detroit. They were voted #1 by the Detroit News in 2014. These cheesecakes are all natural and it's a great company that does tons of school fundraising!

Order forms will be available from October 1st through November 3rd. You will have four weeks to get the word out (and to get your order forms in).

Order forms will be available starting at the General Membership meeting (GMM) on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Forms will also be at the preschool on the Ways and Means bulletin board. We will have cheesecake samples at the GMM so that you can taste what you're ordering.

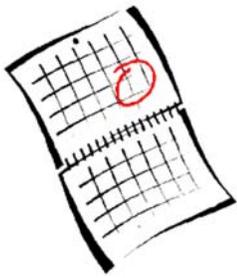
Please note:

- Completed order forms can be dropped off in the Ways and Means mailbox.
- The cheesecakes will be delivered the week before Thanksgiving.
- The cheesecakes can be frozen for up to two months and thaw very well.
- The preschool makes a \$5 profit on each cheesecake sold. That really adds up!

Thanks again and see you soon--please don't hesitate to contact us!

Tess Eastment and Jamie Nicholson - *Ways and Means Co-Chairs*





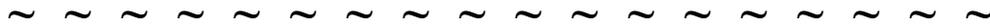
## Dates to Remember

*General Membership Meeting*  
 Wednesday, October 1<sup>st</sup>  
 Beach Middle School Cafeteria  
 7:00pm

This is a mandatory meeting - one adult per family should attend.

Please do not bring children, with the exception of infants.

Learn about the preschool' philosophy, meet your board members, and build connections with other families who will be walking alongside you on this journey!



### *The Parent Education Series*

Presented by the Chelsea School District in partnership with the Chelsea First United Methodist Church.

October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 3:00pm

“Parenting Your Own Personal Sitcom”

Wendy Shepherd

November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 3:00pm

“My Child Has Been Diagnosed With a Disability – Now What?”

Lisa Nickel, Vicki Kellogg, Diana Salazar, & Kristin Krarup-Joyce

February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at 3:00pm

“Minutes Matter: Preventing Drug and Alcohol Abuse with Your Kids”

Reiley Curran

March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at 3:00pm

“Parent Talk: Words that Empower, Words that Wound”

Chick Moorman

**Where:** Chelsea First United Methodist Church, 128 Park Street

**Cost:** FREE!

**Childcare:** Yes! Just register by visiting [chelseaumc.org](http://chelseaumc.org) and pick *adults/special events*

Chelsea Children's  
 Cooperative Preschool

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PLAY. LEARN. GROW.

*At Chelsea Children's Cooperative Preschool, we believe it our responsibility to provide multifaceted opportunities for preschoolers to explore, experiment, and grow in a safe, nurturing, and age appropriate arena. Valuing the family as a unit as well as the individuality and worth of each of its members is our philosophy and practical approach to preschool education.*