



# Handprints



## Happy 2016!

I hope everyone had a great first half of the school year last year and has had an amazing start to the 2016 New Year. The first half of the school year went well, with lots of good times had by all. In 2016 we will have a lot of grand events for everyone to participate, family and friends.

Our first big event is the **Fun Run** fundraiser on **Sunday, January 30** from 3:30 – 5:00pm! This is our first year for the Fun Run and, if we have good turn out, we may continue the tradition.

Coming in early **March** is our annual **Art Show/Musical and Auction Fundraiser**. This event will feature our kids' artwork from the school year and a special performance by the whole school. Following the performance is the **Auction**, our biggest fundraiser of the year. Friends and family are all welcome to come watch the show and enjoy the fun of bidding on items to help raise money for the school and our kids' education.

It is time to start looking toward the **2016-2017 school year**. As a member of the Co-op you will have an opportunity to enroll your child for next year before we open it up to the public. **Early Enrollment** will take place **Tuesday, February 16, 8:30am**. The Membership Chair, Amanda MacDonald, will distribute applications for next year.

Our **Open House** for new families will be **Thursday, March 3 at 6:00pm**. We will be accepting new applications at that time. Please spread the word to friends with preschool age children. Our amazing staff will be on hand to answer parent questions and to share our wonderful preschool

As part of preparing for next year, we will also be choosing our **2016-2017 Executive Board Members**. We will have a weeklong nomination period in which you may nominate yourself or any Co-op member to any position. Although this is only my first year on the Executive Board and I will not be back next year, it has been a rewarding experience. I have taken great pleasure getting to know everyone on the board and making new friends, becoming intimately familiar with how the co-op runs, and developing a new appreciation for the co-op and everything it has done for my child. Please consider nominating yourself or someone who you think would be a wonderful addition to the board.

## March 2016

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Have a great second half of the year, everyone!!

Best,

Brenda Fineman

President 2015-2016

## **Come On Over for Gathering Time!**

As we enter the full swing of winter, I'd like to share with you why we consider Gathering Time invaluable to our preschool curriculum. It would be easy for an adult observer to miss what children are actually learning while gathered at the carpet. This is because learning at preschool looks and sounds different than learning in grade school. There is quite a lot happening behind those smiling faces and silly songs. At preschool, our objective is to encourage children to grow in four main areas\*: physical, emotional, social, and intellectual. While our program is designed to focus on these objectives in various ways throughout the day, each objective is incorporated into Gathering Time. Read below to find out how!

### Intellectual

Children participate in early literacy activities during Gathering Time. Early literacy is defined as a child's early experiences in reading and writing embedded in a larger system of oral education (Roskos). Basically, the steps to reading and writing begin with speaking and listening. At Gathering Time, children listen to and recite songs, poems, and rhymes that highlight letter and word sounds. It is so fun to watch children play with sounds, syllables, and words while knowing they are beginning to find the joy of language. At Gathering Time, children also practice sequencing (calendar patterns) and use positional vocabulary (beginning, middle, end, first, last). Children read the calendar from left to right, top to bottom, as they will someday read print.

### Physical

Early literacy has a physical component as well. During finger plays, children practice small muscle control in their hands as they individually move fingers. This develops the dexterity required to hold a pencil and type. Some songs require large movements, where children coordinate both sides of their body and cross the midline (the imaginary line that runs down the center of your body). This develops connections between both sides of the brain, leading to the ability to read across the page of a book (Gillespie). I notice lots of growth in this area as children progress through preschool. Fine- and gross-motor skills develop exponentially during these years, preparing their bodies for future learning.

### Emotional

The structure of gathering time provides an opportunity for children to emotionally prepare for their best possible day at preschool. Watching the art demo, learning about the table top activities, and reviewing the schedule encourages planning while allowing freedom of choice. On the rare occasion when a child misses Gathering Time, quite often they can be seen wandering aimlessly or feeling panicked, as if they don't know what to do or they may miss something important. While I know missing Gathering Time is unavoidable sometimes, the effect does illustrate the importance of providing a reliable, predictable start to the preschool day. This consistency generates a familiar, comfortable environment in which children can explore and discover.

## Social

As you often hear, an important component to a cooperative preschool is involvement from parents. Children watch their parents or other adults enjoy Gathering Time. From the rocking chair, often I notice children look to their parents when we are learning a new song, when they are asked to come up to help with the calendar, or there is a change in schedule. They find reassurance in your presence, and they find joy in your enjoyment. And best of all, you learn our fun songs and can sing them with your child outside of preschool! Gathering Time is a chance for teachers, children, parents, and other loved ones to join together as a community. It is an opportunity to be connected as a class by sharing an experience together.

Now that we've covered why Gathering Time is so important, let's take a look at your role:

- Where to sit?

If you're able to stay for gathering time, try to sit on the carpet near your child. Often children will sit in their parent's lap. However, if your child ends up in another area, stick around anyway. They will know you are there enjoying gathering time with them.

- Guidance

On occasion, children can become fidgety, talkative, or even physical while on the carpet. Appropriate carpet behavior, such as listening, participating, and ignoring distractions, are part of what we are learning at preschool. If a child needs redirection or behavioral guidance during gathering time, we do our best to honor the different dynamics of each family. It is OK to let the teacher or teacher's aide handle the situation. It is OK for you to redirect your child individually. Feel free to send us an S.O.S. if you've tried to intervene and need some help. Whatever works best for you and your child is what works best for us.

- Siblings

We love having siblings visit during gathering time. Often younger siblings enjoy gathering time as much as the preschoolers! They are welcome to join us at the carpet or play quietly in the classroom. Don't fret if they call out or distract other children a bit. It's all part of the cooperative preschool gathering atmosphere. If things get out of hand, such as screaming or major distractions, feel free to jump in to rescue your little one.

- To sing or not to sing?

Your child doesn't care if you think you can't sing. Trust me! They aren't concerned with how you sound. We all enjoy a Gathering Time full of fun, laughter, and participation! So jump on in!

As always, don't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions. I am very happy to talk about our program or why we do the wonderful things we do. As our parents, you are what make our preschool exceptional. So come on over for Gathering Time to sing some silly songs and engage in meaningful preschool learning! I'll see you there!

Claire

\*To learn more about our Lesson Objectives, check out the bulletin board above the mailboxes.

Gillespie, Linda. "Why Hurry? Respecting Development and Learning" www.naeyc.org

## Fun Run Fundraiser

**When:** January 30th from 3:30-5 pm

**Where:** At the Washington Street Education Center gymnasium

**What:** Preschoolers (also open to siblings 2nd grade and below for a \$10 fee) will run for 15 minutes around a course in the gym. They will collect pledges for completing the run. We will have two shifts depending on age/class. Following the run will be activities set up by Jeremy Hodges (who runs the awesome Itty-bitty sports in Chelsea) for the kids to have some fun!

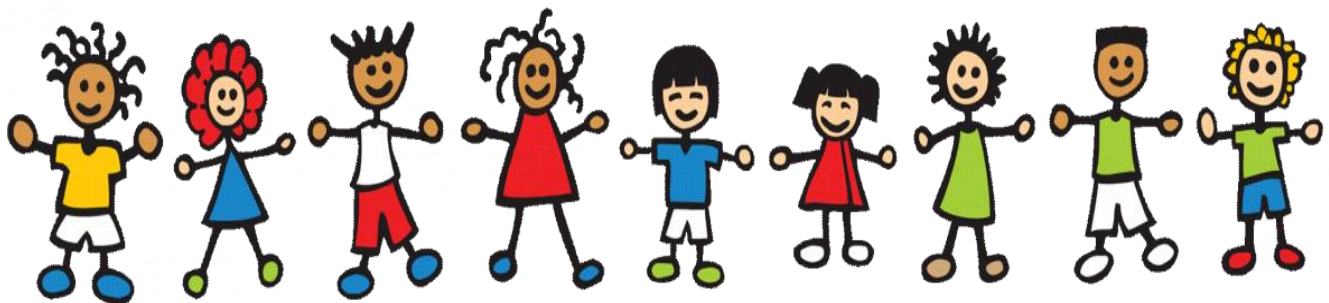
You will have from today until Jan 30th to collect your pledges. I have attached a form and I will have copies at the preschool after the pm class tomorrow if that is easier. You may collect payments in the form of cash, check or online at <https://www.gofundme.com/ChelseaFunRun15>. All checks should be made out to Chelsea Children's Cooperative Preschool Please keep track of all donations on your form. There will be a sign up sheet outside of the 3/4 classroom for siblings 2nd grade and under that would like to participate. It is a \$10 fee due the day of the run. We plan to make this a really fun experience for the kids so please help us to get them pumped up for the run! The activities after will be perfect for getting out your kids extra energy this winter. Please make your goal to raise at least \$35 per co-op preschooler.

## Silent Auction Donation All-Call

Our annual silent auction will be after the Co-Op Music show on March 8<sup>th</sup>!

Last year we auctioned well over 100 items and raised the bulk of our funds at the silent auction. We have begun soliciting for donations—anything from guitar lessons to Disney day-passes. If you have a service, gift certificate, or corporate donation you'd like to make please contact Katie Wyss at [auction@chelseacoop.org](mailto:auction@chelseacoop.org) by **February 15<sup>th</sup>**. Given the Co-op's 501(c)(3) status, all donations are tax deductible, Katie can provide a letter with our Employer Identification Number.

Thanks again for your support!



## Early Enrollment

On Tuesday, February 16th, starting at 8:30am, Early Enrollment for the 2016/2017 school year will be open to any *current or past* Co-op member families. Early enrollment will take place at school just outside the Young 5's classroom. Co-op President, Brenda Fineman, and Membership Chair, Amanda MacDonald, will stay until the line is gone. If you cannot attend on February 16<sup>th</sup>, we will continue taking enrollments from any past or current members before we open to the public at our open house on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please plan to enroll as early as possible to take advantage of your Co-op member priority.

Applications will be available at the Co-op and on the website soon. You will need to provide a \$35.00 non-refundable registration fee (add \$5.00 non-refundable registration fee for each additional child) with your application. Please make sure your application is *complete* to avoid questions and delays. We cannot accept applications prior to early enrollment.

**We accept members on a first come/first serve basis.** In order to help families that may struggle to be at early enrollment, we are allowing each family to submit an application for ONE additional family. If a session is full, your child can be placed on a waiting list for the first available opening; available slots in the sessions do fill up quickly. If you do not register at early enrollment, mailing or delivering the completed application and registration fee as soon as possible will help in securing a spot for your child. Mailed applications will be considered "received" based on the postage-date.

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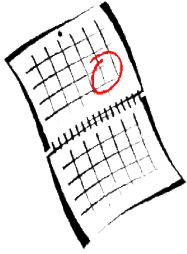
## Open House

Enrollment will open to the public at our Open House which will take place on Thursday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> from 6:00-7:00pm. This will be in parallel to the Community Education's Open House so that families can experience both schools and be informed of each school's philosophy.

Please spread the word to your local friends and family about our Open House and enrollment. If you know anyone who may be interested in enrolling, please have them contact Amanda MacDonald, call the Co-op at 433-1938 or visit the website.

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## Don't miss...



**No school February 12-15 – Great Americans Weekend**

**What:** *Early Open Enrollment (Current/Past Co-Op Members)*

**Where:** Outside the Young 5's Classroom

**Date:** February 16th

**Time:** 8:30am

**What:** *The Chelsea Children's Cooperative Preschool Open House (Enrollment to Public Open)*

**Where:** Washington Street Education Center

**Date:** March 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Time:** 6:00-7:00pm

**What:** *The Chelsea Children's Cooperative Preschool Art Show, Musical and Fundraiser!*

**Where:** Chelsea First United Methodist Church

**Date:** March 8<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 6:00-7:30 pm with musical performance at 6:00pm. The silent auction will follow directly after the performance. Artwork will be hung for your enjoyment. Please invite your family and friends!



**PICUTRE DAY will be March 24<sup>th</sup>**



*The following classroom donations are appreciated!*

Paper Towel

Facial Tissue

Lysol or Clorox Wipes

Baby Wipes

Swiffer Wetmop Refills

Dixie Cups (9 oz.)

Napkins

Chelsea Children's  
Cooperative Preschool

PO Box 391

Chelsea, MI 48118

Phone: (734) 433-1938

Email: [info@chelseacoop.org](mailto:info@chelseacoop.org)

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

**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.*