



S.E.E.K. Early Learning Center

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Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! This month your child will focus on "Under the Sea" life, the color blue and letters F, D, O and M. We welcome volunteers to share a story, help teachers prep lessons, or be involved in group activities. Please contact your teachers for more information.

Cool Weather is Here

Classes will continue to play and learn outside. Please send a change of clothes that is appropriate for the season and label all jackets, hats, gloves, scarves etc. with his/her name. We are looking forward to enjoying the beautiful weather!

a free day of childcare. The reviews show our teachers how proud you are of them and their impact on your little ones. Let us know after you've shared your experience on our [Yelp](#) page and we will credit you with ONE FREE DAY of childcare (Limit one per child, please).

Friendly Reminders

- The ELC is open 7am-7pm, teachers are not permitted to accept students outside of these hours.
- Please send refillable water bottles to school with your child. Label these items with your child's name.
- Please send a change of clothes appropriate to the season labeled with your child's name.
- Please do not open the ELC's front door for anyone you are unfamiliar with during drop-off and pick-up.

A Peek into the Infant Room



With engaging sounds and colors, the infants were stimulating their early mental development while building strong legs and balance.

A Peek into the Toddler Room



Ready, aim, blow! The toddlers raced to see whose pom pom moved faster and some children used tongs to pick up pom poms. The toddlers also created a large classroom mural and added vibrant colors.

A Peek into the Preschool Room

Important Dates

Jan. 18th	ELC Closed: Teacher In- Service
Feb. 12th 3:00pm- 4:00pm	Valentine's Day Party
Feb. 15th - 19th	Spirit Week and Parent Teacher Conferences
Feb. 8th - 10th	Vision and Hearing Test
Mar. 15th	Family Appreciation Night
Mar. 25th	ELC Closed: Teacher In- Service
May 6th	Mother's Day Tea
May 26th	Preschool Graduation
May 30th	ELC Closed: Memorial Day



During center time, the preschool class explored the science center.

Need Drop-In Care?

We need to be notified at least 24 hours in advance of any "drop-in" as our enrollment is now at capacity. If needed, please complete the drop-in form and leave it at Kelsie's desk. You can also email it to [Sara Van Winkle](#). We will then determine if we have the staff and/or space for an additional student to attend.

Drop-in/unscheduled services are available on a first come, first served basis. Payment is due at drop off or the credit card on file will be charged accordingly. Your child will not be permitted to attend class without advance payment in full. An additional \$2 fee will be charged for all drop-ins.

Thank you in advance for adhering to this policy.

Taking a Vacation?

Each family who attends S.E.E.K. will receive 10 days of credit for vacation per year, August 1st to July 31st. The credit of \$20 for half day and \$35 for full and extended day

Five Essentials to Meaningful Play

By Marcia L. Nell and Walter F. Drew

children will be applied to the following month's invoice. Please note: credits for vacation days are per child, not per family. Any credits not used by July 31st of each year will expire. Please give a two weeks notice by submitting a Vacation Request form to the Director. Please contact [Margaret Irwin](#) with questions.

Scholastic Books



The S.E.E.K. Early Learning Center has an account with Scholastic Books. If you would like to order books for your own library, as gifts, or if your client's would like to order books, just visit the Scholastic website. Once you create an account, put in the code **MBJRR**. All of your purchases will be linked to the S.E.E.K. Early Learning Center and our teachers will earn books for their classroom libraries. For more information, please contact [Sara Van Winkle](#).

Things to do in January:

- 1st - 17th: Cinderella Show at the Great Arizona Puppet Theater

Here are five elements essential to meaningful play that create those rich memories we treasure:

1. Children make their own decisions.

When children choose how to play for themselves, they experience freedom in making those choices. They also begin to see connections between choice and the consequences or results of that choice. The type of toys or materials parents offer can help their children make more meaningful decisions. Open-ended materials can be used in many ways so children can decide for themselves how to use them. For example, a child can imagine a block to be a fire truck or any number of things. A toy fire truck, on the other hand, is usually used as a fire truck. Foam pieces, little wooden sticks, ribbon scraps, and other reusable resources are all open-ended materials that inspire creative thinking and delight when children use them to make something no one has ever made before.

2. Children are intrinsically motivated.

The impulse to play comes from a natural desire to understand the world. This play impulse is as strong as your child's desire for food or sleep. It is this intrinsic motivation that allows a child to regulate her own feelings and desires in order to keep playing. Because children eventually find it more important to be part of play with their friends than to satisfy their own wants and needs at that moment, children learn self-control. And self-control has been shown to lead to success in later years, especially in today's information age, where distractions are part of daily life.

3. Children become immersed in the moment.

In true play, children are so fully engaged that they lose awareness of their surroundings, time, and space. In this risk-free atmosphere where

- 1st - 10th: Dinosaurs in Motion at the Arizona Science Center
- 1st - 17th: Cinderella Show at the Great Arizona Puppet Theater
- 9th: Uptown Farmers Market Neighborhood Chef Series Phoenix - Southeast corner of Central Ave and Bethany Home Rd
- 13th: Disney on Ice presents Frozen at Talking Stick Resort
- 15th - 17th: 23rd Annual Big Maricopa County Home & Garden Show - Arizona State Fairgrounds
- 21st: Songs for our Heroes Concert Series Phoenix, Steele Indian School Park
- Dog's Day in the Garden - Desert Botanical Garden
- 29th - 31st: 7th Annual Ikebana Exhibit - Japanese Friendship Garden of Phoenix

reality is suspended, children have the security and safety they need to experiment, try new ideas, and investigate the laws of nature. Although they are immersed in their play, children still can recognize reality versus fantasy, something parents often wonder about.

4. Play is spontaneous, not scripted.

Often, play is totally unplanned. Other times, play is planned but a child impulsively makes a change. One child changes his mind, or perhaps a toy does not cooperate. This sense of the unknown provides children with opportunities to develop flexibility in their thinking and decision making, which is a vital life skill.

5. Play is enjoyable.

Play always has an emotional response attached to it. Without this emotional connection, the experience is simply an activity; it is not PLAY. Enjoyment is the direct result of engaging in play. It is FUN! These five essential elements of play outline why play provides your child with a rich experience. And isn't that what we want for our children, to develop play memories that will become the "good old days"?

Big Jobs at Home

Young children love to help out, but many times we don't let them. Why? Because we think it's easier-and faster-to do everyday jobs ourselves. Your child might take 15 minutes to finish a job you can do in one minute. But in 15 minutes your child can learn a lot!

Big Jobs are indoor and outdoor jobs children do with their families (or others) that help the whole family. They include tasks like setting the table, planting flowers, and tidying up when

Asian Chicken Noodle Salad

This pasta salad is chock full of crunchy vegetables, chunks of chicken and slippery noodles to slurp. It's quick to make and fun for the kids.

- 4 oz. cooked whole-wheat linguine or spaghetti and rinsed in cold water
- 1 cooked chicken breast, shredded
- 1 carrot, peeled and sliced into long matchsticks
- 1 red bell pepper, seeds and core removed, sliced into thin matchsticks
- 1/2 cup sliced sugar snap peas
- 1/4 cup bottled sesame ginger salad dressing

Combine the ingredients in a large bowl, tossing well to combine. Pack with fruit and milk to complete the meal.

Makes 2-4 servings, depending on age and appetite.

Extras: Try soba or udon noodles in place of the whole-wheat pasta. Add sliced green onions, minced cilantro and a squeeze of fresh lime juice for adventurous eaters.

visitors are coming. To adults they might seem like simple tasks, but Big Jobs carry big rewards-for your child and your entire family.

How are Big Jobs different from chores?

You assign chores. Children volunteer to do Big Jobs because they want to help out. Also, Big Jobs are done together with other family members. Teamwork is an important part of doing Big Jobs.

What do children learn from doing Big Jobs?

They learn to:

- work with other people
- solve problems
- compromise
- contribute to their family

What are some Big Jobs young children can do?

- Cooking and baking-washing and peeling vegetables, stirring muffin batter, tearing lettuce leaves to make salad.
- Gardening-digging holes, planting seeds, raking leaves, weeding, watering plants indoors and outdoors.
- Doing laundry-carrying the laundry basket, sorting, folding, delivering clean clothes to each family member's room.
- Caring for pets-feeding, brushing, walking, cleaning the cage or aquarium.
- Cleaning-rinsing dishes, dusting, emptying wastebaskets.

Tips for doing Big Jobs at home

- Keep your child safe. Show your child how to safely use equipment like a rake or a vegetable peeler. Stay close by when it is

Kids can: Measure the ingredients, toss the salad.

S.E.E.K Early Learning Center Happily Accepts Donations!

- Pants
- Shoes
- Toys
- And, even play dough!

his turn.

- Try to find child-size tools. They make jobs easier and safer.
- Have fun. Remember, your child chose to help out. Keep it enjoyable and she will want to do Big Jobs all the time.
- Talk while you work together. Chat about what you are doing and whatever else your child wants to discuss.
- Show your appreciation for the work family members have done. Say, "Thanks for setting the table, everyone. We are ready for dinner now, and the table looks beautiful."

Source: Adapted from the Message in a Backpack for N.P. Jones, 2007, "Big Jobs," Teaching Young Children 1 (1): 10-12.

ABCs of Water Safety

- A** - Never leave any child alone around any body of water
- B** - **Adult Supervision** - Always designate a water watcher to make sure everyone in the water is safe
- C** - **Barriers to Water** - Maintain barriers around all bodies of water
 - Keep pool gates and house doors securely closed
 - Enroll all family members in swimming lessons

-Learn CPR as a family