

Cognitive Development

Children will use or make a prop to represent an object.

Every day the children are actively engaged in this kind of activity. The choices range from using small manipulatives like trios and the magnetic blocks to create a variety of tools to be used in pretend play to using the small cubes as ingredients in a cooking exercise. They understand that these things are not the actual objects, but rather symbolic items. They pay close attention to the details included in this work and work to refine the construction over time.

Social Emotional Development

Children will describe emotions and feelings to trusted adults and peers. During December we spent time explicitly addressing this skill. The introduction of the Mood Meter as a tool is a central piece of this work. The children are invited to place their name in the quadrant which reflects how they feel upon arrival in the classroom. We also use the meter during the morning to help children identify and express how their feelings change during the course of activities. Developing a broad vocabulary as well as an understanding of the nuanced differences between being angry or frustrated or happy or calm are goals for all children.

Physical Development

Children will use smaller objects with precision. The use of small manipulatives is one way the children have the opportunity to refine this type of skill. The materials require them to position pieces with accuracy and apply specific kinds of pressure in order to attach them. The variety of colors and shapes within the materials provide moments of design decision and the deliberate placement of certain colors or shapes calls for precise control.

Early Language, Communication and Literacy

Children will initiate, maintain and end conversations by repeating what the other person says and/or by asking questions. These kinds of conversations happen in many settings. Certainly while the children are playing together they are sharing ideas and responding to the ideas of others. During snack time we work to develop conversations that follow a theme and engage all of those at the table. Our class discussions during group times are another example of these conversations.

Upcoming Events

Welcome to 2018 at PVCC. We hope that you all had a wonderful holiday and are happy to be back at school. Here's hoping for a healthy and happy year!

We are going to be starting the year with two main foci. We are going to be continuing our work around emotional expression. We will be spending one group discussion time each week exploring emotions, ways to express them effectively, strategies for managing difficult moments. Our goal is to help the children develop strong self-regulatory skills, a deeper understanding of how their own feelings affect their ability to work effectively at school and a compassionate awareness of the feelings of others. These are complex concepts and indeed lifelong work. The increased use of the Mood Meter will be a part of this effort.

The second topic we will be exploring is winter. The intensity of this year's winter season is providing a wealth of opportunity for learning. Our whole class trip to the river was a wonderful opportunity to see firsthand the effect of this extreme cold and the remarkable scenes it has created. The children's sense of wonder was certainly visible as we saw how high the frozen river had spread, marveled at the ducks in the water and examined the patterns the flowing river created among the frozen sections. We will experiment with melting and freezing, observe what animals do in the winter, discuss what people do to keep warm and what happens to the plants in the winter.

Reminder that there is no school on Monday January 15.

The PVCC night at Flatbread Pizza is Tuesday January 30. Please join us for a fun night and bring friends and family.

As always if you have any questions or concerns please let me know.