

July 2, 2015

Dear families

The 2014-2015 year has been an exciting year with children's planned activities, preparation for the celebrations of Monte Tavor's 20th anniversary, and our recently finished and launched website. The informational pages for prospect families enrolling for 2015-2017 school years are already letting them know what children do at Monte Tavor, what the program is all about, and what is becoming after 20 years. The successive informational pages for current families will continue to be filled with many Monte Tavor 20th Anniversary events all summer long. Many of these events will continue to be part of the family fun events year after year.

For three consecutive years Monte Tavor has made an emphasis on the well thought out activities planned for children to immerse into, keep challenged, excited and looking forward to a new day every day; with the idea to strengthen and build socio-emotional friendships and attachments for the developing minds. The Developing mind article year after year is shared with teachers in order for them to have the opportunity to receive training and learn about its importance in the field of child development. Our Newsletters for the past two years have been filled with exciting information on what children are learning, fun events and activities for children and families to participate as well as the numerous teachers trainings.

Young Infants; daily activities with sensory toys, tummy times, and sensory balls, listening to music, songs, using baby band instruments, reading time, and outdoor exploration all while developing their senses. The increasing mobile ability and the opportunity to expand their cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. Mobile infants (12-18 months) have been emptying boxes full of sensory items; dressing up: using hats, vests, and scarves; blankets and dolls; swings, learning to slide, to rock back and forth on rocking equipment; and enjoying the outdoors. Older Infants and Toddlers (19 -24 months) (2 year olds) have been using crayons and blank paper; finger painting with Monte Tavor's finger paint (food coloring and flour solution), & dramatic play ex: the restaurant/ kitchen and doctor kits, and eating and sitting at the tables like big kids. Help-self concepts were introduced- washing hands, feeding on their own, finding their shoes after nap, cleaning up after activities and following teachers' directions of the daily morning and afternoon program. Toddlers are part of the water and something "else" activity centers for the exploration, science, discovery and cause & effect themes. Using natural ingredients corn starch, flour, corn meal, ice, soil etc.

Young and Older Preschoolers were introduced to their core courses. Three year olds began writing on small boards, dry erase boards, line paper, and journals, began using chalk, pencils, and thin crayons, and are now extending their speech as part of daily activities. The four year olds were introduced to their first Spanish Journal where they have been learning to color pictures, to identify objects, learning verbs in different tenses, practicing speech, learning to trace alphabet letters, connecting the lines and learning to write letters and sentences.

Four and Five year olds started on their 2nd Spanish Journal along with their 2nd English Journal (writing and looking up words in our pull down window dictionaries and animal theme dictionaries); Writing with a purpose is ideal when writing on line paper or on blank paper, while finding insects, listening to sounds, and observing the surrounding. The children research on living and non-living things, then drawing and learning words and sounds (March-May).

Additionally the Graduates 4 ½ -5 years old started their dual immersion in Spanish and English Journals, Calendar Journals, Learning to recognize numbers 1-50, and learning the months of the year and days of the week; all in preparation for kindergarten. Many are writing and started reading in Spanish and English.

The achievements among preschoolers have been in fall art themes and reading sessions on learning about what happens after summer. Fall displays and decorative fall items brought for each classroom and 2nd entrance continue to be an exciting learning experience for children. The Halloween party and face painting event brought a lot of Emergent Themes on imaginative play that kept on going for weeks. At the cultural event everyone brought a dish to share and children prior to the event had a V.I.P. pass to play the numerous instruments.

The science on discovery and exploration with messy activities and ingredients; immersed children and engaged them alongside their parents; The celebration of Dia de los Muertos honoring our ancestors was an event for remembering loved ones; The winter holiday themes brought many craft projects and Christmas carols; Martin Luther King Jr. birthday involved themes of getting along with each other and talking to each other to resolve conflicts and build stronger friendships; During Chinese New Year celebration kids learning about the culture; The tea parties were one of the most exciting and anticipated events; Valentine's Day brought discussions about friendships and sharing; The introductions to public speaking with show and tell have brought a lot of fascinating sharing time.

Science Projects and Learnings on Animals Habitats, where children were assigned two concepts of habitats among the toddlers and preschool groups. Starting with Farm Animals and African Savannah; Dessert and Ponds; Deserts and Ocean; And Corral Reef and Tropical Forest. Children and their teachers found natural materials to compose 3D Art Exhibits showing their painted, sculpted, drawn or crafted animals and their living habitats! Not to mention all the fun families had at last year's little explorer's petting zoo.

This year the Oakland Zoo mobile came to Monte Tavor. And, we hosted two field trips to Wildcare and The Marine Mammal Center. Next year Wildcare will be visiting Monte Tavor and bringing a few of their ambassadors.

There were Dress up Parties with the emergent themes and community roles, Saint Patrick's Day celebrations, and Easter with egg paintings, egg hunting and face painting activities. Mother's Day, Father's Day, the Toddler and Preschool Dance Shows, Graduation, and the Monte Tavor 20th Anniversary Event at Ardenwood. We plan in continue to put together another family summer picnic for next year and a family hike close to the coast.

For the third consecutive year we pair up with activity centers such as Science and Art, Art and Music, Music and Writing, Writing and Science (cause-Effect / Discovery), Science and Physical games, Physical games / writing and math concepts, Dance and Physical games, Dance and dramatic/pretend play, and our most popular paired up activity water play and dance / music. They all continue to benefit children's learning.

Additionally our reading program across all ages starting with infants using oversized, cloth popup books, Touch, Feel and Look books, as well as books with a lot of songs have been very successful. **The Bag Pack Morning Reading Program** for *older infants and toddlers* continue to increase their attention span from a few minutes to 20 minutes in just the first few months and now *Toddlers* continue to read for 30 minutes. This is always the starting point of building language skills as children in these two age groups are already speaking and singing in Spanish; a great accomplishment. The reading themes included: Music, Sounds, Obstacles,

Numbers, Sizes, Shapes, 5 Senses, and Rhymes among some. Young Preschoolers themes included: Environment, Health and Safety, Nutrition, Sequence, Plants, Alphabet Recognition, Shapes and Sizes. Older Preschoolers included: Climates, Writing, Adding and Subtracting, Preposition, Growing Plants, Environment, Health and Nutrition. The Bag Pack Morning Reading Program continues each year from September and end by February.

Emergent themes; the everyday play based and spontaneous activities for older Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers included: Making piñatas out paper Mache, making games out of recycle items, Binoculars (learning to use tape), the use of color tissue paper with glue diluted in water for rainbow paints, face painting, clown shows, mini carnivals, looking for insects, and gardening.

Monte Tavor feels very proud of such tremendous achievements in our lesson planning and activities for children and their families. We are looking forward to a new 2015-2016 school-year with positive changes, events for Monte Tavor's 20th Anniversary celebrations, and more to come. We look forward to having you continue to be part of our community of parents and children. We also would like to thank you for the years and the time you have been part of Monte Tavor.

Angela, Yeira, Liz, William and Jose (Humberto)

Monte Tavor Providers