



**NSCC PARENT  
ADVISORY  
COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITY  
NEWS**

**DECEMBER  
2012**



**A PLAY AND LOVE BASED CURRICULUM** by Tom Hobson (aka Teacher Tom)

When we enrolled our daughter Josephine in cooperative preschool, I explained how it worked to a friend, telling her that there was one professional teacher in the room and a dozen parent assistant teachers. She freaked out saying, “How can you let amateurs teach your child? I only want professional teachers near my child.” She feared that the parents of other children would somehow damage her child’s educational prospects. So while Josephine spent her 3 years in co-op, her son attended a preschool in which parents were not allowed into the classroom, even to observe.

I could no more have made her decision than she could have, apparently, made mine. Even as a new parent who had no inkling that teaching was in my future, I knew I wanted to be there with Josephine as much as possible, and when I wasn’t I wanted her to be surrounded by the love of a community. I didn’t care about her having a teacher who could teach her how to “read” or identify Norway on map before she was 3, like some kind of circus trick, I wanted her to be in a place where she simply got to play with friends and be guided by loving neighbors.

The more I teach, the better I feel about my decision.

What parents may lack as pedagogs (and, indeed, many of them are masters) they

more than make up for by bringing love into a co-op classroom. And as Mister Rogers puts it:

Learning and loving go hand in hand. My grandfather was one of those people who loved to live and loved to teach. Every time I was with him, he’d show me something about the world or something about myself that I hadn’t even thought of yet. He’d help me find something wonderful in the smallest of things, and ever so carefully, he helped me understand the enormous worth of every human being. My grandfather was not a professional teacher, but the way he treated me (the way he loved me) and the things he did with me, served me as well as any teacher I’ve ever known.

My friend also thought that our co-op sounded too much like “play school.” She wanted her child to go to “real school.” Again, as a new parent, my thoughts on the subject were not well-enough formed to answer her with logical argument (not that it would have done any good), but I just knew she was wrong. Today, I know that to undervalue the importance of play for young children is to make a tragic mistake. Frankly, I think that goes for older children and adults as well. The times in life when my mind has been the most shut down are those times when I...

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**DONATIONS NEEDED FOR PAC SCHOLARSHIPS**

PAC anticipates being short on funds this year as the need continues to be high for scholarship assistance. Please mail your **tax deductible** donation before the end of the year to PAC, memo line – for Scholarship Fund:

NSCC Parent Education Program  
PAC Treasurer  
9600 College Way North  
Seattle, WA 98103

**UW BOOKSTORE FUNDRAISER—ON NOW!**

Between December 10 - 16 the **University of Washington Book Store** will donate 15% of all purchases either in store or online to PAC scholarships. Be sure to mention North Seattle Co-op Preschools (at the store) or enter code **NSC** (online).

**LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!**

Stay connected with NSCC and help us get the word out about co-op preschools, free parent lectures and more.



[www.facebook.com/coops.northseattle](http://www.facebook.com/coops.northseattle)

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# Calendar

## December

10-16 UW Book Store Fundraiser

## 2013 PAC Meetings

14 January

11 February

11 March

8 April

20 May

## 2013 Registration Dates

21 February: Priority registration

7 March: Crossover registration

16 March: Open registration

# CO-OP Openings!

## Infants

North Seattle (Wed & Thu)

## Toddlers

Northgate (Sat)

Victory Heights

## Pre 3's

Broadview

Latona

Meadowbrook

Northgate (2-5s)

Northwest

Sandhurst

University-Ravenna

Victory Heights

Wedgwood

## 3-5's

Broadview

Crown Hill

Latona

Meadowbrook

University-Ravenna

Wallingford (3-4's only)

Wedgwood (4's only)

## Multi-Age & 5's

Meadowbrook 5's

Northgate 2-5's

Help spread the word about our NSCC Co-ops!

## Expanding our Parent Ed Program Outreach

By NSCC Parent Education Instructor Betty Williams

The NSCC Parent Education Program is working on expanding to new areas including setting up classes with Northgate Elementary School families, College Bound students' parents, a teen mother's shelter, and outreach to enroll more families from diverse communities in our Parent Cooperative Preschools. The President of NSCC, Mark Mitsui, has charged our program with finding strategies to respond to the changing demographics of North Seattle and market our program in innovative ways so that more families can benefit from the excellent parent education and support we provide to develop the college students of the future.

A committee of Parent Education Instructors, Co-op Preschool Teachers, and PAC members was formed to share ideas on how to expand our outreach to increase the diversity in our co-op classes in terms of ethnicity, socio-economic status, family make-up, religious background, disabilities, etc. We came up with these strategies to start:

1. Outreach to diverse communities about the advantages of co-op preschool. Ideas included:

- Improve our advertising materials with a focus on how we are an affordable, high quality preschool experience, encourage community building for families, and provide learning/support for families. Look at getting materials translated into Spanish and other languages. Have the committee review new materials before they are published.
- Survey our community to find out about the diversity we already have in our co-ops and ideas for outreach to additional communities that our families are involved in/aware of.
- Place notices in community group newsletters, churches, health care facilities, etc.

2. Curriculum and Co-op Practices need to be evaluated to see how well they welcome all families.

Possible steps include:

- Set up process to make sure calendars for PAC, NSCC and co-op events are carefully reviewed to avoid conflicts with holidays of diverse cultural groups.
- Review co-op practices and procedures to evaluate how well forms and expectations reflect attitudes of welcome and inclusion of different cultural norms and other forms of diversity.
- Survey families to learn about their cultures and find ways to incorporate different languages, foods, music, etc.
- Provide methods for co-op teachers to share the work they are doing in these areas with each other.
- Make use of the PAC Newsletter to share information. It can include teacher articles about how they include all families so we can learn best practices from each other. We also discussed featuring parent interviews and photos, with the focus on them sharing "What does it feel like to have your culture embraced?"

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### Make Your Online Purchases Count. Register for iGive!

Register for iGive and participating online retailers will donate a percentage of their profits towards PAC scholarships. Sign up at [www.igive.com](http://www.igive.com) and search for NSCC Parent Advisory Council of Cooperative Preschools. You'll be guided through the steps to add an iGive button to your browser. More than 1,000 online retailers participate, including Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, Home Depot, JCPenney, Orbitz and Expedia.

For each person who registers, PAC will receive \$5—even if you don't make any purchases.

You can also donate directly to the PAC Scholarship Fund—see page 1 for details.

## DEALING WITH THE STRESS OF THE HOLIDAYS!

By Lauren B. Leiker, M.Ed., Parent Ed. Instructor

This time of year can be a source of great stress for children and parents. Parents are worried about expenses, keeping up traditions, holiday parties, finding the “right” gift, and often, maintaining healthy relationships with extended family. Homes and communities are electrified by both excitement and anxiety, and children react to the energy they can’t even see. You may notice your children acting out, or misbehaving. Maybe you are seeing some regressive behavior. Chances are, if your children are misbehaving, you may be, too. You can help your children by helping yourself! The best way to deal with the stress of the holidays? Be pro-active so that you can be responsive. In other words, **plan ahead**. And, in your plan, have a quick-response system in mind for you to keep calm in a reactive moment.

### ***Planning Ahead: Setting Limits for Yourself***

- If one of your holiday traditions is mailing cards, set a date to have them done. If it doesn’t happen, there is always next year.
- Set a limit for holiday giving, even for your children. It is very easy to over-indulge our kiddos during the holidays. Remember that you are setting the precedent. Make traditions the focus instead!
- Be realistic about decorating. If it is overwhelming to you, it is likely overwhelming to your children.
- Choose no more than 2-3 holiday goodies for baking. There is no need to spend the entire month of December in the kitchen!
- Travelling? Mail gifts ahead of time. And remember, a holiday vacation is a gift. Keep this in mind when setting your spending limits.
- Limit your postage spending by purchasing gift cards for out-of-town family.
- If holiday dinner will be at your house this year, delegate portions of the meal out to family.
- At this time of year, it is especially important to remember your self-care. What rejuvenates you? Re-energizes you? Calms you? Schedule it!

### ***Quick-Response System: Sensory Reminders***

It is always helpful to plan ahead, no matter what time of year. During the holidays, it is necessary. Sometimes, however, our plans fall through, or something completely unexpected puts us on edge. In these moments, we need something to quickly pull us back from that edge. *Sensory reminders* are perfect for these occasions. Sensory reminders are items that stimulate a certain sense and remind us of something that can center us and allow us to be responsive, rather than reactive. Sensory reminders can be candles with a favorite scent, a picture from a family vacation, an inspiring word, phrase, or quote, or any item that takes you to a calmer, happier moment. Keep your sensory reminder close, remember to breath, step away from the situation, and don’t be afraid to say, “Mommy (or Daddy) needs to take a break for a minute!” Not only are you helping yourself, you are modeling great skills for your children!

Remember, your children look to you to model appropriate behavior. And, the most difficult times to do so are often the most important times. By setting limits for yourself, you will be setting limits for your children, too.

## **A PLAY AND LOVE BASED CURRICULUM**

*Continued from Page 1*

felt compelled to do “work” proscribed by others. When I’ve been playing, however, even if dressed up as hard work, I’ve learned the most about myself and the world.

Again, from Mister Rogers:

Play does seem to open up another part of the mind that is always there, but that, since childhood, may have become closed off and hard to reach. When we treat children’s play as seriously as it deserves, we are helping them feel the joy that’s to be found in the creative spirit. We’re helping ourselves stay in touch with that spirit, too. It’s the things we play with and the people who help us play that make a great difference in our lives.

It’s love and play that form the foundation of a good education. Without that the rest is meaningless.

## **EXPANDING OUR PARENT ED PROGRAM OUTREACH**

*Continued from Page 2*

3. Plan a series of ongoing joint trainings for teachers and instructors to work together to improve our skills and knowledge in this area.

- The instructors and teachers will meet together in January to begin this process.

Instructors and Teachers are encouraged to attend the Faces North Conference (focusing on Powerful Communities: Race, Culture and Self-Identity in Young Children) at Shoreline CC on Saturday, Feb. 2, Conference Center. Hopefully co-op classes will provide financial support for their teachers to attend this conference.

- The two groups will meet afterwards to reflect on the learning from the FACES Conference and how to apply it to our co-op classes.
- At the end of the year Teacher Luncheon we will share our successes in implementing ideas for improving our work with diverse families.

Be looking for the survey to come out in January to get input as regarding what is working well for you in your class and ideas for our outreach and improvement in these areas. In the meantime, your ideas are welcome. Please email them to PAC Advisor Betty Williams at [Betty.Williams@seattlecolleges.edu](mailto:Betty.Williams@seattlecolleges.edu).



## UNIVERSITY BOOK STORE

DECEMBER 10 – DECEMBER 16



University Book Store

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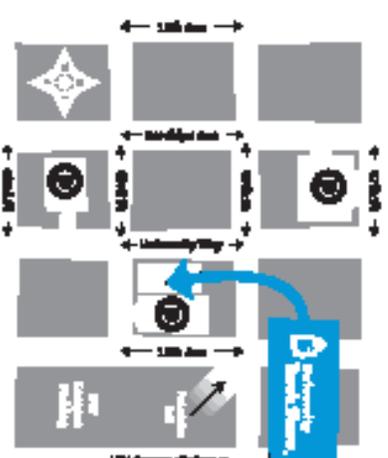
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