-From the Big Pumpkin-

There’s nothing I can do about a monochromatic October in California, but it really makes me sentimental for a hometown NYC fall. Autumn is my favorite season. I prefer cool weather to warm. I love making pumpkin muffins, fall arts & crafts, and of course there’s Halloween and Thanksgiving!

I will always think fondly of my childhood pouncing in leaf piles my parents so patiently raked and apple picking in upstate NY where I ate so many apples I became ill. I think back on chilly Halloween trick or treating and my mom’s all out spooky house décor. I miss those things…

This month, the ECDC will celebrate everything autumn! We will create fall wreaths, make pumpkin snacks, smush clove and cinnamon play dough, explore skeletons and many other “spooky” preschool ideas. As we look ahead to November and Thanksgiving, we also think about how lucky we are to live in beautiful SoCal with those we love. Autumn is truly a wonderful season full of preschool themes that support play and exploration.

Did you Know?

Sleeping Issues - Ahhhhh!

We totally understand exhausted parents whose children are going through sleep issues. Often children sneak into mom’s bed, see monsters, wake at 5 a.m., or refuse to go to sleep at all; night terrors may begin toward this age, too. This is certainly one of the toughest stages! Dr. Weissbluth, the author of “Happy Sleep, Happy Child” believes sleep training is essential and sleep begets sleep. The more rested our bodies are, the more open our bodies are to surrender to sleep. He also feels that we (adults and children) do not get enough sleep—period! We all walk around over-tired which hinders sleep. Here are a few ideas he shares for sleep training:

*Pay attention for the magic moment when children show signs of sleepiness. Often earlier than you think!
*Start bedtime routines earlier. He said 7:30 p.m. for preschool!
*Use Febreeze as “Monster Spray.”
*Stick to relaxing bedtime routines - low lights, warm lavender oil baths, quiet classical music, and story time.
*Use reward charts.
*Leave on a night-light.
*Give your child lovey or stuffed animal.

No matter what you try, consistency and matter of fact attitudes from the parents is important. Do not allow yourself to be swayed by cries and pleas. Stay firm and stay the course. Your may find that after a few nights, your child surrenders happily to healthy sleep.


After School Managers Have New Digs!

The ECDC team wishes the ASP team hearty congratulations on their move to new offices on the Torrey Hills campus. ASP & ECDC have been a happily blended family for over ten years!

This team of four creatively and energetically crafts super fun and engaging after school activities that make staying at school highly desired. We thank you for all you do & we will miss you 😔

It’s not the QUANTITY of time you spend with your children that makes the difference, it’s the QUALITY!
**5 Stages of Moral Growth of Children**

Children go through stages of moral development. Unlike physical growth, moral growth doesn’t happen without some input from parents. To develop into a morally solid person, a child must be given a solid foundation at each stage.

*Stage 1, Infancy* After nine months of being nurtured in the womb, a baby enters the world expecting that nurturing will continue. Never having been hungry, baby concludes that hunger is wrong; it hurts. Never having been unattended to, baby finds aloneness to be wrong; it’s scary. Being in-arms, at breast, and responded to feels right! Baby feels she is the center of the world and she develops a feeling of rightness that becomes her “norm.”

*Stage 2, Toddlerhood* By eighteen months, “otherness” begins. Toddlers learn that others share their world; others have needs and rights. His house has “rules” that he must learn to live by, which can be frustrating. The child does not yet judge something as “right” or “wrong”; he is directed by what others tell him, which competes with his internal drive to do what he wants. A child doesn’t yet realize he hurts someone when he hits. Hitting is “wrong” because parents tell him so or because he gets punished. Depending on how parents convey the behavior they expect, the toddler learns obedience to adults is the norm.

*Stage 3, Preschoolers (3-5 years)* A major turning point in moral development: the child begins to internalize family values. What’s important to the parents becomes the child’s norms. The child’s behavior can be directed by these rules often with frequent reminding and reinforcing from parents. Later, children begin to understand the concept of empathy, considering how what they do affects other people. Children understand the roles of “child” and “adult” and need maturity from the adult. They perceive consequences and can grasp cause/effect: when I misbehave, then this happens. The connected child behaves well because he has had several years of positive parental direction.

*Stage 4, School Agers (7-10 years)* Children question whether adults are infallible. They respect adults who are fair and in charge. This strong sense of rules can set some children up to tattle and they want to participate in making the rules.

*Stage 5, Preteens & Teens* Teens are vulnerable to peer pressure and peer values. As they continue to sort out which values will become part of them and which they will discard, they may vacillate and try on different value systems to see which ones fit. This child is more capable of abstract reasoning about moral values and becomes interested in what’s good for society. Children may view parents more as consultants than as powerful authority figures.

**How Much is Enough, Health & Diet**

We make sure to teach portion control at our table, so that each child has what they need, but not so much that their little tummies swell and stretch. Healthy eating means portion control for all of us, at any age. Try making a fist to illustrate appropriate portion size. Make sure to keep carbs at one portion and if children are still hungry, offer more fruits, veggies, or protein fill them up.

**Upcoming Important Dates**

**Thanksgiving “Give-Back” Food Drive**
*All October at Ashley & Torrey ECDC*

- October 11- PJ Day!
- October 15- Pumpkin Station Meet-Up!
  - 9-11am Del Mar Fairgrounds
- October 25- Orange Day!
- October 21- Football Gear & Cheer Day!
- October 26- Early Release Professional Learning
- October 27- Torrey Hills ECDC Photo Day
- October 28- Ashley Falls ECDC Photo Day
  - 7am start time
- October 31- Halloween Parades 8am & 3pm