

# The CHASTAIN School

A Child Development Center & Preschool



## December 2011 Issue

### Upcoming Dates:

**PARENTS NIGHT OUT  
DECEMBER 2ND & 9TH  
& SATURDAY, DEC 17TH**

**SANTA CLAUS IS COMING  
DECEMBER 8TH**

**TCS CHRISTMAS PARTIES  
DECEMBER 15TH @ 3PM**

**TCS CLOSED  
DECEMBER 26TH**

*Merry  
Christmas  
to All*

**TCS CLOSED  
JANUARY 2, 2012**

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## Celebrating Our Teachers



We recently had a surprise celebration for our expecting Persimmon teacher, *Rash-eeda Kicks*. A new addition to her family is expected very soon! Her baby girl to be will already be greeted with cute toys & clothes!



Congratulations to our Oak teacher, *Sherena*

*Perkins*, who recently obtained her Masters Degree in Reading and Literacy from Walden University. Way to go!

We would also like to congratulate our Business Manager, *John Weaver*, who will finish his Masters Degree in

Design & Communication from Southern Polytech next Tuesday. We also have two more teachers who are pursuing further education.



*Yvri Wadell* (Bonsai) is currently pursuing a Masters Degree in Man-

agement with a concentration in Project Management from Strayer University.

*Khrystal Davis* (Wisteria) is working to earn her

Masters Degree in Human Services: Marriage & Family Counseling from Capella University.



*Happy Holidays!*

*Everyone here at TCS wishes you and yours a joyful holiday season and a New Year blessed with health, happiness and peace.*

*All the Best,  
Tracey, Keisha, John, Kathy  
Dana, Tom & Ron*

*Happy Holidays  
CHRISTMAS, KWANZAA & HANUKKAH*



# Things to do Around Atlanta

What	Where	When	Cost
SANTA @ RHODES HALL 5X7 PICTURE, ACTIVITIES & ENTERTAINMENT	<a href="#">Rhodes Hall, "Castle on Peachtree"</a> Rsvp 404 885 7812	December 3rd—11th Hours & Times Vary	\$35.00 per family \$10.00 extra fee for bringing in Camera
NUTCRACKER ATLANTA BALLET	<a href="#">Fabulous Fox Theatre</a>	December 8th -24th 2:00pm & 7:30pm	\$22.00 - \$90.00
MACY'S PINK PIG 58TH SEASON!	<a href="#">Macys Lenox Mall</a> 404-233-7575	Now – January 1st 10am - 8pm Closed Christmas Day	\$3.00 ride

**Parents Night Out : Dec 2nd, 9th & Saturday, Dec 17th from 5:30pm-10:30pm**

DISNEY'S PHINEAS AND FERB: A ROCKING MUSICAL	<a href="#">Philips Arena</a>	December 18th 12:30, 3:30 & 6:30	\$15.00 - \$ 80.00
OUTDOOR ICE SKATING	<a href="#">Centennial Olympic Park</a>	Nov 19th -January 29th Hours Vary	\$7.00 Entry \$2.00 Skate rental
HAPPILY NEVER AFTER FAIRY TALE	<a href="#">Children's Museum</a>	December 1st - 31st Times Vary	\$12.75

## What Kids Learn All Around the Pre-K Room

*It may seem like a lot of fun and games, but your child is actually learning important lessons as he plays.*

**Story corner:** Just by listening and watching her teacher read Go, Dog, Go!, your child is becoming familiar with basic literacy concepts, like reading left to right, and what words and letters are. If you walk by the book corner, you'll see preschoolers "reading" by turning the pages and narrating what they see -- a great precursor to real reading.

**Puzzle table:** Legos, and puzzles, and beads -- oh, my! Children improve their fine motor skills, concentration, and hand-eye coordination when they play these games. Working independently also gives them practice problem solving.

**Sand/water table:** The tools and toys help teach science concepts like cause and effect. Since there is no right or wrong with these materials, kids feel a sense of success when they play with them.

**Circle time:** Learning to sit patiently, saying good morning, and talking about the day's events is a key part of your child's day. This preschool town meeting gives her important practice for the skills she'll need to master for kindergarten.

**Art area:** Crayons, markers, safety scissors, glue, and paintbrushes are all great tools for mastering fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination. And children love to talk about their artwork -- it gives them practice with language and self-expression.

**Block area:** What isn't your child learning? She's gaining basic math skills when she counts them, identifies their shapes, and compares their sizes. Building houses, roads, and forts helps hone spatial skills that will be helpful for geometry and physics later on.

**Outdoor play:** It looks like chaos, but all that activity helps kids learn what their bodies can do. Children need to move and experiment to master balance, improve coordination, and develop their muscles. Group activities on the playground also teach kids cooperation's.

Sources: Debbie LeeKeenan, director, Eliot-Pearson Children's School at Tufts University, in Medford, Massachusetts; Amy Flynn, director, Bank Street Family Center at Bank Street College of Education, in New York City

Find out what skills you can expect your child to master at 2, 3, and 4 years old.

By Denise Schipani and Illisa Cohen

Here, a snapshot of what you can expect your preschooler to master at ages 2, 3, and 4.

## Two-Year-Olds

You would think "academics" and "2-year-olds" are terms that rarely meet. And you'd mostly be right. School at this age is less about worksheets and lessons than getting experience with becoming part of a group. Kids should be introduced to sharing and taking turns, making friends, and developing language." That said, there is plenty more the littlest preschoolers can learn. No, your child won't be reading or penning her name, but later literacy has its roots in toddlerhood. Coloring and painting strengthen the muscles she'll later



use to write. Exposure to printed material gets her ready to read. And it's not just books; twos love to see their own words written down -- such as when teachers ask a child to narrate what's happening in a picture. That teaches them the constancy of the written word, a crucial foundation for reading.

**Talk to me:** Practicing the art of conversation -- what preschool experts call "cycles of conversation" -- is another goal for the year. Taking turns to talk is about a growing sense of respect for others -- an important piece of the school-preparation puzzle. Same goes for asking for permission before taking that red crayon.

**Physical gains:** The biggie now is no surprise: toilet training! A preschool teacher's aim this year should be guiding each child, depending on her potty readiness, toward independent self-care (pulling up pants, washing hands). Meanwhile, fine motor skills still need lots of work; most twos use their whole fist to grab a crayon and

move their whole arm to make marks on paper.

## Three-Year-Olds

A hallmark of the transition from 2 to 3 is the discovery of the world of friends. Three-year-olds love being with each other now, and caregivers should give them plenty of time for unstructured, imaginative play -- which helps them develop language skills,

**The write stuff:** Writing is rudimentary, but practice is key. And not just on paper: A teacher might pour sugar or sand on a cookie sheet so the children can 'write' with their fingers. Books are big; this is the year it really hits them that the words remain the same every time they're read. Also, at the end of this year, many threes are able to pick out sounds at the beginning of a word and to recognize rhymes, which are critical skills for reading success.

**Count on it:** Most kids this age can count by rote, at least to 10 if not much higher. Still, they might not be able to count 10 actual objects accurately. The aim this year is to help them put numbers into everyday use, such as counting out four spoons for the four friends at their table.



**I'll help myself, thanks:** By the end of this year, threes should be expected to take out -- and put away -- the items they use. In an ideal classroom, things are organized in such a way that students can help themselves to what they need to start a game or complete a project.

## Four-Year-Olds

Kindergarten isn't what it used to be; some educators say it's more like what first grade used to look like a genera-

tion or more ago. What does that mean to your preschooler? Ratcheted-up expectations for the pre-K year. Preschool teachers have the dual job of continuing to stimulate social growth (and let kids be kids), while also preparing them academically for the rigors of kindergarten.

**See Spot run:** Don't panic; your child is not expected to graduate from preschool knowing how to read. But he should show that he's ready to make a start by identifying the starting sounds of words and being able to rhyme easily. And even if your child can't write letters, he should be able to visualize how to do so. This is also the time to introduce him to concepts of handwriting, such as how letters are formed from top to bottom, and how words are written from left to right across the page.

**Class rules:** In most cases, the kindergarten your child attends will have more kids and fewer teachers -- and possibly a longer day -- than he's accustomed to in preschool. That's why there's much emphasis in the pre-K year on increasing attention span, understanding rules, and following directions.

**Playing it up:** Kids are far more adept now at playing cooperatively, which does not mean without conflict! Still, you'll find fours planning out play before they start, creating roles and plotlines, incorporating fairness, and taking turns more easily. Another nice change this year? Increased empathy. "Children are learning to be inclusive, inviting classmates to join them. Or, if not, they might let down their friends easily, saying 'I can't play right now, but we're still friends.'" These nuances of kindness and sensitivity will serve them well come big-kid school.





# Coping With Holiday Hustle and Bustle

Adapted from Helen Danielsen and Karla Rose. "Coping with the Holidays". North Dakota State University Extension Service.

Families can better cope with the hustle and bustle of the holidays by following a few simple tips. Keep routines as normal as possible and concentrate on important activities to reduce holiday stress. **Routines are important for children**, so try to maintain normal meal and bedtime schedules even during holiday vacations. Children may feel upset, grouchy, or anxious during this busy time. Don't expect children to always be happy and appreciative.

Having a quiet time is also a good idea during the holidays. Play soft music, read stories or take a stroll to bring down your child's activity level. Setting a "whisper hour," a time when everyone in the house must whisper is a way to reduce noise and add mystery to the season.

Parents should select activities most important to the family. By letting go of the less important ones, the festive mood won't be hindered, but stress may be eased.

It's also a good idea to schedule activities over several days so the excitement isn't overwhelming -- for the children or for the parents. Make several short shopping trips instead of one long trip. Children have short attention spans and little endurance.

Here are some additional ways to deal with holiday stress:

- Concentrate on people instead of objects. For example, it's more important to have fun making cookies than to have beautiful cookies.
- Prepare children for holiday visits by sharing photos of family members. Discuss who the people are and who the children will see.
- Plan celebrations during children's best coping time of the day.
- Touch people. A loving touch can have the opposite effect of stress because it calms people both physically and emotionally.
- Limit sugar, salt, caffeine during holiday meals and snacks. They may result in the same symptoms as stress.
- Have children help prepare for celebrations by setting the table, cutting out cookies, picking up toys, and designing and coloring placemats.

By letting children be part of the festivities, the family emphasizes shared joys and responsibilities during their holiday celebration.

## Traveling Tips for New Parents

Blogger tips by Jenni at CafeMom & Colleen at Newparent.com.

Through the experiences of these two moms, we found these to be some of the more helpful tips to keep in mind.

Your child probably won't sleep as well on vacation as they would at home. It's your job to keep the bedtime routine intact. Bring along the beloved stuffed rabbit and read favorite stories.

**Leave Lots of Time.** Get to the airport early--very early. Giving yourself plenty of time, will give you peace of mind. A crying baby in the security line is one thing, a crying baby in the security line when you might miss your plane, is another.

**Ship It.** If you'll be gone for a week or so, consider ordering supplies online and shipping it directly to your destination. Try Diapers.com, ( Free shipping on orders over \$49) you can order anything from diapers and wipes to toys, soap, etc. This will drastically cut down what you will need to bring with you, and make travelling a lot easier.

**Things to Bring.** Start packing early, and make a list. A few things to remember, Baby tylenol ,children's gas drops because all that travel can wreak havoc on developing digestive systems, a thermometer (travel is germ) and babies always feel warm.

## December Birthdays

Jake Charette	4	Olive
<b>Lori Beasley</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Apricot/Tangerine</b>
<b>Theresa Olds</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Olive</b>
<b>Shawn Titus</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Olive</b>
<b>Sharon Cash</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Persimmon</b>
<b>Yolanda Ware</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Aspen</b>
Leslie Dean	9	Persimmon
Kira Watkins	15	Kids Club
Austin Paige	16	Dogwood
Maddox Trombley	18	Plum
Benjamin Buzzard	19	Willow
Liam Findley	25	Olive
Jack McCabe	26	Bonsai
Jim Richter	28	Mimosa
Caitlyn Rohner	29	Mimosa

# TCS Annual Halloween Parade 2011

## Spooky Fun!

The Halloween Parade was a huge success! The teachers really inspired the students to participate in their class costumes. We brought out heroes, rebels, athletes, animals, and even some of our favorite chocolate! We want to thank the parents for coming in and making the classroom parties an equal success. We hope you had as much fun as we did watching these children beam with pride in their colorful and creative outfits.

