

# Sonshine Times

JANUARY 2015

Sonshine Christian Preschool      14515 Harvey Oaks Avenue  
Harvey Oaks Baptist Church      Omaha, NE 86144 208-7333

*Our mission is to ensure a Christian based, safe, hands-on, developmentally appropriate, fun learning environment that meets the needs of the whole child...physical, spiritual, emotional, social, and intellectual. This is done by providing a variety of experiences in art, children's literature, music, dramatic play, fitness, cooking, and gross motor activities. We provide an environment where children can discover for themselves, become self-directed and independent, and experience activities that will help them grow and develop.*



## **Before Handwriting** By Ellen Javernick

Children have long been taught to write their names by parents who find their children highly motivated to acquire this skill. But it is wrong to assume that children who proudly write their names are ready to learn to write other letters and words.

When should formal handwriting begin? Most experts agree that children are not ready for handwriting until they have acquired six prerequisite skills. Parents can help their children develop these skills so that they will be ready for handwriting when they enter school. Here are some suggestions...

**\*Small Muscle Development--** Children need to develop fine motor coordination before they can hold and manipulate a pencil. Activities that involve puzzles, snap beads and pegboards are excellent for small motor development. Provide preschoolers with little cars, people and animals give them opportunities to use small muscles. Modeling with playdough, screwing jar lids, lifting beans or sand with small spoons, painting, cutting and tearing can all enhance small muscle development.

**\*Eye-Hand Coordination--** These skills are closely related to small muscle development skills, since children need muscle control to accomplish tasks that the eye and brain want done. In addition to the activities suggested above, provide children with opportunities for construction with a variety of blocks and with hammers and nails. Following dots, pasting, and finger painting also enhance eye-hand coordination.

**\*Holding Skills--** Children must be able to hold a writing tool before they can write. Before they are ready to learn how to grip a pencil, they can learn how to grip other objects. Provide children with objects for sand and water play. Give them gardening tools and kitchen utensils to play with to help them prepare for holding a pencil.

**\*Ability to Make Basic Strokes--** Most children learn early to make lines and circles necessary for handwriting, but these strokes need to be refined. Circles need to be round and closed. Lines need to intersect properly. Activities such as drawing, painting and stirring give children the opportunity to develop these basic strokes.

**\*Perception of Letters--** Before children are ready for formal writing, they need to be able to recognize letters and notice the likenesses and differences. To help children develop this skill, play recognition games with them. Label their clothes. Together look for signs, "read" boxes in the store and play games.

**\*Understanding Language--** An understanding of what written language stands for and how it is used to communicate is essential prior to formal handwriting instruction. Encourage children to "write" such things as lists, letters, books and signs. Have them dictate songs and stories and then read them together. Read stories from their favorite books. As they memorize the words, point out the words on the printed pages.

By Helping children acquire prewriting skills, parents can make formal handwriting easier and more fun for them when they are ready for it!

**FUN FRIDAYS!!!**  
**9:00am-11:30am**

Fun Fridays is off and running and boy are we having fun!!! Mrs. Waller has been busy planning some exciting activities, here is a sneak peek at what's to come... Gingerbread man, Teddy Bear Picnic, kids in the kitchen, Prince and Princesses, Science fun and so much more!!

Sign up for fun Fridays has been moved to the office door along with a snack schedule. Please have your child signed up by Thursday so we can plan accordingly. If you can't make it in to sign up, simply send us an email or text by Thursday.

Remember, we also have the option to "register" for Fun Fridays which guarantees you a spot.

Registration opens up February 2<sup>nd</sup>!

Registration forms can be found on our website...

<http://www.sonshinechristianpreschool.org/registration.htm>

We do have some class changes for next year, those can also be found Our website as well...

<http://www.sonshinechristianpreschool.org/classes.htm>

Daddy and Me Night!

Dads, grandpa's, uncles....

Please join us for an hour of non stop fun, SNOW

FUN!!! This evening is available for Mrs.

Logan's, Mrs. Dickens and Mrs. Dixon's classes!

The fun starts at 7pm on Thursday January 15, see you there ☺

January Calendar...

**January 15:** Daddy and Me, P2 and P3  
Classes.... 7:00pm-8:00pm

**January 19:** No School, Martin Luther King  
Day

February Calendar...

**February 2:** Registration opens up for  
the 2015-2016 school year

**February 12-13:** No School

**February 12-13:** Conferences for P2  
and P3 Classes, watch for sign up's by  
classroom door

**February 16:** No School, Presidents Day