

# Irvine Back – Up News

September – October 2014



## From the Director

As we switch gears from summer and begin to get ready for another school year to begin, I would like to thank you for spending a few of your summer days here with us! We enjoyed having your children participate in the various activities offered at our center. We were excited to offer the Preschool Summer Camp Adventures this summer for the first time. “The Great Outdoors” and “Ooey Goey Science Lab” weeks seemed to be a big hit!

On another note, “Pizza Friday” lunches were a great success over the summer and helped us to meet our goal of \$500 to donate on our center’s behalf to the Bright Horizons Foundation for Children. We will be having a few more opportunities to add to that amount with the Bake Sale Oct. 28<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>, and a Parent Night Out November 7<sup>th</sup>. We hope you are able to join us!

Hope to see you soon!  
Jenny Brown



**Bright Connections** is a web resource that provides relevant information for you and your family’s caregivers — from articles to webcasts — on caring for infants to adults.

Find us at  
[www.brighthorizons.com/brightconnections](http://www.brighthorizons.com/brightconnections).

## Register & Reserve Back-Up Care

Your child must be fully registered before a reservation can be made. Our online system makes it simple to:

- Edit/update registrations
- Request a reservation
- Cancel a reservation
- Print daily information sheets

[www.brighthorizons.com/back-up](http://www.brighthorizons.com/back-up)

## High Demand Days

Sept. 1 – Labor Day CENTER CLOSED

Sept. 25 & 26 Rosh Hashanah

Oct. 13 – Columbus Day

**Don’t wait... reserve 30 days in advance!**

## Important Dates

**Sept. 16 – Family Matters webinar**

(details on pg. 4)

**Sept. 25: Comic Book Day**

**“Things that Go!” One Day Camp:**

\*\*Inf/Tod - Sept. 23 & Preschool - Sept. 24

**Oct. 10: Potty Camp Lunch & Learn @ 12**

**Oct. 13 – Oct. 17 Potty Learning Camp**

**“Superhero” One Day Camp:**

\*\*Inf/Tod - Oct. 22 & Preschool - Oct. 23

**Oct. 23 – Open House @ 11 am – 1 pm**

**Oct. 31 - Harvest Festival**

# Classroom Highlights



## Infants

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## Toddlers

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## Preschool

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## School-Age

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## READY for SCHOOL Parent News: Stages of Children's Writing

Learning to write is a significant developmental milestone in young children's lives. Writing and reading go hand in hand, and the development of one encourages the development of the other. Like so many other aspects of development, writing skills generally unfold in a predictable sequence. The typical stages that children's writing follows are listed below. The ages accompanying these stages are rough guidelines and vary widely.

1. **Making a mark:** (18 months to 2 ½ years) Through experimentation, children discover that the writing instrument they are holding (crayon, marker, pencil) can "make a mark." Initially, children discover this as they experiment with cause and effect relationships, but later, making marks becomes more purposeful. The "doing" of the mark is more important than the end product to toddlers and twos. This stage includes experimenting with all the different ways to make marks, including scribbling, jabbing, or marking back and forth. The sheer joy of making marks is the focus. Older infants or young toddlers may experiment with making a mark, but it becomes more deliberate in older toddlers and twos.
2. **Marks have a meaning:** (2 ½ to 4 years) Sometimes unintentionally, children look at the marks they have made and think they look like something. This is the very beginning of deliberate writing – marking for a purpose. Children will wonder, "How do I make that again?" Some marks might be designated as pictures, while others are designated as writing of some sort, i.e., "That says 'Michael'." The marks may all look the same to adults, but they mean something different to children. Gradually the marks children make for writing begin to look different from the marks used for drawing. At the same time, young children begin to understand that adults use written letters and words to communicate. Understanding that writing has meaning is a powerful motivator.
3. **Marks begin to resemble letters:** (3 ½ to 5 years) Children often start first drawing lines or lots of lines next to each other. Or they may draw lines of scribbling versus circular scribbling. Either way, it begins to more closely resemble letters or even cursive writing. Eventually children move to "mock letters" which resemble letters, but aren't exactly letters (i.e., an E with five horizontal line instead of three). This is typical around age 4. Mock letters typically contain many of the strokes in real letters – straight lines and curves.
4. **Writing more closely resembles standard letters:** (4 to 6 years) Children come to understand that there are a finite number of letters. Mock letters are used less frequently.
5. **Writing includes "mock words":** (4 ½ to 6 years) Children write standard letters in groupings that resemble words, but aren't actual words.
6. **Phonics-based spelling:** (5 to 6 years) Children attempt to write words the way they think they sound. This is typical for many kindergarten-age children.

### A few ways to encourage children in their writing:

1. Keep a well-stocked writing center in your home with lots of different types of paper (lined and unlined, construction paper, small tablets, etc.) and writing tools (crayons, fat and thin pencils, pens, etc.). You can also add clip boards, erasers, rulers, sample letters to copy, etc. Add new materials occasionally to keep your child's interest.
2. Ask your child to tell you about her written work.
3. Encourage your child to tell stories. Either write down what he says or have him attempt to write it down with support as needed. Write grocery lists, invitations for play dates, or emails to relatives and friends.
4. Offer play dough, lacing cards, manipulatives and small blocks to help build the fine motor muscles necessary for writing.
5. Keep early writing experiences fun and playful. Make them meaningful and relevant whenever possible. For example, children generally gain more from writing a letter to grandma than from completing workbook pages.

Schickedanz, J. A. & Casbergue, R. M. (2005). *Writing in Preschool: Learning to Orchestrate Meaning and Marks*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association

# Bright Horizons News



**SAVE THE DATE: September installment of the Family Matters Webinar Series!**



**Parenting: Being Proactive and Positive**  
Tuesday, September 16, 1:00 pm EST  
[www.brighthorizons.com/positive](http://www.brighthorizons.com/positive)

Bright Horizons Family Solutions,<sup>®</sup> presenting in collaboration with guest speaker Amy McCreedy of [Positive Parenting Solutions](http://www.brighthorizons.com/positive), is bringing you the next installment of the Family Matters Webinar Series on positive school-age discipline.

Join us during this webinar to learn and explore proactive parenting techniques that will help to fulfill your child's emotional need, foster good behavior, and eliminate the power struggle that often fuels bad behavior.