

Guidelines for Parent Helpers

Helpers are an integral part of the New Horizons Preschool program. **Each family is required to provide an adult helper to assist our classroom teachers approximately once each month (more often for Penguins or for families who have twins in the program).** Parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles, as well as caregivers are all welcome as classroom helpers. Of course, parents and other adult family members are always welcome to join us at New Horizons on days other than assigned helping days. Parents will need to make other arrangements for siblings on helping days (an infant in a Snugli is OK) as our classroom activities require your attention and many are not age appropriate for younger siblings.

Following is some information you may find useful as a classroom helper:

- 1) Please try to be prompt in arriving on your helping days. After you assist your child in settling in for the day (and initial the sign-in sheet), check with your child's teacher to find out what your "assignments" for the day will be.
- 2) Put your cell phone away. **Please do not text or talk on the phone during your helping time.** The teachers are relying on the helpers to be another set of eyes, ears, and hands with all the children. You can leave your phone in the office and staff would be happy to notify you of an emergency call.
- 3) Play or read with children during Gathering Time.
- 4) During the first meeting (group time) of the day, be present to comfort or quiet individual children as necessary.
- 5) When the children go to their classrooms for "circle groups," go with your child's class. Sitting quietly, listening attentively, and taking turns are skills we often practice. Assist individual children in sitting quietly as appropriate. The teacher may ask for your assistance in the circle activity for the day. We appreciate it when parents follow the teacher's lead in providing help to individual children. Our goal is for the children to feel successful about completing their tasks and that they have work that is truly their own.
- 6) During Choice Time, assist in one of the individual rooms as requested by teachers. You may be asked to help in the Art Room, Gathering Room, Snack Room or Big Room.
- 7) Preschoolers thrive on physical activity and we provide ample outlets for gross motor play; however, at times children's behavior may be too exuberant for our preschool setting. We appreciate our classroom volunteers' willingness to intervene by redirecting children as well as modeling appropriate behavior.
- 8) Assist children in getting ready for outdoor play. Each child should put street shoes in his or her school bag and return the bag to the proper hook before going outside. Many children will need help with zippers or the "2nd mitten," but it is important to encourage them to dress themselves as much as possible. Often a gentle reminder (for example, "What should you put on next?") is all that is necessary to help them move along in the process.
- 9) Helpers should be prepared to go outside and help supervise outdoor play (be sure to bring boots, hat, and gloves, if needed) unless a teacher asks you to assist with indoor cleanup.
- 10) Private restroom facilities are available for helpers in the new building addition. The restrooms are located in the hallway next to the new "galley" and fellowship hall.
- 11) **Enjoy Yourself!!!** This is a wonderful time for parents and children, and it is a great spot for finding extra hugs! Remember, we are never too old for play.

Parents are asked to provide information to assist us in assigning parent helper time slots for our classes. We will make our best attempt to accommodate family schedules. Calendars will be posted on the bulletin board and a copy will be sent home a few days before the beginning of each month. **You are responsible for finding a substitute if you have scheduling conflicts with the time slot you are assigned.**