

### **September 2020 Reflection**

Congratulations to a successfully joyful beginning of our 2020-21 complex pandemic school year! Welcome new and returning families to Klahanie School, the children are beginning to get used to the masks, each other, the new and remember names of classmates and we continue to play finger-plays, rhyming games, songs and movement during circle time as well as wonderful library books centered on self-care and emotions. We have been laughing a lot in the group and throughout class, what a gift!

Thank you parents who were able to attend our Parent Curriculum night with time for parents to learn about Montessori education approach mixed importantly with Emotional Intelligence/Empathy development and Compassionate Listening foundation, during Circle time and on the fly daily experience. During our evening, we discussed the intentions of Montessori education, our intimate class space where we nurture connection building while maintaining the integration of age and readiness for one-on-one and group lessons in Practical Life, Sensorial, Math, Language, Zoology, Botany and Cultural areas of the curriculum, during pandemic. During these first months of school our teacher role is to assist in the children's safety of self, environment and friendship development.

Many children have begun forming very sweet friendships and you may begin talking more about play-dates with friends from school or pass with hellos out in the world. You all have very friendly and warm children. And thank you teachers and parents for helping model a very kind and gentle space for our school community.

***Such a community is nourished by supportive acts of kindness--one parent driving for another who is ill; one family sending a casserole when another family has a new baby; families helping teachers in time crunch before the first day of school; teachers giving extra time when it is needed and many other gestures of mutual support. As each individual feels respected and valued by others in the community, all gradually become comfortable in the family-like atmosphere that serves as a paradigm of our wider participation in the global community.***

~Nurturing the Spirit in Non-Sectarian Classrooms, by Aline D. Wolf

A topic of curriculum night conversation focuses on our daily class practice of Inclusion during play and use of the following response if asked by a friend to play and help the children form routine in this process:

“Can I play?”

“No thank you, maybe later. I am working/playing alone right now.”

Or if approaching an existing group (two or more) working on project or imaginative play:

“Sure, we’ll figure it out.”

To assist the children being creative in the group activity including more if asked to join, is requested in class to assist the individual forming good foundation experiences when seeking connection. This is a confidence builder for all involved because everyone is able to answer authentically while also being kind. Teachers assist a younger two-half year old classmate who might want to play with the same material yet play/concentrate alone. This is the gift of observation in class where we can help decode what is being sought after and seeking to communicate. We also ask the children to practice listening as much as “use your words” and sometimes help brainstorm while having a heart-to-heart check-in if hurt feelings occur using Compassionate Listening and team building skill practice, all in masks. The majority of the times the children are showing great care and imagination attached to this empathy developing response in-group work.

Working with masks has created swift adaptation to studying eyes and body language in discomforts, celebrations, confusions and fatigue. The rewards of connection and laughter from the children, loving the small groups and a clarity of our teacher roles to reflect back what we hear to help everyone. This is also creating an opportunity to adapt to what masks work best for each child. Our empathy lenses are heightened by the magnitude of our reliance on new parts of our senses and methods of communications, learnings and teachings of the process one on one in lessons and in small groups or also in the larger greeting outside the circle. Your children are incredible.

***Empathy is the ability to read and grasp the emotions of another person...Children learn empathy by seeing how others react when distressed and then imitating what they see. They learn empathy when discipline for misbehavior requires them to focus attention on the distress their behavior has caused someone else. Children learn empathy by having their feelings understood and shared by another.***

***Emotional intelligence encompasses many of the foundation abilities that an individual must possess before that individual is able to successfully employ conflict resolution processes. Developing emotional intelligence to enable a young person to learn conflict resolution is simply adding other tools to use, especially when involved in interpersonal conflicts.***

~ Developing Emotional Intelligence, by Richard J. Bodine & Donna K. Crawford

Some masked, small group songs we are exploring inside and outside classes as we enjoy changing weather and friend connection building:

The rain flows down the river  
And washes out to sea,  
Evaporates into the clouds then

It rains back down on me.

The rain is watering the flowers  
The rain is watering the trees  
I put my arms up  
and the rain waters me

As well as: Meet New Friends and Keep the Old, Five Little Pumpkins, In the Autumn Time, Deciduous Trees lose their leaves/ Evergreen Trees keep their green, Listen to the Water, name game fingerplays and fun with the parachute.

### October Topics

- Nocturnal Animals
- Emotions introduction/ creating classroom mask emotion cards that will be laminated and available in our calm-down basket & story table.
- Games/circle prompts and activities about our own masks in the world and making decorative abilities to share out our creativity how we express who we are
- What is a fear, what is an internal alarm system. Exploring ways we can find resiliency and soothing when faced with the emotion of Fear.
- Halloween celebration (costumes to school welcome, masks required :) Loads of Halloween/Autumn Songs and Felt Story Board (COVID19 response,-Lead Teacher Uses in circle stories, viewed by students)
- Spiders (arachnids) and Bats (mammals): looking at their life cycle, parts of the bodies, habitats and how they help the earth.
- Pumpkins, Gourd family & Apples: life cycle, parts of the plant and sensory games, songs and food preparation and tastings.
- Garden preparation for winter and plant cycles: Winter crops and soil care for winter preparation. Pumpkin life cycle, preparation for winter, plant dormancy in our biome: botany and zoology
- Friends & Neighbors: What makes a friend. How does it feel to offer friendship? Peace practices (invitation to play, concentrate together) on how to be neighborly and available for help when asked. Inclusion practice and name games.
- Baking and food preparation begins

***“Finding out that we are one of a kind could be a lonely and frightening thing without the reassurance of knowing that we belong to humankind, and that we all belong to humankind, and that all humans laugh and cry about many of the same needs; and that those needs are best met by other human beings who can love us for both our similarities and our differences.”***

***Mr. Fred Rogers***

## Reminders/Thank You

- **Illness:** Now that we are moving into the cold season amidst pandemic living, thank you so much for keeping your children home when sick of any slight signs. Thank you for adhering to the state guidelines for illnesses and staying home. Please call Emmy directly if you have inquiries. While in a pandemic, if you have inquiries that probably means your children need to take a pause and stay home. Please remember to keep up on the illness protocol. We will call immediately for pickup if signs begin at school and have separation space while they away immediate pickup. Thank you for helping us all stay safe and healthy practices.
- **Lice** Please get your hair combing lice kits and start preventatives: Please check our school blog under Parent Resources for the lice prevention and treatment. Lavender, Tea Tree and Eucalyptus oils diluted with water and rubbed daily at the base of neck hairline as well as around ears are some great preventative bases combined with frequent nit checks. Children will need to stay home until all nits are gone and treatment completed.
- **Autumn Conferences: October 26, 27, 28, 30** times to choose posted soon. Sign up for your optional Autumn conference to hear about what your child is interested in during inside and outside class time joyfully based on cognitive, social, emotional and physical observations. Please note: all content that might require discussing of referrals or more serious specific based is phoned or emailed individually during office times and not conferences. Conferences are meant to be relaxing for parents to inquire, receive answers, enjoy hearing about the joys happening in class for your child. Conference sign-up is emailed out and on the school board in entrance. Conferences are for parents only please and thank you. If COVID19 is limiting availability outside of the home or work, we can zoom into the conference. Please email [klahanieschool@gmail.com](mailto:klahanieschool@gmail.com) the following information prior to conference:
  1. **What are your hopes for your child this school year during school? Any concerns, supports needed, updates on family shifts.**
  2. **Anyways you can be involved?** Ways you can help if able:
    - a. **Substitutes in class (would get orientation with Emmy in small group on a Friday October morning)**
    - b. Playdough (keeping us safe with weekly supply)
    - c. Specialist coordinator: helping us contact and schedule bimonthly specialists in class involved with our unit topics
    - d. Cutouts and copies help for our unit topics
    - e. Pie Auction committee (vital for our annual scholarship fundraiser)
- **Thank you Play Dough Makers!** Please let teachers know if you seek to make weekly playdough that would be individualized for each child in a lidded jar. The outside of the

jars will be sanitized daily and insides cleaned thoroughly each week. Children will remain washing hands in between activities and are doing amazing!

- Self Portraits begin! Please checkout the first set of self portraits in the windows and Alumni mama, community sweetheart Heidi Grimsley will help us begin this very rich and deep process of class self portraits using books, paints and many leveled processes to unveil the beauty of self expression through art.