

WHAT IS A COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL?

A Cooperative Preschool is a learning place for both children and adults. The child is enrolled in preschool for one to five - half days a week. Co-op parents hire a trained teacher to plan and teach the children's program and to lead the parents while they are in the classroom.

One or both parents enroll in a credit bearing, South Puget Sound Community College course in parent education, at no additional charge. This parent education course includes theory and practice of human behavior and development, child guidance, and age-appropriate learning activities for young children.

Parents attend classes (parent meetings) taught by a college instructor called the Advisor. In laboratory sessions (parent helping) they apply the theories and skills they have learned.

So, we have two programs under one roof -- the children's preschool and the parent's college course.

In addition to assisting in the classroom, parents assume responsibility for the operation of the preschool as a small business. Monthly board meetings and a portion of each parent meeting are used to make business decisions about running the school.

What is unique about co-op preschools is that YOU are involved. Since this means a time commitment, it is not for everyone. However, parents can participate in co-ops at different levels. Some will be very active and enthusiastic about the business aspects of the school. Others may have little interest in the business, but provide creative ideas and energy for the children's curriculum. Other parents may have demands outside of the school that make them unable to exceed the minimum requirements for co-op membership. The preschool structure is strong enough to support all families who can meet the minimum participation requirements. Each person contributes to the group in some way and receives benefits from their experience which may remain with their family long after the preschool years.

ADVANTAGES OF A CO-OP

Many people choose cooperative preschools because of the unique advantages for both parent and child. Co-ops have a low child-to-adult ratio. Therefore they can accommodate each child's individual pace and learning style. The environment is safe and nurturing. Co-ops can bridge the gap between home and school in a reassuring way. Children grow from the input of many friendly, trustworthy adults.

Studies show that parent involvement in education is the factor most highly correlated with children's school success. Parent involvement is more important than social class, teacher's input, or curriculum. Children are delighted that we value them and their education enough to want to share intimately in their first school experience. This builds both self esteem and motivation to learn.

Parents in the co-op report an increased understanding of child development, education, and parenting. Parents increase their support networks for sharing and discussing problems and growth. They value the chance to observe other children of the same age.

Parents also develop new skills in group leadership and small business

management that often are useful and/or marketable as their children grow older.

WHO'S WHO IN A CO-OP?

CHILDREN

Attend preschool 1-5 half days per week. Learn to separate easily from parents, follow a school routine, and explore and discover. Learn to trust and communicate with many adults and children. Participate in many social, physical, and cognitive learning activities.

PARENTS

Enroll in college course. Sign commitment to meet minimum requirements. Pay preschool tuition and help fundraise to support school. Attend parent meetings and parent help in the classroom. Elect and/or serve on the board. Do a share of tasks necessary to run the school such as cleaning, purchasing....

CO-OP BOARD

Meets monthly. Coordinates management and operation of preschool including decision making about finances, personnel, facility, policies and procedures. Hires teacher(s). Register children for school. Orients parents. Complies with local, state, and federal business laws. Pays for insurance and implements risk management procedures. Signs an annual agreement with the college. Attends college board training.

PRESCHOOL TEACHER

(Hired and supervised by board.) Plan learning program for children based on current ECE research theory, and practice. Functions as the head teacher in the classroom, coordinating the parent helpers. Works with board and advisor to obtain school goals. Attends board meetings, teachers inservices and parent meetings.

SOUTH PUGET SOUND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Provides Parent Education Program Coordinator. Provides Advisors for co-ops. Publicizes co-ops. Receives requests for information about co-ops. Arranges medical and liability insurance. Provides parent handbooks, board training materials and recordkeeping forms. Provides library, media and counseling services.

PARENT EDUCATION ADVISOR

(Hired and supervised by the college.) Registers parents for South Puget Sound Community College course. Plans and teaches skills and theory of:
1) Early Childhood Education,
2) Parenting/Family Relations, and
3) Leadership and Preschool Business Management.
Teaches through board meetings, parent meetings, classroom visits, and teacher and parent consultations.

THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

HOW YOUNG CHILDREN LEARN

Our goal is to provide a balanced preschool program for the whole child, allowing for physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and creative exploration and growth. During their preschool years, children may learn specific skills such as recognizing their names, using scissors or turning somersaults. These are important skills which encourage both adults and children. Our larger goals however, are harder for us to observe. We are watching for signs that children become comfortable with a variety of people, enjoy using their bodies, communicate their thoughts clearly, and approach life with joy and curiosity and confidence. These are attributes that will enrich their lives and assist them as lifelong learners.

To meet our larger goals, we pay close attention to how young children learn, think and feel. We continually develop our children's program philosophy based on currently accepted theory in early childhood education. Some of this is derived from the position statement "Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Birth Through Age eight" published in 1986 by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Each cooperative preschool teacher and parent also contribute their talents, interests and styles to enrich the basic philosophy. The important points of this philosophy are:

1. **Play is the primary vehicle for children's growth.** Little children are natural learners and they learn through play, especially through self-initiated play. Play is how they explore the world and take information from it. Play is children's work.
2. **There is no hurry to learn.** Children need adults to provide the confident, relaxed attitude that they will learn all they need to know. They will grow teeth, walk, share and read when they are ready. The learning they do in these early years provides a broad foundation that makes it possible to learn more sophisticated skills later. For example, you can teach four-year-olds to tell time. It takes about 180 hours. If you wait until they are eight, it takes about 15 minutes.
3. **Children learn through their senses.** Early learning requires materials which can be seen, heard, felt, smelled, or tasted. These sensory impressions form the mental pictures which can later be represented by written words. Without these impressions, words are meaningless. Also, children need to experience the size, weight, movement, and other properties of materials they handle so that math and science concepts make real sense to them later.
4. **Children learn best through concrete experiences.** They learn by doing, instead of just listening. They learn better by counting blocks instead of dots on a flat piece of paper. They slice and eat apples instead of coloring them or spelling them. They need concrete experiences now. During the early elementary years, children will become able to work successfully with symbols on paper (reading and writing and math).
5. **Children need to learn about themselves and their own lives first.** We plan activities that are real and relevant to children's lives. They make sense of their life by playing house, or taking a field trip to the pumpkin farm. As

they grow older, they will become ready to learn about people, places, and ideas that are more removed from their daily lives.

6. **Children must address their own physical and emotional needs first.** At the beginning of preschool, it may take all of their energy to separate from parents, learn to use the preschool's bathroom and figure out how to go outside and come back in when the rest of the group does. It is only after children feel secure that they can focus on more complex skills such as sharing, learning new concepts, exploring their creativity, or developing language skills.

7. **Children learn actively and interactively.** They actively experiment with materials, ideas, and other people. They expand their thinking and explore ideas in conversation and play. Even children who watch are watching actively. Learning is sometimes quiet, often noisy, and often messy.
8. **Preschool curriculum should be multi-cultural, non-sexist, and non-competitive,** so that all children feel safe and included in the group and can develop to their fullest potential.
9. **Structured, demanding activities are kept brief.** Structured activities are alternated with less confining activities. Most young ones are on-the-go as they learn, so we schedule only short periods of sitting or listening. By kindergarten they will need to be able to sit and listen for 10 minutes, so we work towards that gradually. At about 10 or 11 years of age, the frontal lobe of the brain is developed sufficiently to have "boredom tolerance" which is the ability to sit and listen when you don't really want to. Sitting and listening for more than a few minutes is too much to ask of preschoolers.
10. **Young children learn best in small groups or in individual situations.** The whole class does short activities together each day. In small groups, however, children can participate more actively and an adult can successfully relate new ideas to what children already know.
11. **Young children are individuals.** They have their own temperament, learning style and developmental time clock. We respect each as a unique person with unique needs, interests, abilities and behavior. It is OK to be just who they are at preschool.

PARENTING HELPING IN THE CLASSROOM

Parents are active members of the classroom each preschool day. The preschool serves as a laboratory where parents can observe children's growth, development and behavior, improve communication skills, practice leading children's activities, gain greater appreciation of children's creativity, and work with other adults.

You may feel comfortable in this role or you may feel a little nervous. It takes time and practice to learn about guiding a group of children through their preschool day. The teacher, advisor, longtime members, and even the children will help you to learn your new role.

Scheduling - You will be scheduled to parent help an average of once every two weeks. Your class representative or scheduler makes the monthly schedule. Please let them know if you have a preference for certain days.

If you cannot parent help on your scheduled day, you are responsible for finding someone to take your place. 1) Call other parents and arrange to trade days, or 2) hire a paid substitute parent helper from your school's list, or 3) if these haven't worked, call your scheduler for more ideas. Please do not call the teacher with parent helper scheduling issues.

Who Can Parent Help?

All regular parent helpers are enrolled in the college parenting course, attend the parent helper training in October, read this handbook, and regularly attend parent meetings. This insures a safe preschool with wellinformed adults in charge. An alternate responsible adult can be a visiting parent helper once or twice a year, as long as a regular parent helper is present. You are responsible for briefing a visiting parent helper who takes your place. Please explain their roles, specific tasks, and the preschool day. Have them read this section of the handbook.

General Parent Helping Tips

1. **Arrive 15 minutes before children begin class.**
2. Bring the group snack if it is your assigned day.
3. Help prepare all areas of the preschool for the children. A list of necessary tasks, such as taking lids off the paint containers is posted at school.
4. **You may bring only children enrolled in the class on your parent helping day.**
The preschool is not always safe for younger children and they are not covered by our insurance for participation in class. In addition, your enrolled child really appreciates this special time with you. Many preschool families trade babysitting for younger children on parent helping days.
5. Enjoy the other adults present, but limit adult talk. Be sure not to discuss any children in their presence. This can damage their sense of self-worth.
6. **Focus attention on the children** (more than on adults or cleanup or even learning projects). Children learn quickly with the gift of attention. Watching them, conversing with them, and playing with them aids their growth.
Get in there and play and converse with children. Let them see your enthusiasm for the preschool. Feel free to build relationships with individual children. They learn and respond to guidance better when they have strong relationships with us.
7. Relax and enjoy yourself. No one is here to judge you or your child. They come, like you do, to learn and play.
8. Spend time observing and playing with your own child on your parent helping day. It is OK to satisfy their needs to show you around, play with you, sit on your lap or otherwise stay close to you.

9. Most children are different on the day their parent is in class. Some become more shy or more aggressive, some are very excited, others cling. They may cry more on the days their parents are present. All of this is normal and will even out as the year goes on. They behave differently when you are there because they feel safe when you are present.
10. Supervise children for safety at all times. Feel free to step in or call for another adult to help supervise whenever there is a question of safety.
11. No use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco products at preschool.
12. Remember we are all learners here. That means we will make mistakes. We don't worry over the mistakes, but we do try to learn from them. Feel free to step into any situation as you think you are needed. Afterwards evaluate your actions. If you feel you made a mistake, think what you could do next time and talk it over with the teacher or advisor.
13. **Stay 15 minutes after class to complete cleanup of the classroom** and evaluate the session. Your school has a list of specific clean up duties.

DAILY ROUTINES AT PRESCHOOL

Free Choice Time (also called Discovery Time or Free Play)

Free choice time provides a chance for the child to practice making decisions about what to do, who to do it with, and what materials to use. Children grow in independence and self motivation by practicing these choices. If free choice time is not available the children can become too dependent on adults to direct their play. Then, we hear "I'm bored" or "What can I do now?"

During free choice time a child can use their own self-knowledge to lead them to what they need to learn and understand next. Some children will work intensively with materials during free choice, learning principles of physics or math or exploring creativity. Many children will practice social interactions during this time, working on language skills, problem solving, and cooperation. At least 45 minutes of free choice time is necessary to insure that the social benefits of free choice time occur.

Free choice time is not a free-for-all. The environment has been carefully planned to encourage social interaction and positive behavior. Adults have thoughtfully set up activities and materials throughout the school which encourage children to learn new concepts, create, interact with each other and solve problems.

What can a parent helper do during free choice time?

1. Encourage choice. Make sure adult ideas and voices don't dominate the preschool. Let the children lead. Let them discover their own mistakes whenever possible. Do step in when a child is disruptive to others or unsafe. Help wandering children choose an activity. Children having difficulty choosing may need fewer options at the beginning of the year. For example, ask them if they want to paint or build with blocks. Children who watch others without participating or disturbing do not need to choose another activity. Watching intently is a learning activity.
2. Extend the children's learning through conversations.
 - Get down at their eye level
 - Ask open-ended questions such as: " What do you think will happen if..." so they need to think to answer.
 - Let them test their language or thinking. Through their play they will figure out which ideas make sense in the world.
 - Gently give suggestions. Drop them if the child isn't ready. For example, show how to turn a puzzle piece over the hole to see if it fits. But remember, they learn best by doing it themselves.
3. Show interest in what children are doing by warmly watching them. Encourage curiosity and exploration. Everything at preschool is to touch, check out, ask about, and try new ideas on. Assist them by answering questions and replenishing supplies.
4. Encourage creativity. It is OK to use preschool materials in any way that does not hurt people or property. Painting with the wrong end of the brush is OK. Good problem solvers are people who can think of lots of possible ways to do things.
5. Play. Get in there and lose your dignity. Sit on the floor with building toys or board games. Be fed at their restaurant, scoop up beans at the sensory table, or dress up in beads and a crown.
6. Start a new activity alone or with one child. Others will join soon.

Clean Up Time

Each day the children participate in putting away the materials they have used. Many parents comment that their children can help with clean up easier at school than at home. This may be because everyone is doing it; it is considered to be just one more preschool activity. Children all have days when they don't want to clean up.

What can a parent helper do during clean up time?

1. Help the teacher forewarn the children that clean up time is coming.
2. Help a small group of children to clean up one area. Stay more involved with the children than the cleaning. You can do more thorough cleaning after school.
3. Sometimes children are overwhelmed by how large the task is. Help break it into small pieces. "Jerry, you can get the hats and put them on this shelf." "John, I'll help you find all the pieces of this game." By saying you will help him, you let him know it's his responsibility.
4. Notice and compliment what children are doing, not what they aren't. "You sure got all the blocks on the shelf". This is called positive reinforcement.
5. Support the policy of "everyone cleans until it is done." It doesn't matter who played with what.
6. Ask teachers if you are not sure where items belong. Help to keep things in their labeled areas.

Small Group Activity

Young children are more able to participate in small groups than large groups. You may be needed to supervise a small group activity. Some schools do this daily and some do it occasionally. The teacher will explain the project and your role earlier that day.

Circle Time

For one or two short periods of time each day, the whole group of children will join together for stories, movement, songs, and sharing. Through this activity they increase their attention span, build vocabulary, and practice taking turns. They gain an understanding of their role in the group. They acquire self-confidence as they learn to express themselves.

Some children will not be ready for the large group experience. They may first need to know and feel comfortable with smaller groups. They may not yet be ready to sit. Children are encouraged to join circle time, but not forced. Trust them to know when they are ready.

What can a parent helper to during Group Time?

1. Help children find a place to sit.
2. Be a model for children to imitate. Join the songs and games.
3. Help with children who do not wish to participate. They may be willing to sit on your lap or stand just outside the group to watch. If they are not content with this, calmly move the child out of view of the other children and read a story, do a puzzle, or other quiet activity. Explain to the child that it is a quiet time and we cannot disturb the children in the group.
4. If a child is disruptive during circle time, sit near them (or between them). It is better for you to handle most disturbances, so the teacher can keep her attention on the group activity. Try sitting behind a disruptive child and whispering and touching gently. If they are not able to participate without disturbing others, try suggestions in #3 above. The teacher will also consider switching to active group games, rather than ones that require quiet concentration.

Transition Times

Transition times are when we switch from one activity to another, from free choice time to clean up or from outdoors to snack. They are the hardest times for young children who are just learning about school. They may want to continue the activity they are enjoying. They may not like the next activity. They may not be experienced in shifting gears with a group of children. As the year progresses, transitions will be smoother.

What can a parent helper do during transitions?

1. Help the teacher give all children a 5 minute forewarning, so they can finish what they are working on.
2. Stay with children who have difficulty with transitions. Give them a 3 minute and one minute warning also. Explain exactly what they will be doing when the time is up.
3. Allow enough time for them to complete their project whenever possible. Abrupt change from one activity to another causes confusion and rebellion.
4. Help children remember what to do, one step at a time. "First hang up your coat...next, choose a place to sit in the circle."

Outdoor Time

Outdoor time is for running, jumping, climbing, digging, riding tricycles. It is the acceptable time and place to be very noisy. It is a time for exploration of the natural world outdoors. Children build physical strength and coordination, learn healthy patterns of daily exercise, and practice cooperation through group games.

What can a parent helper do Outdoors?

1. Make sure that all children are always within sight of an adult.
2. Make sure all equipment is used safely. Outdoor time has the highest risk of injury. Teach safety skills such as how to walk around the swing set or waiting until one child is off the slide before you go down.
3. Help children problem solve situations such as who gets to swing or use the tricycle first. Encourage them to think of solutions that will make them both

happy.

4. Start games and teach simple physical skills such as galloping and skipping, balance beam, kicking a soccer ball, playing catch. Encourage a child who is new to climbing or hanging from their knees.
5. In conversation, help children notice the seasons and weather. "What do we need to wear to go out today?" "What do you think is happening to those leaves?" Converse about their bodies and physical skills. "Your arm muscles are getting stronger from hanging like that."

Snack Time

Snack time is an important part of our curriculum since it includes nutrition, science, hygiene and social skills. It is the favorite part of preschool for many children. Sometimes snack preparation will be part of free choice time. Children may peel carrots, cut fruit, measure, mix, bake, and serve. Eating the snack is a chance for learning.

What can a parent helper do during snack time?

1. Help children wash hands before snack.
2. Do your part to keep snack nutritious. They can be very simple, but should not be sweet. See suggestions on next page.
3. Encourage self-help by putting the drink in child-sized pitchers. Children can pour "as much as they think they can drink."
4. Sit down with them and become part of the sharing of food. Your child may want you next to him or her. If not, seat yourself next to a shy child or next to a child who needs guidance.
5. Spills happen sometimes. Put a sponge or rag on the table ahead of time. Calmly ask the child to wipe it up. Reassure them that we all spill at times. As the year goes by, children will be able to do wipe-ups without being asked.
6. Snack time is a natural time for talking. Talking about food, color, shape, texture and taste help sharpen the children's senses. They can become more aware of each other by discussing who is not here today, who is going to Grandma's for Thanksgiving... They will learn about their differences, similarities, and uniqueness.
7. If a child doesn't like a certain food we may ask if they will try it at school. We do not force them to eat or withhold snack at any time.
8. As they finish, guide children to throw away their leftovers. Each is responsible for their own table place. If they have left the table, say "Amy, you need to throw away your ____ before leaving the table."

WHAT TO BRING FOR SNACK

A healthy snack in the middle of the preschool session is important for young children. Most preschool children need snacks between meals to have enough energy and to grow. Some children are too busy or excited to eat a good meal before school and may be very hungry by snack time. Think of the preschool snack as an important part of the children's diet, meeting part of their daily nutritional needs, rather than a time for treats. **Snack will be healthy if it contains a small serving from each of these food groups:**

Carbohydrates Whole grains are most nutritious.	Fruits & Vegetables	Proteins
Bagels Biscuits Bread sticks Cheerios or Chex cereals Corn bread Crackers English muffins French toast-made at school Granola Granola bars (low sugar) Muffins (reduce sugar) Pancakes -made at school Pretzels Rice cakes or rice bites Toast Tortillas Waffles	Apple or pear wedges or wheels Applesauce Apricot or Peach slices Banana chunks or halves Berries or Cherries Carrot curls or sticks Cherry tomatoes Cucumber slices or sticks Cauliflowerettes Dried fruits:raisins,bananas, apple Frozen popsicles (100% fruit) Fruit juice (100% real fruit) Grapes (halves for 2-year-olds) Kiwi Melon cubes or wedges Orange wedges or wheels Plums	Milk Bean dip Cheese chunks (cheddar, jack) Cottage cheese dip Fruit juice gelatin Fruit smoothies (fruit + milk or yogurt) Hard boiled eggs Mixed nuts and raisins Peanut butter (spread thin to prevent choking) String cheese Yogurt dressing for fruit salad

EXAMPLES:

Whole grain cracker, apple wedges and cheese cubes
 English muffin cheese pizza, carrot sticks
 Homemade popsicles made from orange juice and banana and milk, crackers
 Banana smoothie and cheerios

Bagel with cream cheese thinned with milk, peach slices

Please notice if any **food allergies** are posted for children in your class.

Avoid foods that can cause **choking**. Foods such as nuts, popcorn, carrot rounds, and thick peanut butter should not be served in our youngest classes.

Please avoid foods that are high in sugar such as pop, cupcakes, cookies, candy or chocolate. Please avoid foods that are high in fat and salt such as chips or foods that need continual refrigeration such as custards or meats.

WHAT DO CHILDREN LEARN AT PRESCHOOL?

Arrival Time

Greeting
Take off wraps
Opportunity to chat
with the teacher

Value to Children

- Social skills
- Self-concept (identity)
- To share news of self and family
- Self-help skills: zippers
 buttons
 laces
 boots
 getting into and out of coats &
 hanging them up

Dramatic Play Area

dress up
dolls
house
restaurant
fire station
doctor's office
post office
store

Value to Children

- Social contact:
 conversation skills
 problem solving
 talk about feelings
 act out emotional situations
- Learn about roles such as:
 family members, clerks, cooks,
 fire fighters, healthcare workers,
 mail carriers
- Mathematical concepts:
 counting, making change, classifying
- Develop imagination

Large Muscle

Equipment

Climber

Value to Children

- To climb
- The concept of their body in space

Slide	- Safe use of own body and equipment
Balance Beam	- To use large muscles - strengthen back, legs, arms, etc.
Jumping Board	- Muscular coordination and balance
Rocking Boat	- Find socially acceptable release for their energies and tensions
Barrels	- Sharing toys and taking turns
Riding Equipment	
Swings	

Small Muscle

Equipment

Puzzles
Legos
Scissors
Playdough

Value to Children

- Small muscle development
- Shapes, sizes, colors, spacial relationships
- Eye-hand coordination
- Counting/number concept
- Classifying

Sensory Table and Sandbox

Value to Children

- Soothes tensions
- Opportunity for solitary, parallel, or cooperative play.
- Physical skills:
 - pouring, measuring
 - using small tools, sweeping
- Science principles:
 - gravity
 - floating, sinking
 - temperature
 - quantity
 - weight
 - measurement
- Language skills to express the above

concepts

Science & Nature Center

Magnets
Pulley
Seasons
Weather
Cooking
Human Body
Magnifying Glass
Weights and Scales
Animals (zoo, farm, pets, insects, etc.)

Value to Children

- Characteristics and need of living things
- About weather, air, water, rocks, etc.
- About the properties of magnets, wheels, pullies, etc.
- About the growing world around them
- Concepts such as:
 - size
 - directions (up, down, behind)
 - weight
 - animal habitat
 - senses
 - attract/repel
- Mathematical concepts:
 - number concepts (important prerequisite for math)
 - counting- classifying/categorizing
 - seriation
 - matching
- Stimulates curiosity

- Problem-solving skills
-

Block Area

Unit blocks
Hollow blocks
Legos/Duplos
Bristle blocks
Accessories: animal
& people figures,
cars, planes...

Value to Children

- Science concepts:
Properties of matter (solidity, weight, size, shape), gravity, balance, stability, trial & error, inductive thinking, physics (ramps, levers...)
- Math concepts:
Number, fractions, measurement (area, volume, height, length, depth, weight), order, classification.
- Art concepts:
Patterns, symmetry, balance.
- Social Skills:
Cooperation, working in small groups, problem solving, concentration, respect for work of others, clean up.
- Physical Skills:
Visual perception, eye-hand coordination, small muscle development.
- Language arts:
Signs, labeling, naming buildings, stories about building, planning, and exchanging ideas.

Creative Activities

Painting
Clay
Crayons/felt pens
Playdough
Finger Painting
Cutting
Pasting
Collage
Stringing

Value to Children

- Self-Expression
- Acceptable ways to release tension
- Concentration
- Creativity:
Experimentation, discovery, problem solving.
- Exploration of color:
Mixing colors, color relationships (bright, dull, light, dark)
- Pre-writing:
Eye-hand coordination, small muscle development, drawing lines & strokes and shapes
- Pre-reading:
Focusing eyes, left to right eye movement, use of symbols.

Music

Songs
Movement
Instruments

Value to Children

- Rhythm:
Clapping, drumming, marching.
- Sound relationship:

Dramatic Play
Dance

- high or low pitch, fast or slow
 - Use of musical instruments
 - Listening and memory skills
 - Energy release (singing, clapping, stomping)
 - Movement concepts:
 - Heavy or light, fast or slow, small or big, circular or straight.
 - Self-expression
 - Vocabulary and language development.
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Clean-up

Handwashing
Toileting
Putting away toys
Washing tables
Cleaning snack place

Value to Children

- Self-help skills:
 - washing, soaping, rinsing, drying, handling their own clothing and toilet needs.
- Health reasons for washing
- Learning about bodies and their functions
- Routine
- Cooperation
- Care for property and environment
- Orderliness and organization
- Self-satisfaction in helping and completing a job.

Circle Time

Games
Stories
Conversations
Music
Creative dramatics
Dance and Movement

Value to Children

- Social sharing
 - Language development
 - Listening skills
 - To ask questions
 - To verbally respond to the teacher's and children's questions and ideas
 - Stimulate curiosity
 - Taking turns
 - Concentration
 - Express self verbally
 - Visual perception
 - Vocabulary and speech development
 - Rhyming
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Snack Time**Value to Children**

Social contact and conversation
Consideration for others: passing, waiting, asking
Practice pouring and serving
Math concepts: fractions (1/2 pieces), comparison
Awareness of basic nutrition

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT PRESCHOOL

When children are not well enough to come to school...

Illness can spread rapidly at preschool. To protect your child and others, keep your child home if they have:

- persistent cough or sneezing
- inflamed eyes
- colored or thick nasal discharge
- sore throat, red or inflamed
- earache
- skin rash
- head lice or nits
- fever, vomiting, or diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- unusual fatigue or irritability, or lack of appetite
- medication which interferes with their participation in school.

If a child develops any of these symptoms at school, the child will be isolated to prevent contact with other children and you will be called to pick the child up. Please notify the teacher if your child has a contagious disease so that other parents can be informed. Children may come back to school after an illness when they are well enough to play outdoors.

If a child is injured at school

Know where the first aid kit is stored. The teacher is first-aid certified. Parent can apply first aid if trained, or can calm and occupy the other children. If needed, call injured child's parent and/or 911.

For any minor or major injury, the accident/incident report form must be completed by the teacher or witness. If the child goes to the doctor or hospital a Hartford insurance form should accompany him or her. The first section is completed by the teacher or witness.

When it snows

Preschool closes when the surrounding school district closes. Listen to your radio for Olympia Schools (Eastside Co-op), North Thurston Schools (Lacey Co-op) and Griffin School (Steamboat Island Co-op). Radio stations carrying the message are: KTOL (1230 AM), KGY (1240 AM), KLDY (680 AM), KMAS (Shelton 1030 AM), or KXXO (96.1 FM)

What to wear to preschool

(Your guide to dressing for mess)

Both adults and children should wear clothes that can get dirty. Outside play will happen everyday, so clothes should allow for active movement and weather conditions. In addition, clothes should be as easy as possible to manage for toileting and dressing.

STARTING PRESCHOOL

How to Prepare Your Child for the First Day of Pre-School

1. Tell the child about some things she'll be able to do at school: play with other children, use big blocks, paint, etc. Tell the child about things the teacher and parent helpers will do: read stories, teach songs, help children when they need help, etc. Be "low-key" so the child's expectations will not be too high, causing later disappointment.
2. Attend open house where the child can meet the teacher and explore the school. Introduce the child to all rooms and the outdoor play area. Encourage the child to use the toilet facilities.
3. Invite a child from the pre-school class to your home to play before school opens.
4. Let the child know you will be at school with him or her for awhile, but prepare the child for separation from you. Let the child know that on some days you will be parent helping.

Attending the First Day of School

1. If this is the child's first experience in the school, you can plan to stay for the entire session. Even returning students may feel some apprehension after being away for summer vacation, getting a new teacher, etc. All parents should plan to spend at least a few minutes at school until the child feels connected to the teacher, parent helpers, or children.
2. In families where both parents work outside of the home, one parent should try to take time from work to bring the child to school on his or her first day. If this is impossible, someone close to the child should substitute-- grandparent, sitter, neighbor, etc.
3. If your child needs to remain close to you, that's o.k. Try to remain visible to your child at all times. The child will feel more secure venturing out, if she or he knows you are there to return to.
4. For a child who is particularly concerned, bring a blanket, stuffed animal or other item from home that will be a comfort.
5. Don't expect your child to behave perfectly. Teachers and other parents are at school to support you and your child and to learn with you, not to judge you.
6. When school is in session and you are remaining with your child, limit your conversation with other adults. Do not discuss the children or their reactions to school in their presence. Comments about themselves that children overhear have a powerful effect on them.
7. Make the day special, plan a favorite breakfast, a picnic lunch, etc. Make the child's first day in school something to celebrate.

8. Be prepared for possible changes in your child's behavior at home. She or he may be tired, over-excited, boastful, or unusually sensitive in response to the new experience. Many children have a need for more rest during this time.
9. Your child may develop a huge appetite. Some children even need a snack in the car on the way home.

When Mother or Father Leaves

1. Let your child's confidence grow until she or he is ready to handle school without you. Some children will be ready for parents to leave after the first day. Others will need their parent for several weeks.
2. Consult privately with the teacher about when your child seems ready to let you go. Withdraw gradually if the child has been shy or dependent.
3. When it is time to leave, tell your child you are leaving, do not sneak away. Let him or her know when you will return by using time references that the child can relate to: "I will be back before lunch, and we will go home and eat lunch together."
4. If your child seems sad, acknowledge your child's feelings but also be encouraging. Let your child know that the teacher will help him or her.
5. The teacher will comfort and reassure your child if she or he is upset. Children may feel grief, fear, and anger when parents leave, and teachers and parent helpers need to acknowledge these feelings in order to help children work through them. Children will need to vent those feelings before they can be encouraged to get involved with something at school.
6. It may help a child feel better to have something of his or her parent's at school.
7. A child who continues to cry long after the parent has gone may need to have the parent remain at school for a few more sessions until she or he feels more comfortable. The parent may then leave for a short time and gradually lengthen times away. Be patient; this is a big step for your child.
8. The child who cries each time his or her parent leaves but then stops and plays comfortably, possibly will do better if someone else brings them to school.

How to Continue Supporting Your Child Through the School Year

1. Focus on the primary goal of keeping "going to school" a positive thing-- rather than on secondary goals (eating every bite of breakfast or picking up every toy before you leave home). If you focus on the primary goal, you'll be more apt to allow time for the secondary goals to be met too.
2. Invite school friends over to play.
3. Use a carpool. This is good socially. Have a car pool party to introduce children and parents who will be riding together.
4. Be on time. It can be more difficult to enter the school situation when other children are already deeply into their play.
5. Be sure that the child connects with the teacher and ideally with something to do before you leave. Always take the child into school.
6. Provide nutritious meals. Many studies link the ability to learn with good nutrition.
7. See that your child comes to school with adequate rest. School is very stimulating and tiring.

8. Dress your child so he or she can be as independent as possible. Velcro shoes, slip on boots worn without shoes, elastic waisted pants, and mittens instead of gloves work well. Dress your child for comfort. Consider the weather and provide raingear and boots for wet days, mittens for cold days, etc. Dress the child in clothes that can get dirty, and let him or her know it's o.k. to get dirty. Children need to feel free to use materials (paint, sand, water, glue, dough, etc.) without worrying about getting clothes soiled.
9. Keep children home when they are not feeling well.
10. Tell children "I hope you have a good time" not to "be good."
11. Understand that your child may not bring home projects each day, or even when other children do.
12. Communicate with your child about school. Be ready to listen when he has something to tell you about his or her experience. She or he may not answer a direct question such as "What did you do at school today?"

GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR AT PRESCHOOL

GOALS FOR GUIDING BEHAVIOR

We guide children's behavior so that they gradually learn to live and play well in a group. We want them to have internal self-control over their behavior so that they are cooperative, kind, fair, safe, and can solve their disagreements peaceably even when we are not around. This requires that we use only positive guidance techniques that build children's self-esteem as they learn acceptable group behavior.

We accept and respect each child regardless of their behavior. The children are treated with warmth and caring even when they make mistakes. We patiently teach young children how to behave successfully in school. They are not punished for not already knowing how. It is o.k. if it takes all year to learn how to act at preschool.

THE RULES

Preschool has a few basic rules.

Rule

Prohibited behaviors

"We treat ourselves with care"

Running indoors, hammering without safety glasses, building blocks above shoulder level, going outside without an adult, going out of play yard.....

"We treat other people with care"

Hurt bodies: hitting, pushing, biting.....
Hurting feelings: name calling, excluding from a play area.

"We take good care of the things in the preschool"

Disturbing others: indoor screaming, disruption during circle time, ruining someone's project, throwing toys, misusing equipment....

The children are free to explore, be active, make some noise, and make messes that may not be appropriate at other places they go, but for which the preschool is designed. They can express a full range of emotions here. They can cry, get mad or scared and no one will tease or make them stop as long as people and property are safe.

Children are not expected or required to participate in all preschool activities. Some children may choose to stand back and watch others at first until they feel comfortable enough to join in.

PROBLEM SOLVING BETWEEN TWO CHILDREN

If two children are fighting or arguing, you have an opportunity to teach the lifelong skill of problem solving. Approach them in a friendly way, with a statement like: "Sounds like there's a problem. I'll help."

1. Listen to both children without taking sides. Give each a short turn to say what happened and what they want, but make no judgments. We rarely ever know who had it first or who started it. They will cool down when each believes

- you have understood their point of view. You may have to hold an item they are fighting over, so they believe each has a fair chance in the discussion.
2. Encourage them to brainstorm ideas that might make them both happy. You can even write them down. Help them think of ideas without judging or choosing yet.
 3. Let them discuss each idea, asking "Will this one make you both happy?" Brainstorm more if no ideas work yet. This skill takes time to learn, but is worth it. They will be able to use it by themselves as they grow older.

PREVENTING BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

Whenever we can, we prevent behavior problems. Some ways to do this at home or school are:

Change the environment: A table in the middle of the room is something to run around. Moving it near the wall eliminates the behavior.

Change the timing: Too many quiet activities in a row cause children to build up steam. Alternating quiet and active periods prevents problems. Moving snack time earlier may prevent hunger-caused crankiness.

Change Our Expectations: Understanding what is normal for your children can help us plan well for them. Since only 5% of three-year-olds can share we stay near to help them with difficulties when there is only one item. We put out enough art materials so they can all have what they need.

Decrease stimulation: Noise and visual clutter may affect behavior. We arrange a quiet place where children can get away. We make sure there are not too many choices of activities. We make sure the visual impact of the room is calming and draws children toward activities.

Foreshadow: Let children know what is going to happen. "It's almost time to clean up." "First we'll wash hands, then eat snack."

Keep the Routine: Children are more relaxed when they know what to expect. Changes in the routine are made to meet the children's needs.

Get Down to Eye Level: Stoop down and make eye contact when you need to give direction to a child. Use their first name.

Give Simple Directions: Make short statements. No lectures. "The games go on this shelf." "Climbing here isn't safe" "Bite this toy, not a person."

Give Clear Directions: Make specific statements such as "Get on your coat" instead of vague statements like "Get ready to go."

Give Focused Attention: Whenever supervising children's play at preschool, give your undivided attention. Give extra attention, maybe playing one-on-one with a child who is having a bad day (or month).

POSITIVE GUIDANCE TECHNIQUES

When a child is behaving unsafely or unkindly, any preschool adult can step in to help the child learn a better way. Remember it is confidence, not anger, that says you "mean it". Here are some suggested methods:

Stop a dangerous situation immediately: If danger is immediate, use words and gentle action. Gently hold the arm that is swinging the stick. Help a child move who is too close to a swing.

Use positive commands: Tell the child what you want them to do. They don't always know what to do instead.

Say "Put the blocks down" instead of "Stop throwing the blocks."

Say "Sit on the chair" instead of "Don't stand on the chair."

Say "You may run when we are outdoors" or "Walk while you are indoors." instead of "Don't run."

Say "Tell him what you want" instead of "Don't grab the toy."

Say "Use listening ears," instead of "Stop talking".

Give simple explanations: No lectures, "People are not for hitting." "Food is for eating."

"___ isn't safe, try ___."

Give two yeses for every no: "You can use chalk on the chalkboard, or markers on paper, but not on the wall." "Blocks are for building, you can throw the ball or bean bag."

Redirect the behavior: "Kick the soccer ball, not people." " Jump on the rebounder instead of off the table." " Play in the water basin instead of the toilet." "Play with the stick by the fence, but not near other children." "You can build your own tower to knock down." These ideas allow children to express the same energy, without hurting anyone.

Catch them behaving acceptably: "You petted the hamster very gently." "That was a good idea to build together, instead of fighting over the blocks." Wow, you can clean things up." Ignore minor infractions and watch for something you can compliment instead.

Use "when-then": "When your snack trash is thrown away, then you can go outside."

Make short, simple consequences: Let children know the consequences in advance. "If you run with the scissors, I will put them away for two minutes." Give the child another chance to be successful very soon.

Repeat yourself, with confidence, when necessary: A smart, curious, unfearful child must test and re-test to fully understand the nuances of our rules.

Talk with the teacher: If you lose patience, or the unsafe activity continues, talk the situation over with the teacher.

Last resort method: If a particular behavior continues day after day, the teacher and parent may discuss it and agree on a positive method to handle it. The

child should be informed of any plan.

As a last resort, if a child continues to disrupt or be aggressive, the teacher may use a time out. An effective timeout for young children is two minutes or less away from the activity or situation. An adult always stays with the child.

An appropriate time-out doesn't resemble being "sent to the corner." The time out is used as a breather to reduce the stress of the situation. The child is encouraged to re-try the situation right away to be successful. Time out is rarely necessary at preschool; often a whole school year passes without using it. Many teachers prefer to use a distracting "break" or a short walk, which can be very effective.

TYPICAL PRESCHOOL SITUATIONS

What not to do

Possible adult responses

Aggression

People hit when they don't know other options. Help build self esteem and language skills to prevent future hitting.

Don't be aggressive also.
Don't use a voice that makes children afraid or ashamed.
Don't compare "Why can't you play nice like Lisa?"

Stop any danger right away.
Seek ways to channel the anger.
"People are not for hitting. You can come outside and hit the baseball." "Ow, that must hurt."
"You can use your words to tell him, instead of your fists."
"I won't let you hit anyone and I won't let anyone hit you."
"Use gentle hands."

Arguing

Don't take sides. Don't use put downs. Don't take the toy away (they don't learn new skills this way).

Use ideas from previous section "Problem Solving Between Two Children". "I bet you can work out a deal that would make you both happy."

Crying

Crying is the release of emotion. After a child has cried they can often be more reasonable and solve problems.

No teasing or put downs:
No, "Boys don't cry." Don't give food or treats to get them to stop.

Treat them as warmly as you would if their hurt was physical instead of emotional.
Hold them if they like. When they are ready, help them solve their problem.
"Everyone can play in this area at preschool." "That hurts feelings."

Excluding

Name calling, saying shut up

Avoid lectures, shaming, or sarcasm.

Model respectful treatment of both parties. Say "That hurts feelings. Instead tell her you are mad at her." or "Tell her that it hurt your feelings."

Noise (Extreme disruptive)

Avoid screaming

Get close. Speak quietly.
"Use your low voice" or "Use your inside voice"

Sharing

At preschool when a child is using something, it belongs to them and only they can make the decision to share.

(If we decide, they are obeying but not truly sharing). Wanting to share develops gradually. Most adults have difficulty with sharing.

No forced sharing. It delays true sharing. Don't say "Share!" because it is too vague.

Protect ownership rights of the child who is using the item. Ask them to tell the waiting child when they are through. Help the second child wait. Teach how to ask for a turn. Remain patient. Help them problem solve.

Swearing

Remember that the child did not make up the words. She must have heard them from someone, and been able to sense their power.

Don't get excited. It just makes the words more powerful.

Stay calm and matter-of-fact. Teach alternatives such as "Yikes" or "Rats" or "I'm very, very mad at you!!". Another option is to ignore the words, not the child, and help the child with the strong feelings.

Tattling

We don't want to cut off tattling, because we may someday need the information.

Don't make tattling wrong. Also, don't react to the situation that you didn't see unless it's dangerous.

Listen to the reporter. Help them with their feelings. "You could go back and say that you didn't like it."

Wandering/Not focusing on a project

Give them some time to choose. Limit the choices. "It's time to pick an activity. Do you want to look at a book, play with legos, or paint."

R.E.S.C.U.E.* FLOW CHART

(*Responding Effectively to Social Concerns and Untimely Emergencies)

When a parent, teacher, or advisor has a concern about a child's behavior, a possible developmental delay, or suspected abuse we use this RESCUE Chart. We will have a written plan for the situation within two weeks whenever possible. The advisor and teacher share the responsibility equally.

STEP 1 - Teacher or Advisor is notified of concern.

STEP 2 - Planning: Teacher and Advisor consult to gather information and plan observations.

STEP - 3 Observations: The teacher and advisor observe and record behavior, events preceding and following behavior, who, what, where, when.....

STEP 4 - Meeting: Teacher and/or Advisor meet with Parent to create a written plan for school and/or home. This plan is unique for each child and is updated regularly.

STEP 5 - The Plan: Can include any or several of the following:

Methods for building child's self esteem and confidence

referral for screening for delays or other family services

contract with the child

intervention procedure such as in Pages 19, 20, and 21

plan for follow-up observation and meeting

class meeting or communication with other parents

Board or policy committee discussion

ROLES IN A COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL

The Parent's Role

YOU ARE THE OWNER-OPERATOR OF YOUR VERY OWN PRESCHOOL. Parents run the preschool, with the help of the children's teacher and the Parent Education Advisor. Almost every task is done by a volunteer parent. As preschool parent you will:

1. **Enroll in a credit bearing, South Puget Sound Community College course** called "Cooperative Preschool." One adult (or more) per family must enroll. No tuition is charged. The forms are available at preschool orientation. The enrolled adult, whom we call Parent throughout this handbook, may be a parent, babysitter, grandparent, or other responsible adult who plans to attend parent meetings and parent help in the children's classroom.
This college parenting course is designed to give you the support needed to run your preschool. The course work consists of "lecture" and "laboratory" time. All coursework takes place in the parent meetings and parent helping sessions explained below. The credit equivalency you are awarded allows South Puget Sound Community College to fund and provide this program.
2. **Attend an average of one parent meeting per month.** The parent meeting is the lecture portion of your college course. Parent meetings may include school business, a speaker, video, or lively discussion on a subject relevant to raising young children. Many parents say that these meetings help them feel less alone, give new insights and build new skills. If you attend less than an average of one meeting per month, you must complete related make-up projects to meet your obligations. (see next two pages)
3. **Parent help in the classroom.** You will be a parent helper in your child's classroom an average of once every two weeks. This is the laboratory portion of your parenting course. You get to experiment with the ideas and skills you have discussed in parent meetings. You will be able to watch the children learn and grow, observe your child in a group, and see how other children of the same age behave. You can try out new methods of guiding children's behavior. You can plan and practice leading a children's activity. Some of your scheduled days will be field trips. Each parent helper must complete a background check for felony abuse convictions. This is a state law which helps to assure each child's safety.
4. **Elect a preschool Board or serve as a Board member.** Board members meet once a month to coordinate the management and operations of the preschool. They coordinate finances, resources, personnel decisions, and relations with the landlord. They make sure that the preschool complies with all laws regarding small businesses and tax exempt organizations, with insurance risk management procedures, and with the State Board of Community College Education Guidelines for Parent Education Programs.
The Parent Education Advisor attends and assists at all board meetings. Advisors conduct three training sessions per year to help board members learn their jobs and increase their skills in decision-making, problem solving, interpersonal communication, group process, organization leadership and management.
Many board members are able to continue using these skills as community or school volunteers or in employment.
5. **Accept your share of other preschool tasks.** The tasks can range from cleaning the toilets to purchasing crayons, screening children for vision problems to writing preschool newsletter articles. It all is done by co-op parents. Your job or committee coordinator matches people to the jobs

they prefer and makes sure parents get training and information to do the job.

- 6. Record your participation hours, in the Parent Logbook.** This is needed to justify the parent education course/Advisor funding provided by the State of Washington.

PARENT MEETING MAKE-UP PROJECT

Eastside _____ Parent's name: _____
_____ Lacey _____
Steamboat _____ Class: _____
Date: _____

GOALS OF A MAKE-UP PROJECT ARE:

- 1) to provide a worthwhile educational opportunity in place of the educational opportunity missed
- 2) to give a choice of meaningful activities as make-up
- 3) to provide you with similar type information being received by other preschool members

TIPS ON COMPLETING MAKE-UP PROJECTS:

- 1) projects need to be completed by the end of the quarter (November 30, February 28, or May 31)
- 2) projects should take about 2 hours (the length of a parent meeting)
- 3) a list of suggested activities and a completed sample form are in the parent log book under "Make-up Projects"

1. DESCRIBE IN DETAIL WHAT YOU DID AND WHAT YOU LEARNED:

2. WHAT DID YOU DISAGREE WITH OR QUESTION?

3. HOW CAN YOU USE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED IN YOUR OWN FAMILY OR AT PRESCHOOL?

4. MAY WE SUBMIT THIS TO THE NEWSLETTER OR USE IT AS A SAMPLE IN THE PARENT LOG BOOK?

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENT MEETING MAKE-UP PROJECTS

- 1) Attend a parent meeting at another preschool.
- 2) Attend another class, workshop, or lecture in the community on child development, early childhood education, or parenting and share what you have learned.
- 3) Read from a book or article on child development, early childhood education, or parenting, and write your response to it, prepare a discussion for a parent meeting, or write an article for the newsletter about it.
- 4) Interview a parent who attended a meeting you missed.
- 5) Watch a video or TV program on child development, early childhood education, or parenting, and write your response to it, prepare a discussion for a parent meeting, or write an article for the newsletter about it.
- 6) Watch a "children's show" on TV and evaluate it as to what messages are being offered about families, parents, children's rights, etc.
- 7) Watch sitcoms with your children and discuss the messages being offered.
- 8) Analyze the advertisements and commercials during an evening of "family" television shows.
- 9) Design, carry out, and evaluate a learning experiment in the home. For example: observe situations such as sibling relations, unplugging the TV for a week or month, changing family holiday celebrations to reduce stress.
- 10) Listen to an audio tape on child development, early childhood education, or parenting, and share what you have learned.
- 11) Prepare and present a "mini parent meeting" on a subject near and dear to you.
- 12)
- 13)
- 14)
- 15)

THE ROLE OF SOUTH PUGET SOUND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Your cooperative preschool has signed an affiliation agreement with South Puget Sound Community College for this school year. Every Spring your members will vote whether or not to affiliate with the college for the following school year. The College/Co-op Preschool Agreement says that you, the parent, will fulfill certain requirements (see sections of this handbook on the Parent's Role). In return, you will receive from the college:

1. A parenting course "Cooperative Preschool", which includes instruction and practice in early childhood education, parenting and family relations, leadership training, and small business management.
2. A program coordinator is responsible for program development, implementation and coordination of Parent Education Advisors.
3. Services of part time Parent Education Advisors whose salaries are paid by the college.
4. Publicity which helps your cooperative enroll new members.
5. Group medical and liability insurance plans (preschool pays the premium).
6. Inservice training, networking, and individual help for teachers, board members, and advisors to further their professional development.
7. Parent handbooks, board training materials, parent education handouts, recordkeeping forms with a limited printing budget.
8. Access to College student services, counseling, and library/media services.
9. A photo student ID card for enrolled parents.

This may apply to you if you are a board member, have more than one child enrolled, or otherwise commit many hours to the preschool. Ask your advisor. ID card allows access to South Puget Sound Community College library and student events, use of the recreational facilities at The Evergreen State College, and student discounts at many stores and cultural events.

THE PARENT EDUCATION ADVISOR

Your Parent Education Advisor has received college-level training in child development, education, and guidance. She is a part-time instructor at South Puget Sound Community College and is supervised by the Parent Education Coordinator. Her duties, within the limits of her contracted hours are to:

1. Assist cooperative preschool members in providing a high quality children's preschool program.
2. Work closely with other Advisors to prepare parent education and other materials to jointly benefit the cooperative preschools.
3. Plan, attend and evaluate all joint co-op board trainings and teacher inservices.
4. Complete all necessary college recordkeeping including college registration forms; quarterly reports of parent hours, tuition, and credits; grading; make-up project documentation; advisor work hours logs; and annual program evaluation.
5. Meet with the children's teachers at least once per month, during teacher inservices, classroom visits, or individual meetings to conference about children and their progress, plan and improve the children's and parents programs and involvement, and assist the teacher in planning professional development.
6. Conduct classroom or child observations at parent or teacher request.
7. Consult with parents on parenting and family issues, share possible resources and referrals, both during parent meetings and scheduled at parent request.
8. Attend and assist with all board meetings. Consult with board members and committees as needed.
9. Attend the preschool class as the parent's instructor as planned cooperatively by the teacher and advisor.
10. Plan, present or arrange parent education meetings in accordance with course goals and objectives (see next page).
11. Assist with special projects as agreed by advisor and preschool board, such as hiring, relocation, classroom arrangement or parent library.
12. Maintain high professional standards, particularly in the area of confidentiality. Take advantage of opportunities for professional growth.
13. Carry out any additional duties as described in the South Puget Sound Community College Part-time Instructor's contract, College Handbook, and Parent Education Department's Advisor Hours Description.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE PARENT COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

State Board of Community College Education Resolution 82-1

GOALS: The goal of Washington community college parent cooperative preschool education program is to improve the parenting skills for parents of pre-school children.

OBJECTIVES: Parent education programs based in parent education cooperative pre-schools provide practical, experiential learning laboratories which have the following student objectives:

- a. To develop realistic age-level expectations from knowledge of normal childhood behavior and growth.
- b. To clarify child rearing values and attitudes and explore methods of child guidance.
- c. To learn about the physical needs of family members: nutrition, safety, first aid, childhood illnesses, exercise and stress management.
- d. To experience and understand the role of parent involvement in maintaining a quality learning environment for children.
- e. To develops skills and practice in teaching young children in the following areas: art, science, concept development, language, music, motor skills, and cooperative play.
- f. To share support, consultation, and resource information concerning childrearing and family life.
- g. To learn about contemporary family concerns such as child abuse, divorce, sexual assault, illness and death, and family resource management.
- h. To develop skills in group organization and leadership.
- i. To develop and/or increase confidence in managing the demanding role of parents in a changing society.
- j. To strengthen family communication and relationships.

THE COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL TEACHER

The children's teacher is hired by the preschool parents and supervised by the preschool Board. The position of teacher has a double focus. Part of the position is planning and teaching the preschool children. Equally important is leading and involving the parents who are also students taking a course.

The teacher's duties are to:

1. Develop and plan a children's program including a) curriculum, b) sequential developmental activities, c) field trips, and d) a predictable daily schedule with flexibility determined by children's needs. These shall be consistent with the children's program philosophy as described in "How Young Children Learn" in the South Puget Sound Community College Parent Cooperative Preschool Parent Handbook.
2. Serve as the head teacher during children's class time, with parent helpers as the assistant teachers. Orient parents to parent helping and classroom procedures and assign tasks as necessary on a daily basis. Serve as a resource person and model for parents.
3. Communicate the few classroom rules to children and parents. Use and model positive guidance techniques based on children's developmental stages.
4. Schedule opportunities to communicate with parents about their child's development, behavior, and progress in preschool.
5. Schedule time to work with the Parent Education Advisor at least monthly during college teacher inservices, classroom visits by the Advisor, or individual meetings to: a) conference about children and their progress, b) plan and improve the children's program and involvement, c) plan and improve the parents program and involvement, and d) develop ongoing teaching skills and methods. Attend the scheduled teacher inservices sponsored by the college.
6. Know the requirements and benefits of South Puget Sound Community College affiliation. Work with the Board and Advisor to support and explain the parent education course.
7. Attend parent meetings at least three times per year to communicate and discuss children's program philosophy, curriculum, children's rules, guidance techniques, parent helping skills, and classroom issues. Communicate through the preschool newsletter and handouts between those meetings.
8. Attend monthly board meetings to report on plans for the month, classroom needs, and training conferences and inservices. Participate in board decision-making on issues affecting the children's program. Maintain communication with board members and others responsible for preschool business between meetings as necessary.
9. Work with the Board and other teachers to plan and arrange the children's environment and equipment. Request or obtain materials and supplies as needed.
10. Seek evaluation from parents, Parent Education Advisor, peers and Board. Participate in program and advisor evaluation.
11. Develop a professional development plan and share it with the Board at least

annually. Pursue professional growth through reading, classes, workshops, visits to similar programs and involvement in professional organizations.

12. Maintain high professional standards, particularly in the area of confidentiality.
13. Carry out additional duties as described in the individual cooperative preschool's Teacher Contract and Teacher Job Description.