

Our Mission:

Growing Places provides early education programs that foster the development of the whole child.

Our Programs:

Lee Early Childhood Site

6 weeks ~ 6 years

56 Pinkham Road

(603)868.1160

Director: Kim Snow

Teachers: Lindsey Colbath

Katie Gray

Michelle Guthrie

Shane Krafton

Alyssa Medico

Lindsay Michel

Kate Milne

Julie Scadova

Ashely Studer

Durham Early Childhood Site

2~6 years

60 Strafford Ave

(603)868.5674

Director: Hillary Hughes

Teachers: Jillian Calderara

Sarah Hastings

Becca Kelly

Emily Kluun

Ashley Studer

School Age Programs

5~12 years

(603)969.8677

Moharimet Elementary School

Director: Francesca Trial

TimberNook Programs

5~12 years

Moharimet Elementary School

Program Administrators

Sarah Nason

Wendy Rousseau

Executive Director

Cellissa Hoyt

Board of Directors

Jessica Starkey, President

Kathryn Mone, Vice President

Chris Regan, Treasurer

Amy Leone, Secretary

Brooke Fleit

Kate Haley Webb

It is true, a picture *is* worth a thousand words



At a quick glance this picture would elicit a smile or perhaps even an “awe”. When pausing to take a closer look, this picture captures so much more. The interaction of verbal and non verbal communication in this exchange (known as the “serve and return”) is so powerful!

In fact, “new science tells us that our children’s first five years are when they develop the foundation for ALL future learning. Every time we connect with a child, it’s not just their eyes that light up– it’s their brain too. In these moments, half a million neurons fire at once taking in everything we say and do” (Vroom, joinvroom.org).

The teachers at Growing Places cultivate interactions with children and seek out brain building opportunities that flourish from them. They recognize that “all those early neural connections are building the framework for a child’s cognitive skills and social emotional development” (Nina Sand-Loud MD Children’s Hospital at Dartmouth-Hitchcock).

This science based research is bringing an awareness to our state and country about the direct correlation between adult-child interactions and a child’s future development. Recently three Growing Places Staff attended “Transforming Tomorrow’s Workforce Today” seminar hosted by Early Learning N.H. and Spark NH. This forum brought together over 280 advocates and leaders in the field of Early Childhood including scientists, educators, the Department of Education, NH Coalition for Business and Education, Endowment for Health, and so many more; all supporting the importance of quality early care for children birth through five.

NHPTV PRIME is also bringing awareness to this topic through the airing of “The Raising of America” and “Raising New Hampshire -The Early Years”, by capturing the incredible correlation of the early years (birth-five) with our nation’s future economic and social vitality! This broadcast is filled with power packed science and studies that support how investing in early childhood will pay us back ten-fold. Thomas Raffio, from The NH Coalition for Business and Education, says “let’s not spend on the back end, but the front end”. If we must invest, why not make it proactive and meaningful. This idea is captured in just three sentences spoken by Raffio:

“If you’re concerned about the economy, invest in children 0-4”

“If you’re concerned about crime rate, invest in children 0-4”

“If you’re concerned about high school drop out rate, invest in children 0-4”

Growing Places is honored to be a part of this very important documentary and share a glimpse into our day through video footage and interviews that were captured by NHPTV at our Lee location.

It is with great hope that this message, shared by many influential leaders, will reach policy makers and create a movement to ensure that ALL children birth through five receive quality early childhood care. Growing Places will continue to persevere with our mission to offer the best start for all children and help others do the same.

To learn more about this initiative please view the brilliantly co-produced segment by the Endowment for Health and NHPTV at <http://www.nhptv.org/raisingnh/>.

A Nonprofit Early Care, Education and Youth Recreation Organization

56 Pinkham Road, Lee, NH 03861 | 603.868.1335

www.growingplacesnh.org

Durham | Lee | Madbury



Jim Davis, our Growing Places hero for over two decades!

~written by Wendy Rousseau



The children of TimberNook summer camp presenting Jim with a one of a kind painted canvas as a token of our appreciation.

Mark Desvaux once said, “If your life inspires just one child, your life has been a success”. If this is so, there is no doubt that Jim Davis’ life is light years beyond a success! His relationship with Growing Places began over 20 years ago. That’s right, Jim has been sharing his knowledge of fire safety with the children of Growing Places for over two decades!!

Jim started his career as a fire fighter in Durham in 1976. Since then, he has devoted years of his expertise to being a fire fighter in Lee and is currently the Assistant Fire Chief in Madbury, New Hampshire.

When I mentioned featuring Jim in our newsletter, Michelle Guthrie’s (current Growing Places Pre K teacher) face lit up. She exclaimed, “Oh Jim, I remember when he used to visit when Growing Places had a site on Packers Falls Road over 18 years ago and the children just loved him”. To this day the children still squeal with excitement “Fire Fighter Jim is coming today to teach us how to be safe”. The feeling is clearly mutual as Jim shared that one of his favorite things about visiting GP is that he “loves to be greeted like part of a family”.



Jim successfully started a fire in a down pour after the children challenged him that he couldn’t.

Our relationship with Jim has deepened over this past year through the launching of TimberNook. TimberNook is an innovative, nature-based outdoor program, that often has an element of cooking over an open fire. Rain or shine, Jim is always prepared to start a fire. While the fire grows, he enjoys interacting with the children as they gather around, allowing the warmth of the fire to encompass them. Jim loves that the children “are exposed to the outdoors and learning the skills of making food over an open fire”.

Our TimberNook setting in the woods surrounding the the sugar shack is not new territory to Jim. In fact, I think he might consider it his home away from home, as he spends countless hours spear heading the maple sugaring process that goes on in/surrounding the shack with the students and teachers of Moharimet Elementary School. His involvement with the children of Moharimet Elementary School is just another hat that Jim wears in the community. To them “Firefighter Jim” is also known as “Maple Sugar Jim”. “This labor of love (maple sugaring with the children) started with just one teacher tapping trees and evolved into an entire school wide project and has become a big part of their curriculum. The impact is clearly evident as more than 85% of fourth graders mention it in their exit interview when ‘graduating’ from Moharimet”. Jim said his participation in TimberNook “dovetailed so nicely with the experience of the maple sugaring. It seemed like a natural extension into the forest and all that it has to offer”.

Our time with Jim is truly treasured. His genuine presence and natural connection with all of the children is truly a gift. We are grateful for his commitment and dedication to ALL of the children in the Durham, Lee and Madbury community. We secretly hope that his son, Andrew, who is the first full time fire fighter at the Durham Fire Department to follow in a father’s foot steps, will one day join us in these outdoor adventures. Carrying on this amazing relationship into the many generations to come would be a dream come true!



Another challenge....to cut a leaf exactly in half.



Enjoying time around the open fire.

Inviting Spaces to Play and Learn in our Classroom

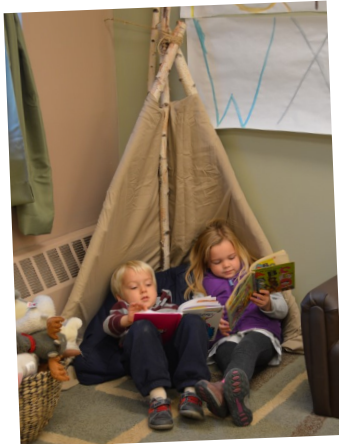
“Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.” – Fred Rogers

Through their play, children learn to solve problems, cooperate with others, use their imagination and build muscle control and strength. Teachers at Growing Places support the importance of play through classroom design and materials. Through their work with ITERS and ECERS (a commonly used assessment tool called Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale) staff elaborated on their classroom goals including the arrangement of furniture, use of colors, and materials offered to children.

Our environments encourage exploration, independence, collaboration and communication. This is what you will see in our classrooms:

- A balance of ample space that allows children to move freely for active play and smaller, cozy, private areas that allow children to immerse in creative and focused play with minimal distraction
- Interest areas that include dramatic play, blocks, art, reading and fine motor activities
- Natural wood and other colors found in nature
- The use of everyday “household” materials (metal cookware, utensils, baskets, sheers, etc)
- “Loose parts” and other open ended toys and materials that leave room for a child’s input and creative imagination

The pictures here capture the very essence of the work we do to create environments that foster children’s learning.



Upcoming Events:

- WINTER SWAP is now happening at your child's site. Feel free to take or add hats, mittens, coats & boots to the collection!
- Details for a family winter wonderland adventure coming soon.
- Save the date for the Art Show, Wednesday, March 2

Please call 868.1335 for more information.

Organizational Announcements:

- We are collecting: dress up clothes, sheer curtains & fabric, metal cookware (pots, pans, cookie sheets, utensils, ladles, cupcake tins), yarn
- Limited half and full days are available to add to your child's schedule on a drop in basis. Please see your Program Director for more information.
- We have a few spots remaining for full and part time. Please call for more information on availability.

How beautiful a day can be when kindness touches it. ~George Elliston

This balloon was carefully and thoughtfully designed, cut out and given to a friend who was sad because their balloon had just floated away. Kindness matters!

~4 year old, Pre K Classroom



A HUGE thanks to our amazing Corporate Sponsors!

"It is literally true that you can succeed best and quickest by helping others succeed" ~ Napoleon Hill

To learn more about this powerful partnership please contact Wendy at 868.1335.

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