

# The Tan Bark Times

MAY 2021

Spring has sprung and the weather has been changing every day. It's the time of year to trade in your raincoats and boots for water shoes and swimsuits. In the next couple of weeks, we will be getting back into lots of water play. Please make sure that cubbies are well stocked with layers for all weather...no one likes to be soggy! We also remind you to label all clothes brought into the center, to avoid confusion and missing clothes! Also, no open toed shoes please! Crocs, sandals and watershoes are great during the hot months. Please label everything you bring in to the school!

More about water play: Children love to experiment with water, and in the warm months we will not be telling them no! Your children will be getting wet, and probably having a great time while keeping cool. Water play in the warm months is virtually unlimited at Kid Time.

## Sunscreen

Please send your children in with sunscreen in the morning! If your child has a skin sensitivity and needs their own special sunscreen, please bring it in labeled and they will be kept in the kitchen on top of the fridge. We will reapply as needed! Please no sunscreen in cubbies per licensing! We have a bottle by the sign in sheets for you as needed.

## Control your control!

Control is a huge issue in the lives of young children. It also is a huge issue for the adults around them. Every decision made, every direction given becomes a question of control, and often we are faced with "convincing" children to do something that as adults we

see as a non issue, i.e. putting shoes on in the morning, wiping our bottoms, or getting into the car in the grocery store parking lot.

We ultimately are in control all the time over their lives, decisions and choices. It is important that we give some control to the children, but in a way that we (the adults with life experience) have engineered. For example, sit down and think of times when you can give your child the power of the decision- maybe they get to choose what is for dinner every Friday from a couple of choices. Perhaps they are able to pick out their own clothes every school day from a drawer of weather appropriate and Kid Time friendly clothes. Setting up the environment for success and giving them the room to make a choice without having total free reign allows them a feeling of empowerment that may lessen the need to fight for control and power over the "little things".

When you have to be the decision maker, make sure to explain that this is a safety issue, etc. Remind them of times when they get to choose- maybe then deflecting the discussion to the next one. Get creative and learn to think on your feet. They will not always be happy with your decisions, but they need to learn from experience that you will follow through and do what you say and say what you mean. When this happens often, power struggles happen less and less. Of course, there will be times when a meltdown or tantrum occurs- don't try to avoid them. Tantrums are simply an outlet for emotion. Yes, they can be annoying and frustrating, but letting the child see your frustration is giving them just the reaction they are hoping for. Do not allow yourself to play into tantrums but allow it to happen, walk away or move them somewhere safe, and approach them when it is finished. As a mom of a two year old, I am right there with you...I know the feeling of embarrassment when my child "acts up" in public...I'm also realizing that all other parents understand. We have all been there.

So many of us have the notion that if we just can avoid the conflict or the tantrum things will be better for the child. Another way to look at it though is that this is essentially another way to try to control our children's emotions. It's important to let them feel what they feel, or experience the consequences of their actions. If they are upset at morning drop off time because they don't have a share toy, because when it was time get one they didn't, they will learn from that the next time. If you go home to get it for them, they will learn that they can use their emotions to control others.

Keeping our control in check is a constant battle with our children and ourselves. Choose important things to decide for yourselves and give them opportunities to make choices and live with them. This is how children learn, and how once upon a time we learned as well. As always, please feel free to ask if you would like any clarification, have questions, or simply think this all sounds insane. I welcome feedback!

\*Kid Time will be closed Monday, May 31st for Memorial Day. \*  
Thank you all for reading, and have a great month!  
The Kid Time Staff