



# The Turtle Times!

May 2009

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## Developmental Milestones

Have you noticed a change in your 3 year-old lately? Over the last several weeks many of the Turtles have begun to grow and work on some new skills. Has anyone guessed it...well right now it's all about (well mostly) social skills.

Just a few short months ago the children were working hard on their physical and self-help skills, like dressing themselves, putting on their own socks and shoes, cleaning up their spills/mess, and working on opening their own lunch containers, etc. While they are still perfecting these skills, many of them have found some accomplishment in these self-help skills. It couldn't have happened without a lot of practice. As parents, we encourage you to continue supporting their independence. When they seem frustrated or don't know how to do something, SHOW them how to do it rather than just doing it for them.

And now, the Turtles are getting lots of practice in another area. There has been a dramatic focus on social relationships over the last three to four weeks. Below is a list of some of the Social and Emotional skills that the Turtles are working on:

- Conflict resolution
- Controlling anger and impulses
- Problem-solving
- Sharing toys and materials
- Taking turns
- Recognizing that anger can interfere with problem-solving
- Learning how to calm down
- Understanding appropriate ways to express anger
- Identifying feelings in oneself and others

We've noticed that some of the Turtles have naturally begun building some strong friendships over the last three to four weeks. The friends seek each other out during open centers and playground time and really engage in cooperative play. These new friendships offer an opportunity to experiment with roles, power, and imagination while also giving them a chance to practice conflict resolution, taking turns, and independent problem-solving. At times, watching these social interactions can be overwhelming and tiring for adults. Rest assured, with a little bit a verbal guidance, modeling, and support from parents and teachers our Turtles will learn how to play cooperatively with each other and work out their problems successfully. Sometimes it's best not to get involved in a peer conflict and watch to see how they work it out. They'll often surprise us with how they resolve their conflicts, and this only builds self-confidence and self-esteem as they practice being in relationship with their friends. To read a great article on social development in young children, please click on the following link:

### **The Power of Peers**

<http://www.babycenter.com/viewArticle.htm?articleId=65565&showAll=true>

### **Another article: Ages & Stages: How Children Build Friendships**

<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3747174>

## **Week of the Young Child**

The Turtles had a wonderful time during WOYC. Thank you for your time and contribution to make that special week a success. We have posted some pictures out on the bulletin board for you to see.

## Birthday Corner



**Lyla Macon – May 4**

### The Turtles are taking off!



The Turtles have grown up so much over the last several months. With the developmental progress that we'd seen, we felt they were ready for their first field trip.

The Turtles have always had an interest in transportation, particularly when it concerns taking a trip on an airplane. So we thought visiting a real airport would be a great opportunity to expand their knowledge of airplanes. **We just had a wonderful field trip to Signature Flight Support, a private airport located next to Austin Bergstrom.**

The children were able to see some aircraft up close and even board a real airplane. They enjoyed practicing putting on their seat belts, looking out the plane windows, pulling down the tray tables, looking at the cockpit, and finding out that airplanes have toilets too! We also had lunch in the conference room with a big window where we saw a few planes take off. I might also add that the Turtles picked a great day to visit Signature Flight Support as we saw Air force 2 (Vice President Joe Biden was in town to give a speech) and apparently the actor, Luke Wilson, was in the lobby waiting to board his plane!

### May Field Trip



Speaking of field trips, the Turtles will be having one last field trip before the school year ends. We will be visiting **Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Parlor on Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup>**. We will post more details within the next week, but wanted to go ahead and give you enough notice so that you can request time off if you'd like to

sign-up to be a driver. Since all of the Turtles will be three years old, we will only need **four drivers** to accompany us to Ben & Jerry's.

## Family Gathering

We will be scheduling our next family gathering for sometime during the first week of June. We'd like to have it out at Park Fountain (behind the Palmer Events Center) in the late afternoon. More details to come...

## May Community Events

**The Austin Symphonic Band presents, Mother's Day in the Park on May 10th at 7pm.** This is a free concert held at the Zilker Hillside Theatre.

**The Austin Shakespeare Festival presents, "Romeo and Juliet" during the month of May.** Admission is free and is held at the Zilker Hillside Theatre. For dates and times please visit

[www.ci.austin.tx.us/dougherty/hillside.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/dougherty/hillside.htm)

## Important

Ms. Yjasming will be on vacation to China from **May 16<sup>th</sup> – May 28<sup>th</sup>**. We will let you know who will be the substitute teacher as soon as possible.

## Memorial Day

**The Center is closed**

**Monday, May 25th**

*Happy Mother's Day!*

*The Turtles Team*

*Melanie, Yjasming, and Vee*