

## He hit me!

How often have you heard this lament from your child. Or, you cringe when another child says this about your child. This is one area of early childhood that is often discussed with a zealous conviction. We often react to this situation as though the child is “being mean.”

You might be surprised to hear me say I have a more relaxed approach regarding hitting in an early childhood class. Don't get me wrong, I don't want children hitting each other either. I just view this behavior as more often driving from a totally different motive than adults would typically have if they were hitting.

Think about a toddler. They often use their actions to communicate. They point to things they want, they take your hand to have you sit on the couch and read a book, etc. We even encourage this now with the baby sign motions. We understand that it is easier for little ones to use their bodies to “talk” than to verbalize their needs.

Transition this idea to children that are three, four and five years old. Often times hitting at these ages is motivated by similar needs as that toddler. A child, while not able to clearly verbalize his or her needs, may be thinking: “I want to play with them but I don't know how (or am afraid) to ask to play.” “I really want those blocks, I'm afraid I won't have enough if he takes some.” “I need to get to the kitchen play area and he is in my way.” “We are buds, I REALLY like him but I don't know how to make sure he knows it.” Each of these motivations could result in a child hitting another.

I have talked before about the concept from Conscious Discipline of positive intent. Basically this is our mental “self talk” about why someone has acted a certain way. If we take away the negative motives of “being mean”. “bullying” or even “aggressive” we open ourselves up to helping a child in a much more constructive way. It is OUR job to help a child learn alternative ways to communicate his needs.

So here's the practical peace of this article. When a child hits another one we should focus our attention first on the injured child. This shows everyone that compassion for others is a high priority. Once the injured party is calmed, you can then address the hitter. I often have them notice how upset the injured child is then talk about what might have motivated the behavior. At this point I give the actual words a child might use to convey his need. “You wanted some blocks? Then you need to say, ‘Can I have some blocks please.’” Usually at this point the injured child will gladly share some and we talk about how much happier we are when we use our words. I try to remain calm throughout so everyone is more open to hearing and learning in the moment.

As always, let me know if you are dealing with a situation like this and you would like to talk about ways to approach it.

*Miss Cyndi*

## Dates worth noting!

**January 16**

**OPEN**

**Even though Olathe schools closed**

9:00am–ish

**Children's Worship**

You are welcome to attend with your child or bring in your child if he or she does not attend on this day.

**January 19**

9:30am & 7pm

**Tour/Information**

**Meeting for community families interested in enrollment**

**January 24**

5:00 pm

**Current family & church enrollment**

**February 1:**

9:15am

**Previously family enrollment**

**February 2:**

5:00pm

**Community enrollment**

**February 3:**

**Open**

**even though Olathe schools closed**

**February 7-10:**

**CLOSED**

**Parent/Teachers conferences**

**February 20:**

**CLOSED**

**President's Day**



## I Am A Mother Too

Something happened to me over Christmas break that really made my day, made me want to reach around and give myself a pat on the back. It was one of those moments where I felt like I was doing everything right and it superseded all of those parenting moments that I'd like to forget about. We have retired neighbors who live behind us. Mr. Fred often likes to stop by and chat on his way to the mailbox and did so over break to my husband and I. While we were chatting, he told us he had something that he and his wife had been discussing that he'd like to ask us. He proceeded to tell us that he and his wife notice how often our children play outside. He went on to explain how rare this is anymore for children and wondered if this was something that we were

*Intentional* with them about or something that just happened. He obviously hadn't heard me on my "soapbox" about the importance of play! But, this was an astounding moment to me as I was reassured that all of the things

that I "preach" at Aldersgate, I "practice" at home with my own children.

Through my series of newsletter articles this year, I have attempted to explain our beliefs about learning at Aldersgate. I have discussed how we believe children learn best and how we teach and uphold those beliefs during the preschool day. Through my newsletter articles and my class picture e-mails, I have tried to explain how *intentional* everything we do at the preschool is.

As a parent and educator, I have found that there is one word that I have tried very hard to live by and instill in my children: being **intentional**. My neighbor used the word when he talked to us about seeing our children play. I have used the word in my class e-mails to you explaining how teachers plan activities, and I pray with my children every morning before school that we can all be *intentional* in the way that we live our lives. Being *intentional* means being conscious of everything that we think, say, and do and understanding the impact it has on our lives and those around us.

There are so many things that I want to instill in my children: creativity, responsibility, confidence, and the importance of Christ in their life. Some things that I have found that help:

- \*Weekly family meetings/ time to play together, to make goals, talk about values, do devotions, pray.

- \*Everyone taking responsibility in taking care of our house: children love to help and it builds their confidence to have responsibility. From folding towels, making beds, unloading the dishwasher, children are often capable of more than we give them credit for.

- \* Lots of supplies on hand for creativity: I keep a whole dresser in our hearth room full of art supplies, play dough, puzzles, etc. and often all it takes is me opening a drawer before they are instantly busy creating.

- \*Letting the messes go: I love a clean home but I know sometimes I have to let that go. Not too long ago, my girls were really into building forts and there were pillows, quilts, blankets, and chairs strewn across the house. It was worth it for the hours they spent together playing.

- \*Turning off the TV and electronics. It is so important to just "be." I've said before that my best talks with my children are in the car. I also find that we get along so much better sometimes when the television and electronics aren't involved.

- \*Planning for emergencies: There are times when my children struggle with keeping themselves busy and will resort to fighting. I keep science experiments and other activity ideas in mind for those times. Just over holiday break, this happened and I put a box of toothpicks and gumdrops on the kitchen table. It wasn't long before they were building together and happy again.

Being a parent is the toughest job I will ever have and I can't say that I'm always the best at it. But, I have found that when I am reflective and deliberate in my parenting, I do a better job. It's nice to know that my neighbors have taken notice and think my husband and I are doing well. It was fun to open my freezer a couple of weeks ago to find frozen bowls of water full of small toys that one of my children did because she remembered me doing it last year and letting them "excavate" the animals from the ice. I love that they are beginning to know how to unload the dishwasher, fold towels, and get themselves ready in the morning without my help. But, none of this was done without careful planning, reflection, and deliberation.

Shelly Todd  
Staff and Curriculum Development Coordinator



## I love you rituals:

Taken from I Love You Rituals by Becky Bailey  
Fun activities for parents and children that: \*boost brain potential, \*encourage cooperation and caring, \*promote learning and literacy, \*increase attention and decrease power struggles, \*build bonds of unconditional love

Begin by holding your child's hand in your hand, palm up. Draw circles on the child's hand with your

index finger as you say  
"Round and round the garden"

Continue drawing circles in cadence with the chant  
"Goes the teddy bear."  
Walk your fingers up the child's arm (heading for the armpit).

"one step, two step"

Give a gentle tickle under the child's arm and say  
"Tickle under there."

### Boredom Busters For January:



- have a snowball fight in the house: using old recycled papers, wad them up into a ball and throw them at each other, or see how many you can get into the trash.
- create a scavenger hunt using pictures of places that lead your child all through the house.
- make an indoor obstacle course using pillows, chairs, couch cushions, and any other items you can find around the house.
- make a crystal snowflake: twist pieces of a pipe cleaner together to form a snowflake shape, boil water and then carefully pour into a mason jar, mix 3 T of Borax per cup of water, then suspend the snowflake shape in the jar of solution (tied to a string with pencil on top) and wait overnight, a surprise will await you in the morning!
- how many words can you come up with that rhyme with the word snow?



### Ten Ways to Love Your Kids:

- Establish boundaries for their lives
- Enjoy them
- Expose our humanness to them
- Explain the reasons behind our decisions
- Exchange ideas with them
- Encourage them
- Help them believe they can go further than they dream
- Physically express what we feel in our hearts
- Examine our own lives regularly
- Exercise great patience

Coming Soon:

## Ice Cream Social

Mark your calendars for  
Saturday, March 3rd  
3-5:30pm

We'll have lots of fun with kids activities, ice cream sundaes, bake sale items, fun performances by Dino—a wonderful children's musician and the Silent Auction.

**This is a fun event  
for the whole family!**



## It is right and good to give thanks!

### We express our appreciation to:

- To all of you for sharing your beautiful children with us each day. We look forward to many more wonderful experiences in 2012
- To the Williams family for the donation of a rocking alligator
- To the Tomlen family for the donation of puzzles and other educational toys

***I thank my God every time I  
remember you. Philippians 1:3***

## Giggles & Grins

Enjoy actual anecdotes from  
our Aldersgate kids.

- Child playing with the nativity set, "I can't find the guy that carries the Frankenstein."



He took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me."

Matthew 9:36-37

# Aldersgate

PRESCHOOL



15315 W. 151st Street  
Olathe, Kansas 66062

Phone: 913-764-2407

Fax: 913-254-0478

Email: [preschool@aldersgateumc-ks.org](mailto:preschool@aldersgateumc-ks.org)

Website: [www.aldersgatepreschool.com](http://www.aldersgatepreschool.com)

## Mission Statement:

The purpose of establishing a preschool at Aldersgate United Methodist Church is to provide opportunities within a Christian atmosphere to meet the educational and social needs of young children in both the congregation and the community.

## Program Goal:

To provide a safe, nurturing, Christian environment where young children can explore and discover, through age appropriate activities, the wonders of God's world.

## Worship at Aldersgate United Methodist Church:

Every person is invited to join our worship and Christian education experiences of Aldersgate United Methodist Church. There are greeters each Sunday morning that will assist you in finding Sunday School classrooms or the Worship Center. Please note the following times and schedules:

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| 8:30 am | Worship and a children's activity time for children ages 3 through 10 years. Nursery care is available.  |
| 9:45 am | Sunday School classes are offered for ages 1 through adult. A greeter will be glad to assist you in finding a class that may interest you and or our children. |
| 11:00am | Worship and Kidz Worship—a children's worship experience.  |



## For unto us a child is born.

Our Blue/Red enrichment class did a play of the Christmas story.  
We hope you all had a joy filled Christmas and a wonderful fun filled break.