



April 2017

IMPORTANT DATES

Mark these dates on your calendar:

April 5, 19, 26.....	Lunch Bunch
April 10-14.....	School Closed—Spring Recess
April 17-28.....	Parent Teacher Conferences
April 20	Hilltop Helping Hands Art Show Matting Meeting
April 21.....	Set up for Art Show
April 22.....	5 th Annual Art Show!
April 23	Art Show Clean up
Week of April 24.....	Week of the Young Child



If you plan to return to Hilltop in the fall of 2017 and haven't registered your child for yet, please register soon! We can't promise our staff a job in September if we don't have children registered. We love our teachers, and don't want to lose them because they are worried about not having a job in September!

REGISTRATION

Registration for the 2017-2018 school year is under way! Thank you for your continued faith in Hilltop as you entrust your children to our care. We still have spaces available for three and four year olds as well as Pre- K children and Kindergarten eligible children. We also have spaces available for income eligible children in our School Readiness class. Please continue to refer your friends and family our way.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent Teacher Conferences will be scheduled in April. Teachers will have sign ups available. This is a time to see the progress your child has made this year. We use the State of Connecticut Profile to guide our assessments of young children. If you want to know more about the frameworks and profile you can visit the Office of Early Childhood's website, or speak with Mrs. Sosnicki or your child's teacher. .



- 5** or more servings of fruits & vegetables
- 2** hours or less recreational screen time
- 1** hour or more of physical activity
- 0** sugary drinks, more water & low fat milk

SUMMER PROGRAM

Hilltop plans to run an 8 day Summer Program this summer! Hilltop's summer "camp" will be one class of 18 children ages 3-5 with three teachers. Children who will be coming in the fall can join us as well as the older children who just "graduated". We will run the program July 11-20. Class will run from 9:00-11:30 a.m. and will include lots of fun activities! Look for more information including the topic of study, registration and tuition soon.

WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) established the Week of the Young Child more than 45 years ago to bring attention to the importance of early learning experiences for young children. Typically, the week of celebration falls during our spring break, but this year we will be in session, so we are planning to participate in the celebration by planning special activities throughout the week of April 24-28.

NAEYC provides some ideas that we can springboard from. This year, they have designated each day of the week with a special focus. There is Music Monday, Tasty Tuesday, Work Together Wednesday, Artsy Thursday and Family Friday. We will be planning activities around these ideas, though they may not always land on the exact day. Since each class may have different plans, then those plans will come from your child's classroom newsletters and announcements.

One school wide activity will focus on "Work Together Wednesday". Please see the other article on this page referring to our Food and Diaper Drive.



Celebrate NAEYC's Week of the Young Child™ April 24-28, 2017



OUTDOOR PLAY

We welcome the signs of spring! **Please know we will be taking the children outside to play again!** Though spring has arrived, we still need to wear hats & mittens. Also, consider sending in warm pants for your daughters. Even tights and leggings may not be warm enough yet.



FOOD & DIAPER DRIVE



Hunger never takes a break! Hilltop will be conducting a Food Drive during the month of April to support local food banks. As part of the Week of Young Children campaign, we will "work together" to gather as much as we can for local families. All non-perishable food collected will be donated to Friendly Hands Food Bank Inc.

At the same time, we will be running a diaper drive to support Two Hearts Pregnancy Center in Torrington. This organization supports needy women and families who need supplies and support during and after pregnancy. Diapers of all sizes as well as diaper wipes will be included in the drive.

We will invite representatives from both organizations to visit our classrooms to accept the donations. Thank you for your thoughtfulness and sacrifice to help those less fortunate!

The children love to use envelopes in the classroom writing centers, but we are running on empty!

If you have any unused envelopes around, please consider sending them in. Do you get envelopes in your "junk mail"?

They are FREE and perfect for our writing area! Do you have other mismatched envelopes? We love them! Any unused envelopes will be quickly utilized!



**HILLTOP HELPING HANDS
FIFTH ANNUAL ART SHOW
THEME THIS YEAR IS “INSPIRED BY...”**

Hilltop’s Helping Hands are gearing up for the Fifth Annual Art Show to benefit the Tuition Assistance Fund! Please consider how you can help! All art work will be Inspired By and artist or children’s literature.

- April 20th. All parents are invited to join the Hilltop Helping Hands parent group to help matt the art work the children have been working on throughout the year! We want to be sure the kids work POPS!! We will get started at 6:00 p.m. and work until the work is done! Many hands will make light work!
- April 21st. 9:15 a.m. Art Show set up. We will need volunteers to help us set up the Fellowship Hall upstairs to create a fun art show atmosphere! We are usually done with set up before 11:30.

We are looking for other help too!

- Take a shift to help out during the show on April 22nd. The show runs from 10:00-2:00. Volunteer to help out for an hour or so during the show. We need volunteers to help greet guests, man the silent auction and monitor the bake table. There are also shifts just before opening and right after closing.
- Help provide refreshments for the Art Show! Visit Pinterest to discover some creative art OR children’s books themed foods and add them to the refreshment table!
- Provide something for our raffle table! Ideas include a themed basket, a craft or some artwork, gift cards, a service of some sort.

Most of all **visit the show** and find your child’s art work displayed! The art show has no admission fee, but remember, this **is** a fundraiser, so we will ask for donations at the door and at the bake table.

In addition, we will also be raffling off cooperative art work which has been completed by each class, as well as items donated by staff members such as artwork or crafts completed by staff members, Hilltop families and St. Paul’s members and staff!

A separate letter from the Hilltop Helping Hands will be distributed so you can find other ways you can help! Also, Sign-up sheets can be found in the hallway and on Sign up Genius

This will be a great day! Mark it on your calendar—April 22nd 10:00 a.m.-2:00!

IF YOUR FAMILY HAS RECEIVED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN ORDER TO ATTEND HILLTOP, WE ASK THAT YOU FIND SOME WAY TO GIVE BACK TO HILLTOP BY VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME AT THE ART SHOW, OR IN SOME OTHER WAY.

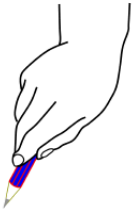


PENCIL GRIP

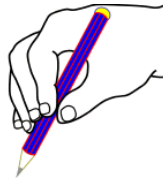
The way a child holds their crayon, marker or pencil is developmental. During the preschool years we want to work towards good grip habits so when they enter Kindergarten they have good habits established.



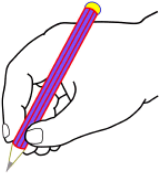
Around one year old, a child should begin to be allowed to hold a crayon for supervised coloring activities. Their grip normally looks like this.



When a child is between 2 and 3 years old, the grip might look like this when they hold a crayon.



As their grip continues to develop, their grip begins to take shape. By four years old, your child should be able to hold their pencil in a modified tripod position as illustrated here.



In Kindergarten, they will need to be able to hold their pencil like this and have good control over their pencil grip.

You can find some great information on how to help your child with their pencil grip at www.drawyourworld.com. Here you will find instructions on how to hold a pencil and some ideas for training tools. We work with your child on their grip here at school. Giving your child writing opportunities and encouraging them with their grip at home will help with the partnership we strive for between school and home.

Provide opportunities at home for writing and drawing. Give them pads and paper in different settings. Set up a writing area in the house like we have here where they can “write” to friends and family. Including stickers and envelopes here will enhance the fun of a writing center! Give them a pad to make a grocery list when you are getting ready to go to the store or while they are in the grocery cart.

Not all writing experiences need to be with paper and pencil. Chalk on the sidewalk, a thin layer of sand or shaving cream in a tray or even some foods like pudding make unconventional fun ways to write!

To help build up their fine motor muscles which will help them in their pencil grip, provide activities including playdough, tearing paper, threading beads or macaroni, peg boards, legos, clothespins and picking up small items using their “pinching fingers”.