

# Los Niños News©

February 2015

## Mastering Symbols

### What Does He Mean By That?

Many of the “papers” that I do with the children are headed with the expression: *symbols mastery*, Why is that?

Here at Los Niños we want the children to develop confidence in all areas of the curriculum.

We know that children can be taught to *parrot* (mindlessly repeat) symbols like numbers, letters and shapes. But we have learned that it is far more important that young children learn early on that these symbols can represent their thinking skills, their solution to problems, their recognition of patterns and their thoughts (as when interviewed). The value of the symbol is therefore illustrated to the children as a tool and the motivation to use that tool is then very high.

Emergent Literacy includes mastering symbols, of course. Your children are taking a big step towards competence in language, math and other communication and cognitive wonders!

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## Healthy Children At Los Niños!!

There have been no serious illnesses reported this winter, but lots of “colds”. If there are any exposures during the year it is our policy to immediately inform parents in writing. We and I know you also, are especially vigilant about “arm-coughing”, use of tissues, hand washing and sanitizing.

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## 12,000 Pounds!

That’s how much Gold Track Fines we moved into the yard for the re-paving of our bike trail! By “we” I mean your children and I working together... load it, wheel it, dump

it, spread it and tamp it! It was a great project and should help to alleviate the winter flooding in the playground and make for a smoother, more lasting trike-trail for years to come!

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## Love is in the Air!

Yes, Valentines Day is coming! My son, Jesse, was born on Valentine’s Day!

We here at Los Niños are, as you well know, big fans of **Love**. We think that Love conquers all and that all you need is Love, indeed, Love will keep us together and that Love is the answer...

I, personally, have had vivid relationship with the *treasured emotion*... the throes and the ecstasy in my long life, with no regrets.

However, we forego this tawdry flippant Valentine thing. In years it became a “card toss” (450 cards!) and all of the sentiment and sincerity became lost.

So several years ago we established a “no-card” policy. We have Class Rosters with addresses and encourage you and your child to make and send Valentines to special friends through the mail...it is really fun for young children to send and receive mail.

We still have some Valentine theme art projects and interviews.

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## Look, You’re in the News!

There is nothing like seeing your name in the News: Zoe Garrick Max Sophia Mars Aidan Danielle Alex Ethan Ava Lila Eli Kali Gavin Avery Abigale Hadley Poppy Brody Rebecca Daniella Charlie Max Annie Chloe Lucy Tyler Jenna Milo.

## The LNNS Play Dough Recipe

Many of you have asked for our wonderful “Playdough” recipe. It was given to me by my mentor, Doreen Foo Croft, when I was a teacher at Greenmeadow Nursery School in Palo Alto, a long time ago.

1 C flour

1/2 C salt

1 Tbs cream of tartar

1 C water

1 Tbs oil

1 Tsp food coloring

Combine all dry ingredients (I use a non-stick saucepan), and then gradually stir in the liquid ingredients. When mixture is smooth, cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until a ball forms. Remove from heat and kneed until smooth. Store in airtight container for several weeks.

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## Welcome Kara!

Miren has decided to apply for another teaching position. I did not expect her to leave and I am very disappointed. However I know we all wish her well.

I was very fortunate to find Kara Thompson who will begin on February 2 and be the Head Teacher in all three programs until at least the end of our school year July 31.

Kara has been studying Early Childhood Education and is fully qualified to assume the Head Teacher position. Most recently she has been working at the prestigious Crescent Park Child Development Center in tony Palo Alto... but she would rather work with us!

Please introduce yourself... let’s give Kara a big Los Niños welcome.

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## President’s Week Holiday February 16-20 Aloha!