

“Childhood means simplicity. Look at the world with the child’s eye – it is very beautiful.” – Rakesh Satgarthi

After 31 years of excellent service to Pine Hills Learning Place, our beloved Director, Deb Ingram, will be retiring in December of this year.

She has led Pine Hills with grace, determination, and faith. She saw us through 31 years of change and growth. Deb was there when Pine Hills Learning Place was a small program in the extra space Pine Hills Church wasn’t using during the week. She was there when it outgrew that building and needed newly constructed classrooms, then outgrew those and needed more space again.

To think of Deb is to think of warmth and laughter. She cares so much about so many people. Deb’s compassion has touched the lives of countless Fort Wayne children and families. Whenever a family came to Deb with a struggle they were facing, Deb worked tirelessly to help find any possible solution. She has supported families through financial trouble, grief and loss, and all the trials and tribulations of parenthood.

She cares so very much about Pine Hills’ program – anyone who drove past our building any time on a Friday night probably saw her car in the parking lot. Deb would stay as long as she needed to most Friday nights to make sure everything was in order for the week to come.

Deb sees the good in people. She gives new teachers a chance. She guided so many potential teachers through the rough few weeks of taking on his or her own classroom. Deb is a good listening ear, a wealth of knowledge and expertise, and an unfailing example of perseverance. She is also still, after all this time, eager to learn. She still attends professional development opportunities with a bright attitude and excitement for putting new strategies into place.

There will be a retirement party for Deb that is open to parents and families. On Friday, December 14th drop in from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Whether you’re a current family, or a blast from the past, it’s your chance to come tell Deb how much she has impacted your life through her work at Pine Hills.

We feel so very lucky to have had such a wonderful Director for so long. Pine Hills Learning Place wouldn’t be the program it is without her. She will be greatly missed.

Also retiring at the end of the year is Don Ingram. He has been our faithful custodian and handyman extraordinaire for 21 years. He lovingly kept the facility looking its best, took on extra projects whenever needed, and went above and beyond to help Pine Hills offer the best possible environment for the children and families in our care.

We are lucky and excited to announce that our new Director will be Debi Sands. Debi has been our Enrollment Coordinator and Chapel Lady for nearly 13 years. She is passionate about ensuring the children of Pine Hills have the best possible start in school and life. Her passion and dedication make her a wonderful fit to be the next person to lead Pine Hills.



Bev’s Corner

Deb Ingram came to work at Pine Hills Learning Place in 1987, 31 years ago but our story doesn’t start there. In the early 80’s, Deb was hired at another program I managed. She was a part-time toddler teacher. It was not long before I realized her talents and wisdom were an ideal match for the director’s position.

When I think about what makes Deb so successful, I believe it is her insight and perception as well as her ability to calmly think and act when everyone else is frantic. The fact that Pine Hills Learning Place has been voted number one for 11 consecutive years and the reputation our program enjoys rests squarely on Deb’s shoulders.

I remember a time, during the big remodel, when Deb and I were arranging classrooms at 2:00 AM. Both of us beyond tired, I would go into a room and arrange it then move on to the next. Deb, unaware that I had “finished” the room, would enter and rearrange it. Later, I would go back in and unaware that Deb had “finished” it herself, I would rearrange it all over again.

Through the years, Deb and I have watched our children be born and grow up into thriving adults. We have laughed and cried together. I was honored to have her and Don present when I got married in Colorado five years ago. In December, Deb will no longer work with me but she will always be my friend.

Upcoming Events

October 31st: Fall Festival

Costume party! Bring your child in costume (with “street” clothes to spare) for our annual classroom Fall celebration.

November 4th: Daylight Savings ends

November 21st: Thankful Day

November 23rd: Thanksgiving Day
Pine Hills is Closed

Monthly: Check our website pinehillskids.com for information about **safety recalls** for children’s products

Lighten Up!



Laughter Is a Very Good Thing!



Raising children in an environment filled with humor and laughter has many advantages, from boosting the immune system to providing social benefits such as making friends. Everyone likes to be around people who are funny and who laugh easily. Research shows that humor activates the parts of the brain related to resiliency and well-being. Children are not born with a sense of humor; it's actually a trait that can be developed.

What's So Funny?

Something that brings fits of laughter from a toddler will often get an eye roll from a seven-year-old. **That's because what's humorous depends on the age and developmental level of children.**

- Infants laugh at things that are out of the ordinary. Gales of laughter are likely to follow a hat being put on your shoe or a stuffed animal falling off of your head. They also like silly noises. Mooing like a cow or croaking like a frog is popular with this set.
- Preschoolers are learning language quickly. They love nonsense words and silly faces. They are boisterous when telling jokes and laugh when they walk into a wall. They enjoy

knock-knock

jokes, even the ones that don't make sense. And we're all familiar with this age group replacing the words to familiar songs with silly words.

- School-age children understand that words can have more than one meaning, so they appreciate puns and more sophisticated jokes. They like practical jokes and have the ability to think them through and carry them out.

Children appreciate an audience, so once in a while, step out of the busy daily routine and respond to their silly songs and attempts at humor. **Laughter is a fantastic way to boost your mood and feel less stressed.** According to research, on average we laugh about 17 times a day, and laughing with others is more powerful than laughing alone. That's why we laugh more when watching a funny movie together. And it's important to note that the benefits of laughter last up to 45 minutes.

Bring it on! Try these easy ways to create more opportunities to laugh.

- Read funny books.
- Watch funny movies and TV shows.
- Read comics together.
- Tell jokes and funny stories.
- Play with a pet.

Play

- miniature golf and go bowling.
- Host a karaoke night.
- Be silly.
- Choose a funny screen saver.
- Take funny photos.

Check out these statistics:

Did you know?

Laughter . . .

- * Boosts the immune system
- * Eases anxiety and fear
- * Helps defuse conflicts
- * Draws others to us
- * Strengthens relationships
- * Brings joy to life
- * Lowers stress hormones
- * Is contagious

Funny Books

Parents undoubtedly remember what books made them laugh as children, and they will want to share them with their children.

Here are some favorites:

- Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type* by Doreen Cronin
- Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!* by Mo Willems
- If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* by Laura Numeroff

- * Dr. Seuss and Shel Silverstein * wrote many funny books and poems.

PERSONAL PARENTING



HOW TO SAY HI TO A DOG

Adorable dogs can be hard to resist, and they draw kids like a magnet.

But there is a right way for children (and adults) to approach a dog. Always ask the dog's owner for permission to pet the dog. If it is okay, then wait for a moment to

see if the dog approaches you. If he does, pet him under the chin. If a dog is tied up and the owner is not around, don't touch the dog. Your child can talk about how cute the dog is or blow a kiss from a distance.

Flashlight Fun

It's fun to play with a beam of light. Provide a flashlight and these directions for a fun way to help your child learn **positional words** such as up, down, under, and behind.

- Shine your light up to the ceiling.
- Shine your light down to the floor.
- Shine your light beside the chair.
- Shine your light on top of your shoes.
- Shine your light under the table.
- Shine your light behind the plant.

Child's Play: How Many?

This is a simple math game but fun. Ask these questions or come up with your own that are simple to answer but still challenging. Use scales and a tape measure for added learning experiences.

- How many fingers are on your hand?
- How many shoes are on your feet?
- How many inches from your head to your toes?
- How many pounds do the apples weigh?



Pumpkin Power



Pumpkins are a nutritious vegetable with lots of iron—and they're not just for pies and cookies.

* Pumpkin Parfait

Stir 1 cup pumpkin puree into 1 cup vanilla yogurt. Layer with granola and you have created the perfect pumpkin parfait.

* Spicy Pumpkin Seeds

Toss pumpkin seeds in a mixture of melted butter, cinnamon, nutmeg, and allspice. Place on a cookie sheet and bake at 300 degrees for 30 minutes.

* Spicy No-Bake Pumpkin Balls

Kids will love shaping this mixture into nutritious pumpkin treats.

In a large bowl, combine 1 cup oats, ½ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice, 3 tablespoons pumpkin puree, ¼ cup brown sugar, and ¼ cup raisins. Form into 1-inch balls and roll in powdered sugar. Delicious!!!

BRAIN TECHNOLOGY

We can't see what's going on inside a child's head, but we can measure the activity in different parts of the brain with a positron-emission tomography (PET) scan. This technology allows scientists to determine which parts of the brain are particularly active at each stage of development.



Chatting With Children

Shared conversations between parents and children create warm relationships.

Having a conversation with children can be a little tricky. They may be quiet and unresponsive when parents ask questions such as “Did you have a good day at school today?” or “Are you feeling sad?” or “Did you have fun with your new friend?” **Parents are seeking information and want to have a conversation, but often that’s not the result. They simply get a yes or no answer.** On the other hand, some children, especially young ones, are so talkative that parents are faced with endless questions such as “Why does it rain?” or “Why do dogs wag their tails?” or “Why did you name me Amanda?” It’s often difficult to find the time to answer the thoughtful, imaginative, and often humorous questions kids come up with. Thankfully there are some techniques that encourage a good chat.

Gently remind yourself that timing is everything.

Asking a personal question when others are around is not a good idea. It’s much more effective to wait until you have a few minutes alone. If you’re reading the newspaper or watching TV when your child is trying to have a conversation with you, you will both feel frustrated. It’s okay if you’re in the middle of something to say, “I want to hear what’s on your mind. Give me a minute and we’ll talk.” If you’re in the middle of a conflict, it’s a good idea to have a cooldown period before trying to have a serious conversation.

It can be a little intimidating when children ask questions that you’ve never even thought of. But instead of ignoring the question or trying to fake an answer, it’s best to simply say, “I don’t know.” Kids find out sooner or later that parents don’t know everything! And when you have the time, you can look up the answer together.

Experts say that specific, open-ended questions generate the best responses. Instead of asking, “Did you have a good day at school?” ask, “What was the most interesting thing you did at school today?” Open-ended

questions call for more than a yes or no answer. Parents can take a lesson from inquisitive youngsters and learn to ask more stimulating questions that actually generate discussion. “If you could be really good at one sport, what would you choose?” By listening to the answers, parents can learn a lot about their child’s thoughts and feelings.

Communication is as much about listening as it is about talking. Help your child be a good listener by getting his attention before the conversation begins. Children are just like adults—their minds might be a thousand miles away. **To get their attention, say their name or establish eye contact.** For young children, it’s a good idea to get at their level by kneeling down or by sitting on the floor or at a table. This arrangement makes interacting much easier. To avoid confusion and misunderstandings, get in the habit of restating and clarifying. Ask children to restate what they heard you say. You’ll know right away if they “got it” or



if you need to clarify with further explanations. And listen very carefully to your children when they speak. **When children are listened to, they tend to share more because they know you’re really interested.**

Shared conversations between parents and children create warm relationships. They build trust, assuring that your child can come to you at any time with any question or concern. Make it a priority to talk as often as you can. Children need practice having conversations with the most important people in their lives.