

Little Bridges News

December 2019



Calendar of Events

Harbor House Toy Drive

Gifts Due 12/6

Preschool

Christmas Program

12/12 7:00 PM

Festive Sweater Day

Friday 12/20

CLOSED – Christmas

12/24 & 12/25

CLOSED – New Years

12/31 & 1/1

School Age

Holiday Camp

12/23, 12/26 & 12/27

12/30, 1/2 & 1/3

Canyon Creek Church

Sunday Services &

Sunday School

Celebrate the Advent Season!

8:45 & 10:15

Christmas Eve Services

Family Service 4:00pm

Candlelight

Services 6:00pm & 7:30pm

Harbor House Christmas Toy Drive

Please join us as we participate in supporting the Harbor House Christmas Store again this year. Harbor House is a Christian nonprofit organization located in east Oakland that provides many services to low-income families. The Christmas store empowers low-income parents to purchase gifts for their children at a fraction of the cost.

This year we are using SignUpGenius as a way to coordinate. Gifts can either be sent directly to Harbor House from Amazon or dropped off in the office. To participate, go to your class Shutterfly or our Little Bridges website. All gifts are due **Friday, Dec. 6th.**

Please consider helping another family this year. Your actions will warm your heart, spread kindness to a family and show your own child the true gift of giving this season.

Christmas Program: Thursday Dec. 12th

Please join us on Thursday, Dec. 12th for our annual Christmas program. This year our show is all about "The Joy of Christmas". Bring your cameras and prepare your hearts for a very special evening. The show will start promptly at 7:00 pm in the worship center.

Family Christmas Eve Service

Canyon Creek Church has three separate Christmas Eve Services. The 4:00 service is perfect for families with smaller children. The evening times of 6:00pm and 7:30pm are traditional candlelight services. Join us!

Thank You!

We collected over 2000 pounds of food during this years Contra Costa County food Bank Drive. Thank you for supporting this very worthy cause.

Kindergarten & TK Readiness Info. Nights

The San Ramon Valley Unified School District is preparing for kindergarten and TK enrollment for fall 2020. Below are the times for their Information Nights.

Kindergarten (must be five on or before Sept. 1st 2019)

Jan. 14th 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm California High School

Jan. 16th 6:30pm – 7:30 pm San Ramon Valley High School

Transitional Kindergarten (must turn five between Sept. 2nd – Dec. 2nd)

Jan. 7th 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm John Baldwin Elementary School

Jan. 9th 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm Coyote Creek Elementary School

Money Doesn't Grow On Trees

The other evening, while my two young boys and me were driving home, I said aloud—to no one in particular—“I wonder what I should do for dinner tonight?” (Big mistake on my part...I know better than to say anything like that out loud.) Instantly and simultaneously, both boys sung with enthusiasm “McDonalds!”

I thought fast—“Sorry, not an option tonight. I don't have any money.”

But my boys are just as quick—“Just go to the ATM, mom.”

And then I came back with the line my dad always used on me, “You just don't get it,—money doesn't grow on trees!” I then proceeded to go into this long explanation of how you have to have money in the bank to get it out—that there is not a little man inside the ATM machine handing out bills to everyone with a card—that their two big brothers in college are sucking our bank account dry—that mommy and daddy work hard to pay for all they have—that we have food at home that we already bought—that we need to think about things before we buy them—yada, yada, yada. Sound familiar??

By four years old, children are starting to develop the cognitive skills necessary to understand basic monetary concepts. They can start identifying coins, figuring out how to count change, and can even begin matching small amounts of money to items they want to buy. In fact, on this particular evening, my youngest said, “But I have some money,” and he dug in the car door cup holder to reveal about 13 cents.

I responded by informing him of the true cost of a *Happy Meal*—which I think is important. But, besides acquainting your kids with the basics of economics, money lessons have other benefits. Simply stated, money is a stand-in for many of the values we want to teach our children. If youngsters learn how to spend wisely and delay gratification, they will develop patience and planning skills in other aspects of their lives.

To increase your child's money smarts, try these strategies:

- **Explain how money works.** Your child needs to know there's not a little printing press inside every ATM. Explain that the bank is like a big piggy bank where you keep your money until you're ready to use it. Tell her that when you spend what's in your account, it's gone until you get paid by your boss and can put more in. She should understand that you can't buy whatever you want and that you need to make careful choices about how you spend your money.
- **Build your child's money skills.** Reinforce lessons he's learning at school by making a chart that illustrates basic money equivalents. Post it on the refrigerator or in your child's room. Help him practice exchanging pennies for nickels and dimes and quarters for dollars. Play store by putting price tags on items around the house 50¢ for a pencil, 75¢ for a rubber ball, and \$2 for a *Hot Wheels* car. Help your child figure out the cost to “buy” each one. Then hand him two one-dollar bills and explain that he has enough for the pencil and the ball or just the car, but not all three. Let him choose.
- **Give your child a small allowance.** It should be enough for her to buy minor items, such as trading cards, hair clips, or ice-cream bars. The next time you go shopping, tell your child to bring her money if she thinks she might want to purchase something. What if your child has blown her wad and still begs for ice cream? Tell her she'll have to wait until the next allowance day. If you give in, you've defeated the purpose.

If your child wants something big, such as a new game or toy, help her figure out how much she needs to save each week in order to buy it. Clear plastic banks are great because children can watch their money grow.

- **Let your child do some spending.** When your child wants to make a purchase, help him count out the correct amount. Have him hand the money to the cashier and wait for his change. If your child wants to blow \$3 on vending-machine toys instead of waiting to combine it with next week's allowance to buy a *Superhero*, point out the trade-off, but leave the final decision to him. Of course, I as mom still have veto power if I think an item is inappropriate or too sticky to eat in the car.

I think it's also important to teach kids to do more with their money than spend it on themselves. Encouraging them to use their own money to buy gifts for others (like the Harbor House toy drive) is a wonderful way to teach sharing, empathy and caring.

- **Offer ways to earn extra cash.** I am also one of those parents that feel that a child's allowance should not be tied to household chores. Children should help out around the house because they are part of the family, not because they are being paid. But there are times when kids need to learn that they can increase the amount of money they have—by working for it. Make a list of jobs your child can do above and beyond her routine chores, such as raking leaves or dusting furniture, along with the amount you're willing to pay for the job.