

A U G U S T
N E W S L E T T E R

INVITATIONS FOR LEARNING

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Take your child's hand firmly and run as fast as you can.....

When should you run with your child as fast as you can from that kindergarden?

- When the program expects children to sit down often
- When the program expects all children to be at the same level doing the same skills
- When the program does not offer lots of choices
- When the program uses punishment as their means to guidance
- When the program says, "No parent volunteers"

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At a conference recently, a parent of a child who will be attending kindergarden in the fall, stood up and expressed her fears. The more she described the setting and the curriculum, the more her voice cracked and the tears ran down her cheeks, until she was no longer able to talk. Her final words were, "What can I do?"

I am hearing this type of situation more and more. Parents and guardians feel lost as to what their options are in placing children in kindergarden.

My response use to be, "Enroll your child in kindergarden and volunteer as often as possible to make changes happen." This is still appropriate for some

children and situations.

Lately I am concerned about what some children will be entering into.

No child should ever be in an environment that causes him/her to feel like a failure. They need lots of opportunities for success and it is up to parents/guardians to make sure that happens.

When my daughter was in second grade, my wife and I attended a parent teacher conference. At the conference the teacher said, "Jennifer talks a lot during class time". My comment to her was, "You are not telling me anything new. What can I do to help you get over it?"

It is our responsibility to make sure we are advocates for our children. Knowing what options are available helps.

Kindergarden Options:

There are some excellent kindergarden teachers who are really working "hard" at making a better world for children. Unfortunately, they are not always available to all parents in all schools.... So what are some options?

- Set up an appointment to observe the classroom your child is entering. Are the children allowed to be active, creative and social?*
- Keep looking around for a kindergarden that would be appropriate. You don't always have to choose the one in your neighborhood.*
- Check out private schools. Remember just because their private doesn't make them better. They do often have smaller class size.*
- Perhaps home schooling is your answer. I never recommended home schooling before, but now see it as a very realistic option for some children. There are some very organized home schooling organizations for support. Remember it doesn't have to be the child's whole educational experience. You might find a terrific first grade.*
- Place your child in a program and volunteer every day.*
- Take your child's hand firmly and run as fast as you can. Keep him/her out for another year. Perhaps next year you will have different options. Never place a child in a program that doesn't respect his/her needs.*