

Unique Preschool Curriculum Developed



Smart Love-trained teachers at The Natalie G. Heineman Smart Love Preschool have developed a unique early childhood education curriculum based on Smart Love principles. Its goal is to promote young children's long-term academic success by strengthening their social-emotional health and creating eager and enthusiastic learners. We are guided by the idea that it is not when children learn to read or add and subtract that matters, it is whether they love these activities and want to do more of them.

Children learn best through age-appropriate enjoyable and constructive activities within a setting that offers warm and friendly relationships with their teachers and one another. Our play-based curriculum follows the themes most meaningful to children: Me, My Family, My Home, My School, My School Community, My Neighborhood Community and My School Yard and Garden Community (plants and animals). The curriculum provides many opportunities for progressive and integrative learning and exceeds the State of Illinois Early Childhood

Education Benchmarks across all domains from math, language arts, science, social science, to art, drama and music.

When school first begins in the fall children are introduced to the learning community in a gradual and fun way so they associate school with enjoyment. We create a family bulletin board right next to their cubbies that shows photos of each child's family.

This provides an immediate comforting connection. Children are interested in talking to their teachers and classmates about their families and the school community begins to form.

As school progresses, many opportunities for science learning also occur both in our classrooms and in our outdoor classroom that features a greenhouse, several raised vegetable beds, an herb spiral, and a nature path with a grape arbor. Farmer Billy, our gardener-in-residence, engages children in how plants grow from seed to table and relates it to how they themselves grow. Children help harvest produce from the garden and make tasty pizzas. They sort and dry seeds for planting next spring. They also talk about how plants make food out of water and sunlight, and how worms and insects help out. The children are learning about recycling, solar energy, photosynthesis, life cycles, and many other science concepts. Teachers also help children integrate their learning across themes. For example, by connecting children's activities about homes

for people to homes for animals, an extended study of birds in our yard and their nests was undertaken. Children created their own bird nests from materials they gathered in the yard just like real birds and then made a bird egg and then a bird so they could begin to understand nature's lifecycles.

Learning at Smart Love Preschool occurs as an accompaniment to enjoyable activities and not in situations where children are made to perform or to sit quietly to work. The Smart Love teachers and administrators make sure the curriculum is age-appropriate, fun, exciting, and challenging but doable for the children in the classroom and make adjustments to make the day sufficiently varied and interesting. This sets children up to become inspired, consistent, and eager learners in the grades to come.

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QUICK TIP:

TAKING THE HASSLE OUT OF HOMEWORK



Many children struggle with homework, which can cause parents to feel frustrated and confused about how best to help them. Some parents wonder how they can strike the right balance between letting their children struggle alone and doing it for them. Other parents are frustrated to find themselves, night after night, in a power struggle over homework with their children.

Doing homework is a learned process. Young learners don't automatically know how to do a worksheet,

how to approach every math problem or where to look to find answers. For young students, doing homework is new. They are required to complete and hand in their homework on time or face negative consequences. They may also have feelings about the grades they receive for their work. So, right from the start, children are dealing with a lot. Some children approach this new process with enthusiasm and optimism, while others may feel anxious, overwhelmed or less motivated.

Completing homework isn't helped by the fact that young children, and even adolescents, routinely underestimate the time it takes to do their homework. This is developmentally appropriate behavior. They truly believe that it will take only five minutes or believe they hardly have any homework at all. It is helpful to keep in mind that children have an immature sense of time and their time management skills are not yet developed (a skill many adults themselves are working to master!). When children realize the cold hard fact that their assignment takes far more time and effort than they had bargained for, they can feel overwhelmed and discouraged, making it even harder to get started. In the higher grades, students are required to juggle complex subject matter with more long-term assignments and varying timeframes, not to mention the pull of extracurricular activities and spending time with peers. And this is all happening as they are dealing with the numerous developmental changes and challenges.

If despite your best efforts your child continues to find it hard to do homework, and you find yourself getting into power struggles, seek the help of a patient and caring tutor. You will accomplish the goal of getting your child the help she needs, while also protecting your relationship from the conflict that homework seems to trigger.

Your relationship with your child matters most. The love and closeness of your relationship will foster your child's inner-happiness - the most important indicator of a child's academic success. Over time, your positive approach to helping your child do her homework will help her to become a confident, joyful, lifetime learner.

What can you do to help your child with homework?

- The good news is that there is an effective middle ground between giving up in defeat or using a harsh, punitive approach when children struggle to do their homework. It is possible for you to help your child do her homework, while preserving her happiness.
- First and foremost, take the long view and keep in mind your ultimate goal: to help your child develop a life-long love of learning.
- Be available to hear your child's feelings about what it's like being a student and her feelings about school, all of which impact her learning and motivation for homework. Sometimes it is hard when kids realize they cannot know or do everything perfectly in school. Help your child understand that learning entails making mistakes.
- Set a consistent homework time before or after dinner. Let your child decide. If you give your child a choice, they will feel cared about and empowered, and more likely to be motivated to do their work.
- Approach homework from a positive perspective. Minimize distractions by turning off the television or radio. Sit with your child or be nearby so you can help if she asks for help. Make it a relationship experience rather than a solitary one.
- If your child is struggling, but trying, and not asking for help, let her work on her own and at her own speed. When your child does ask for help, respond right away. Don't make her beg for answers or say, "you can do it!", or "sound it out!" or any number of responses that add pressure to the situation and can make it harder for her.
- If your child is clearly making mistakes on her homework, but declines your help, do not force the issue. Allow the teacher to be the "bad guy" to help her correct her work. (Remember that your goal is to build on, and allow space for your child to discover his or her own motivation to do her best).
- Be positive, gentle, and kind while your child is learning. Never use put-downs or get mad when your child is trying. While it can feel frustrating at times when helping your child, it is better to take a break (a parent time-out) than to become angry.

PARENTING

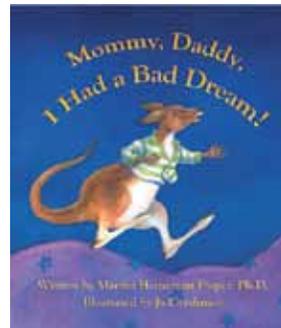
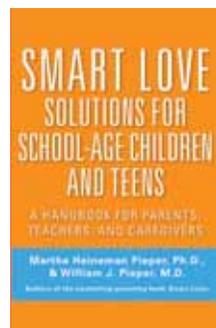
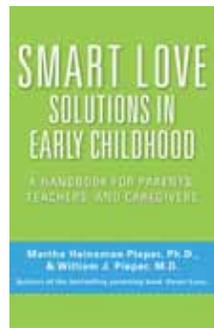
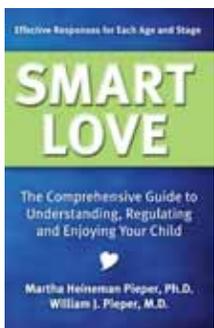
Parent Education Seminars Announced

Baby Sleep & Development	January 24
Sibling Rivalry	February 21
Toddler Toileting & Development	March 21
Discipline Redefined	April 4 (Oak Park) & 18
Baby Sleep & Development	May 16
Sibling Rivalry	July 18

Presented by professionals at Smart Love, these seminars cover a wide range of topics of interest to parents and include time for parents to ask their specific child-rearing questions. Smart Love's parent education seminars are open to all parents as well as professionals who work with children. We offer free childcare during seminars at our Chicago location. Seminars are held from 6:00 to 7:15 p.m. at The Natalie G. Heineman Smart Love Preschool in Chicago unless otherwise noted.

Please visit www.smartlovetfamily.org to register.

Smart Love Books for Families



Books are available for purchase at the following sites:

smartlovetfamily.org
smartlovetpreschool.org
smartlovetpress.com
amazon.com
bn.com

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Chicago Botanic Garden hosts Smart Love Teacher Training

The Chicago Botanic Garden invited teachers from The Natalie G. Heineman Smart Love Preschool to participate in their school gardening conference on June 30, 2012. Our teachers showed how preschoolers bridged their indoor learning about caring for themselves and others to caring for plants in our school garden. Topics discussed included worm composting, making soil blocks from seed starts, greenhouse gardening, and fun cooking projects geared to preschoolers.

Fox Valley Montessori Teacher Training

Carol Johnson, LCSW, staff therapist and Kelly Perez, Preschool Director offered the first of a two-part training to teachers at Fox Valley Montessori School on October 5, 2012. Ms. Johnson helped teachers understand how children's minds develop and how best to help manage children's behavior and enhance children's inner self-esteem and happiness. She also addressed how best to help children who have challenging behaviors in the classroom. The second part of the training will be offered by Kelly Perez who will focus on showing Smart Love in action in the classroom. Topics will focus on the learning environment, daily schedule and transitions as well as partnering with parents and collaborating with colleagues to help children fully engage in the classroom setting.

Spotlight on Donors

We offer heartfelt thanks to all who supported Smart Love from July 1, 2011 to October 31, 2012.

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Friends Treated to Fall Flouish Open House Event!

A special event for Friends of Smart Love took place on Saturday October 6th. Guests enjoyed the banjo music of acclaimed folk artist, Mark Dvorak and delicious food as they toured the preschool and counseling programs and talked with Smart Love staff and board members. The beautiful fall day also offered guests an opportunity to explore our new school garden and greenhouse.

School Garden Project a Success!

Thanks to the generous support of Mary Frances Budig and John Hass our school garden project has been an unqualified success. Their \$7,500 matching grant garnered over \$15,000 from over 20 donors! It was an idea that caught the attention and engagement of teachers, preschool families and Smart Love donors far and wide. John and Mary Frances along with their two preschool aged children have seen firsthand the rich learning experience this project offers our preschoolers. Billy Burdett, our gardener-in-residence, engages the children twice a week in the garden through fun, age-appropriate activities. Thank you to the Budig Hass family for your leadership and to all who made contributions.

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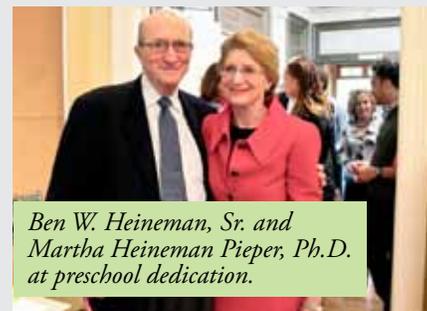
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Gift Key:

- * Gifts to the Smart Love Gala / Martha Heineman Pieper, Ph.D. and William J. Pieper, M.D. Scholarship Fund
- ± Gifts in memory of Ben W. Heineman, Sr.
- ° Gifts in Memory of Mary Ellen Taylor
- # Gifts to the Natalie G. Heineman Smart Love Preschool Fund
- ^ Attendees to the Smart Love Gala
- ∞ Deceased



Ben W. Heineman, Sr. and Martha Heineman Pieper, Ph.D. at preschool dedication.

In Memorium Ben W. Heineman, Sr.

This past August, Smart Love lost a dear friend. Ben W. Heineman was revered as a giant of his generation—a brilliant lawyer, a far-sighted businessman, an advisor to presidents, governors and mayors and a generous donor to non-profit organizations in Chicago and nationally. The Natalie G. Heineman Smart Love Preschool was named for his late wife, Natalie. At the preschool's dedication in 2010, Mr. Heineman cut the ribbon to officially open the school. He provided numerous gifts towards the preschool's scholarship fund because he wanted to ensure that any child could enroll in the preschool regardless of their family's ability to pay. Ben W. Heineman was the father of Martha Heineman Pieper, Ph.D. who wrote *Smart Love* and developed the philosophical understanding underpinning all Smart Love services and programs. Many of his friends and family provided over \$15,000 in gifts to the preschool in his memory. We will always be grateful to him for his many positive contributions to the lives of children and families.

Save the Date

Friday, April 26, 2013
Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum

SMART LOVE ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP GALA

All proceeds from the event support financial aid for families who are unable to fully afford services and programs offered by Smart Love. This vital support enables families to grow and thrive! The event will feature cocktails, silent auction, gourmet seated dinner and a live auction.



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See what other parents have to say
about Smart Love on Yelp



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COUNSELING SERVICES

Play Therapy
Adolescent and Adult Psychotherapy
Parent Guidance and Counseling
Couples and Family Counseling
Child Friendship Groups
Learning Assessments for Children
and Adolescents
Parent Education Seminars

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Parent and Baby Group (*infants 6 wks.
– 11 mos.*)

Toddler Explorations (*parent and
toddlers 12– 36 mos.*)

Toddler Transitions (*toddlers 30 – 36
mos., parents wait in Family Room*)

Preschool (*full and half day programs
for children 3 – 5 years*)

TO LEARN MORE VISIT

www.smartlovefamily.org
www.smartlovepreschool.org



Toddler Explorations & Toddler Transitions

Our popular Toddler Explorations program for parents and toddlers (12 – 36 mos.) is under-way welcoming returning and new families. We're delighted to see how excited the children are to be attending the class as they press their faces to the glass door and "knock" to come in. New this fall is Toddler Transitions, a class for toddlers 30 – 36 months. The parents or caregivers are available in the family room while the children play with the teachers in the toddler classroom. Children attend twice a week for 90 minutes classes. This class provides a comfortable transition to preschool. Families may register at anytime by visiting www.smartlovepreschool.org.

The Smart Love Approach was developed by Martha Heineman Pieper, Ph.D., and William J. Pieper, M.D., and is described in their book *Smart Love*. The Natalie G. Heineman Smart Love Preschool offers classes for 3–5 yr. olds, Parent and Tot classes for children 12–36 mos., and Mom and Baby Group. Smart Love Family Services provides counseling for children and families based on the Piepers' therapeutic approach, Inner Humanism[®]. Parenting programs include private parent coaching, educational seminars (co-sponsored by the Intrapsychic Humanism Society) and publications. Copyright 2012 Smart Love Family Services, an Illinois-based 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization.

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