

Parents as Teachers

Reflections from the Coordinator

One of the positives of having a harsh winter is that it makes me so grateful for spring when it arrives! I hope you can find some moments to get outside and soak in the vibrant colors and enjoy a little sunshine on your face. This month's newsletter is going to be full, I hope you will take a few moments to read through it as we have some really great events coming up and information to share.

First, this Thursday night I invite you to come join us for a conversation around screen time at the Hilltop Conference Center from 6-7:30pm. We designed this presentation specifically for parents of children birth to 5 because we believe that sharing researched based information and prompting intentional conversations early can help families develop a plan to ease the stress of screens and promote healthy development. This event is free and we encourage to you come with your spouse and you are free to bring others in your circle including grandparents, nanny's and friends so you can continue to conversation after the event and have others to walk the journey with you. Sign up [HERE](#).

Second, we have two fun upcoming events for you to bring your children with you as well. First, April 12th we will once again host our popular Worm Walk. This will be a fun opportunity to get out into nature with your kids and get a little dirty. Spots are limited and registration is required. Then on May 3 we will host our Annual Touch-A-Truck from 9-11am where you can come and explore the Hilltop playground and check out some cool big vehicles of all kinds. We are still looking for a few more trucks for the event so if your family has a business or access to a fun truck, it can be a great promotion. Email Amy Mertz amertz@bluevalleyk12.org to get more information about how you can get your truck included.

Finally, if you have not yet joined our PTA, I encourage you to take advantage of joining this month. If you join now, your membership will be good through the 2025-26 school year. The PTA helps support events like Touch-a-Truck as well as monthly extra playgroups and outings. They also support our staff through teacher appreciation events. Sign up [HERE](#).

As always, make sure you are following us on social media to stay in the loop!

Warmly,

Michelle Kelly
Program Coordinator
mkelly@bluevalleyk12.org

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SOCIAL MEDIA!
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CODE TO BEGIN.**



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Teachers

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parentsasteachersbv



Worm Walk & Nature Play

Mark your calendars for a fun spring event! We will host our annual Worm Walk and Nature Play on Saturday, April 12th from 10-11am. This will take place at the Wilderness Science Center (5001 W 163rd Terrace). We will enjoy story time together, explore the environment for worms in their habitats and explore a sensory-rich art making experience. This is most appropriate for children 20 months and up. Registration required and space is limited. Click [HERE](#) to register.



Screen Smarts Parent Event

When Blue Valley surveyed K-12 parents in our district about what their number one struggle is at home, Screen Time was near or at the top of every list. The internet, iPads, and Smartphones have changed not only our world, but also what childhood looks like today compared to when we were kids. While technology can help enhance our lives and make things easier and more efficient, it can also become addictive and disrupt our connections with people, especially our children. We are excited to present a parent only event April 3 from 6-7:30pm at the Hilltop Conference Center. This evening is designed to help parents navigate the tricky world of utilizing the best parts of technology while minimizing the negative impacts on our children's development as well as avoiding the Screen Time battles. The evening will include research-based information and tools to help you make informed, intentional decisions, and put in place routines that are right for your family. There is no better time to start having this conversation than while your child is still young as their world is already impacted.

Event is provided at no cost and open to parents, grandparents and caregivers. We ask that you register all those attending with you at the link below to help us set the room. Please see our flyer below to share with friends.

Registration: <https://forms.gle/u3ESD1hyP1XtP2VW9>

Please make other arrangements for your children. If you have any questions let me or your parent educator know.

Hope you can join us!

Michelle Kelly

BV PAT Program Coordinator

Screen Smarts

Helping Families Thrive In a Screen Filled World



April 3, 6-7:30pm

Hilltop Conference Center

7710 W 143rd St

Overland Park, KS 66223



MAY PLAYGROUPS

In order to help facilitate connections between children and families, we run playgroups in 2-4 week sessions. In May, families have the opportunity to sign up for a group that will meet weekly at the same time for 2 weeks. You can choose to sign up for a group with children that are similar age to your child (Baby Play, 1-Year-Olds or 2-Year-Olds) or you can choose our multiage group (1's and 2's) if you have more than one child or would like you child to be around children of all ages.

MAY PLAYGROUP SIGN UP WILL BE EMAILED ON APRIL 15TH

Each group will be limited to 10-18 children.

- Only one adult per child may attend. A nanny or grandparent is welcome to bring child in place of parent if necessary.
- No siblings are allowed in the Baby Play, 1-Year-Old or 2-Year-Old playgroups. Siblings under 36 months of age are allowed to attend the multiage playgroups, evening and Saturday playgroups. Non-walking/crawling babies are an exception.
- All adults must show a valid state issued photo ID or passport to enter any BV building. Please plan to bring ID with you every time you come to playgroup or you will not be allowed to attend.
- Strollers and car seats are not allowed in the playroom, please plan to wear or carry your baby while in the playroom when not on the floor playing.
- If a session is full please add your name to the waiting list. Waiting list families will receive priority registration for the next month.
- If you miss two sessions in a row, your spot will be given to the next family on the waiting list.
- Please stay home if you or your child is ill.

May Playgroups

Baby Play for non-walkers (4-12 months)– Thursdays 12:15-1pm: 5/8 & 5/15

Baby Play for non-walkers (4-12 months) - Tuesdays 12:15-1pm: 5/6 & 5/13

Playgroup for 1-Year-Olds (12-23 months) - Wednesdays 10:15-11am: 5/7 & 5/14

Playgroup for 1-Year-Olds (12-23 months) - Thursdays 9:15-10am: 5/8 & 5/15

Playgroup for 2-Year-Olds (24-36 months) - Tuesdays 10:15-11am: 5/6 & 5/13

Playgroup for 2-Year-Olds (24-36 months) - Wednesdays 9:15-10am: 5/7 & 5/14

Playgroup for 1's and 2's (9-36 months) *This is a playgroup for children 9 to 36 months of age and/or families with more than one child under 36 months*– Thursdays 10:15-11am: 5/8 & 5/15

Evening Playgroup Wednesday, 5/7 6-6:45pm

Annual Parent Satisfaction Survey

Each year in May, we have a long planning meeting where we reflect over the year, review the great feedback we receive from you in our annual survey, and begin to plan forward for next year. You can help us prepare for this year's meeting by sharing your feedback and PAT experience with us by completing the survey by following the link below. Please use the comment boxes to share what you love and ideas you have to help us grow. Thank you!

Survey link:

<https://tinyurl.com/yc3x6sdz>

SAVE THE DATE for Touch-a-Truck

Our Annual Touch-a-Truck will be held Saturday, May 3rd from 9-11am in the Hilltop Learning Center parking lot (7700 W 143rd St). This is a drop in event so no registration is required. If you own a business that has a truck and would like to participate please email Amy Mertz at amertz@bluevalleyk12.org. We anticipate over 250 people so it would be great visibility for your company. Thank you for considering!



2025 Blue Valley Special Needs Resource Fair

This is our 15th annual Resource Fair and we hope you can join us. This fair has become one of the largest resource fairs in the Kansas City metro area, providing wonderful resources to self-advocates and to families who care for individuals with intellectual/developmental and/or physical disabilities. The Resource Fair will be held the evening of Thursday, April 10th from 5-8pm. This in-person event will be held at the spacious Hilltop Conference Center (7700 W 143rd St).

PTA Corner

Did you know that the PTA organizes a Staff Appreciation Week each May? This involves school decorations, daily meals or treats for the staff, and a raffle of gifts to say thank you. It's a big undertaking that's only made possible by the parents who donate and volunteer. Your first opportunity to participate is to help us Chalk the Walk. Stick around after Touch-a-Truck on May 3rd to brighten the entrance of the building with chalked positive messages and artwork. We hope to see you there!

And if you haven't joined the PTA yet we are offering a time limited opportunity for membership. Pay your \$30 to join now and your membership will last until July 2026. That's PTA membership for your entire family from now until the end of the next school year. If you sign up today you will get an email with an invite to next month's events including a playgroup, outing, and music time with Ms Rae. Plus you can join us at Deanna Rose next month on the PTA! Now's the best time to join. [Click the link here to sign up.](#)

With gratitude,

Megan Dumas
BVEC PTA President
(913) 251-1114
bvearlychildhoodpta@gmail.com



Wilderness Science Center offers a Path for Mindful Nature Connection

Did you know there's a hidden gem right in the District's backyard, open to students and the public? The [Wilderness Science Center](#) (WSC), at 5001 W. 163rd Terrace, has been an essential part of Blue Valley students' education for more than 20 years. Each year, 7,000 students learn about natural plants and the importance of environmental stewardship at the WSC.

In addition to hands-on learning experiences, the WSC features a Wellness Walk: a special place that unites nature, mental health and wellness. Thanks to the generous support of the Keep the Spark Alive Foundation, the quarter-mile Wellness Walk invites visitors to enjoy student-created interactive artwork designed to encourage better mental health.

BVEF is proud to have supported the WSC since its inception in 1999. Countless improvements and additions over the years, like new footbridges in 2023, have been possible through the generous support of our donors, business community, Blue Valley staff, and volunteers.

Take advantage of warmer weather and longer daylight hours to explore this beautiful space! Your mind and body will thank you.

BVEF's Women's Giving Circle Surpasses \$100,000 in Grants

Blue Valley Educational Foundation's Women's Giving Circle is all about community-driven impact. This unique form of participatory philanthropy invites women to pool their individual \$100 donations, with the goal of 150 members, and collectively award a grant of up to \$15,000. It's an evening of networking in a relaxed happy hour environment where educators present three grant proposals for funding consideration. After a lively discussion, members cast their votes, and the excitement builds until the winning proposal is announced. These impactful grants fund special academic programs, author and artist visits, and guest lecturers. They can double the impact of an existing program, support new initiatives across an entire grade level District-wide, across District departments, or be used for collaboration with other schools.

Women's Giving Circles take place twice a year, in October and April. All women in the community are welcome to join this remarkable group making a lasting difference in the lives of our educators and students.

A special thanks to our Sustaining Members of Women's Giving Circle! We're grateful for these women who have supported this special grant-making event on a recurring basis.

Want to be part of a great Ladies' Night Out Party with a Purpose? You're invited to our spring Women's Giving Circle! Join us on Thursday April 10, 6:00 - 8:00 pm at Vista 154 at Ironhorse Golf Course. [Learn more and register online](#), or email Susan Tideman: satideman@bluevalleyk12.org.

Parents as Teachers was awarded a grant last year through the Women's Giving Circle that funded our Conscious Discipline work with families this year.

Rhea Lana's of Overland Park



A Children's
Consignment Event

APRIL 6-12

6495 Quivira Rd, Shawnee, KS
Next to SkyZone

Scan for info!



SHOP BEFORE WE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

PRESENT THIS POSTCARD FOR FREE ENTRY FOR YOU AND A FRIEND ON
SATURDAY, APRIL 5 AT 4PM



Sell your gently-used children's items at Rhea Lana's!

- ♥ Earn 65-75% of sales
- ♥ Consignors shop early
- ♥ Get paid by pick-up day
- ♥ Items are guaranteed
- ♥ Quickly enter items using voice entry
- ♥ Watch your items sell in real time through our app



Come experience the Rhea Lana's difference!

Shop name brand clothes and shoes in newborn-teen sizes + maternity! Find furniture, baby gear, toys and more - all neatly organized & 60-90% off retail!

PUBLIC SALE DAYS

Sunday, April 6 - 12 PM - 6 PM

Monday, April 7 - 10 AM - 8 PM

Tuesday, April 8 - 10 AM - 8 PM

25% OFF DAYS

Wednesday, April 9 - 10 AM - 6 PM

HALF PRICE DAYS

Friday, April 11 - 10 AM - 8 PM

Saturday, April 12 - 9 AM - 4 PM

Questions? Contact us!

katelyn@rhealana.com

816-308-6672

overlandpark.rhealana.com