

ST. HELENA PRESCHOOL FOR ALL



Parent Testimonial

BY ERICA MENDEZ, SHPFA PARENT

V-I-C-T-O-R-I-A, how my daughter will confidently offer to spell her name anytime we introduce her to someone new. She's kind, smart, and one curious toddler. Preschool for All has provided Victoria with the opportunity to participate in a structured setting with teachers and other children. Since becoming a student at St. Helena Cooperative Nursery School (Co-op) we have had the pleasure to witness her social and emotional growth. Victoria is eager to learn and play with others. Prior to her attending Co-op I had great concern with her starting school. She was shy, and did not have much interest in playing with others. After having attended our first parent-teacher meeting, we learned Victoria's fine and gross motor skills had significantly improved. Victoria understands the importance of sharing with her little sister and friends and is willing to "take turns". In addition Preschool For All has also provided both my husband and I with a parent education program that provided us with tools we can utilize to better support both our girls at home.

Preschool Testimonial

BY MAUREEN KELLY, ST.HELENA COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL DIRECTOR

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SHPFA has truly been life-changing for so many local families, and is a wonderful living example of unity and progress.

The St. Helena Cooperative Nursery School has proudly been in partnership with St. Helena Preschool For All since its inception in 2010. Over our 11 years working together, the Co-op and SHPFA have made it possible for many children to walk into our schoolhouse each fall and emerge each spring with broadened minds and expanded social-emotional skills that support their success in Kindergarten and beyond. SHPFA children and their families have diversified and enriched the Co-op community, bringing our core values of equity, empathy, and full inclusion to life as children discover and learn together through play.

The collaboration of SHPFA with the Co-op and other inclusive up valley preschools, and the St. Helena, Howell Mountain, and Calistoga School Districts is an inspiring model. It is our belief that a community united in practicing values like compassion and integrity promotes development of those same values in children. SHPFA has truly been a life-changing for so many local families and is a wonderful living example fo unity and progress.



District Testimonial

BY NICOLE LANDIS ST. HELENA PRIMARY SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

Why is Preschool Important?

Over the years I have had many people ask me my opinion about the need for preschool before kindergarten for their children. My answer always emphasizes the importance of their child's social and emotional development before beginning kindergarten. In my experience, children that have gone to preschool at least one year prior to kindergarten have more developed social skills and they can articulate their emotional state and feelings more clearly to adults and their kindergarten peers. I believe preschool provides young children the opportunity to strengthen their social skills such as learning how to listen, follow directions and routines, talk nicely, be kind, take turns, show compassion and empathy. Preschools encourage children to explore their independence, listen to others, and try new things. All these skills build a preschool child's confidence as they make the transition smoothly to kindergarten.

What difference has the St. Helena Preschool For All program made in your experience with children?

As a kindergarten teacher in St. Helena Unified School District for the past 23 years, I have seen the benefits preschool provides for young children firsthand. With the development of the St. Helena Preschool For All community outreach program I have seen the increase of students coming with preschool experience to kindergarten at St. Helena Primary each year over the past 10 years. I have been impressed with the social, emotional, and academic skills these students have when they begin kindergarten. These students arrive with a sense of confidence, excitement, adventure, and eagerness to learn. I have also noticed the sense of community many of the families display when they see preschool friends in their child's kindergarten classroom. I feel the SHPFA program, the local preschools, have been a big reason for the success of the students that attend St. Helena Primary School.

