Greetings Parents,

Pumpkins are everywhere and students are cooking pumpkin soup, pumpkin seeds and other delicious items that involve pumpkins. Pumpkins of all shapes and sizes pose so that students can draw them and notice the details. Many curriculum learner outcomes are achieved through the pumpkins as we use them to learn about weight, measurement, number, comparison, drawing with detail, writing, reading/stories, colour, facial expressions, feelings, and nutrition to name a few. As the brave few reach into the “yucky” pumpkin and scoop out the seeds and cut out the face the pumpkins disappear to be replaced by jack-o-lanterns.

**Halloween Bake Sale and Celebrations**

The Parent Coordinator group met last week and planned some events for the upcoming months. They are now working together on a Halloween Bake Sale that will take place this Thursday, October 29th. Please read the attached letter regarding this event.

Remember to send your child wearing a Halloween costume on Friday, October 30th. As the children will be trick or treating going up and down stairs, they should be dressed in comfortable and weaponry-free costumes.

**Early Dismissal on Thursday, October 29th**

Please note that this coming Thursday the ACS teachers will have a professional development afternoon. Therefore, there is a school wide dismissal at 1:00. The KG2 & KG1 children that are usually picked up from the car gate will be dismissed from the main (BD) gate on that day.

**Parenting**

Often when I ask a child what they like to do when they go home children will tell me watch T.V., use my IPad or use the computer. Like most things these various media devices have pluses and minuses. However in a world where adults are often hooked into their Smart phones and children learn to model behavior. Technology is a tool that has made our lives easier in many ways but we need to help our children learn to use this tool wisely. We also need to ensure that we set limits on the amount of time spent in front of a screen and we need to very closely monitor the things that children are watching/playing. In an age of rapidly growing technology children are involved in imaginative play less and often are involved more in solitary activities with the screen rather than in social activities. I read some interesting research about the important role of imaginative play and foundational skills. I share this with you today.
“Studies show the links between play and many foundational skills and complex cognitive activities such as memory, self-regulation, distancing and decontextualizing, oral language abilities, symbolic generalization, successful school adjustment, and better social skills.

Elkonin identified four principal ways in which play influences child development. All four expected outcomes of play activity are important for preparing the foundations for subsequent learning that takes place in primary grades (Elkonin 1977, 1978).

1. **Play affects the child’s motivation.** In play, children develop a more complex hierarchical system of immediate and long-term goals. In fact, play becomes the first context where young children demonstrate their ability to delay gratification—something preschoolers are known to struggle with in most other situations.

2. **Play facilitates cognitive decentering.** The ability to take other people’s perspectives is critical for coordinating multiple roles and negotiating play scenarios. Assigning different pretend functions to the same object involves cognitive decentering. This newly acquired competency will later enable children to coordinate their cognitive perspectives with those of their learning partners and teachers. Eventually this ability to coordinate multiple perspectives will be turned inward, leading to the development of reflective thinking and metacognition.

3. **Play advances the development of mental representations.** This development occurs as the result of a child separating the meaning of objects from their physical form. First, children use replicas to substitute for real objects; then they use new objects that are different in appearance but can perform the same function as the object prototype. Finally, most of the substitution takes place in the child’s speech with no objects present. Thus the ability to operate with symbolic substitutes for real objects contributes to the development of abstract thinking and imagination. (It is important to note that Vygotskians believe that imagination is an expected outcome of play, not a prerequisite for it.)

4. **Play fosters the development of deliberate behaviors - physical and mental voluntary actions.** The development of deliberateness in play becomes possible because the child needs to follow the rules of the play and because play partners constantly monitor each other to make sure that everyone is following the rules. At first, this deliberateness is demonstrated in physical actions (for example, a child moves on all fours when playing a cat or stays still when playing a guard), social behaviors, and changing speech registers in language use. Later, this deliberateness extends to mental processes such as memory and attention. According to Vygotskians, only when these four outcomes are in place can a young child profit fully from academic activities. If these foundations are missing, the child may experience various difficulties adapting to school, be it in the area of social interactions with teachers and peers or in the area of content learning. *(Beyond the Journal. Young Children on the Web. May 2003)*

Respectfully,
Sawsan Yaseen
syaseen@acs.edu.lb
01374370 ext. 2101

### Upcoming Events & Dates to Remember

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 29</td>
<td>Halloween Bake Sale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 29</td>
<td>PD day—Early Dismissal at 1:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 30</td>
<td>Halloween Celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 13</td>
<td>Mini NESA—No School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 16-18</td>
<td>Book Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 20</td>
<td>EY Open House</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>