

HEALTH

BAYSIDE

Kuhn Children's Institute prepares all children for learning

BY TONY RUSSO
STAFF WRITER

BERLIN — Mainstreaming is an educational term that means finding ways to work special-needs students into the traditional curriculum for their age group as best as possible. It requires equal parts flexibility and rigidity in the teachers and care-givers, knowing when to stick to the script as well as being able to seize opportunities — teachable moments — as they present themselves.

Getting students who have special needs to adopt a can-do attitude to learning and behavior norms established for them takes a particular set of skills. Integrating their day into the traditional learning model takes another particular set of skills. The staff at the Kuhn Children's Institute are well-equipped for both challenges.

The school — which is an accredited day care and pre-school — was founded on the premise that all children should be taught “developmentally appropriate skills that are necessary for the child to succeed at a higher level of learning through a structured/non-structured environment,” according to the company literature.

By accepting and tailoring the curriculum to both children with and without developmental disabilities, the school takes



TONY RUSSO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Staff and students at the Kuhn Children's Institute work together no matter the students' developmental levels.

advantage of openness that is the pre-K attitude to exploring the world. In their statement, the Kuhn Children's Institute said that dominant research suggests that children with special needs develop better when surrounded by typically developing children.

The entire premise is about creating an atmosphere that

takes the mystery out of schooling for all children by leaning on the structure of the school day while using innovative approaches to help them get as much as possible from their learning hours.

Incorporating the skills and knowledge of teachers, nurses and occupational, speech, and physical therapists, the Kuhn

Children's Institute is arranged in such a way that all of the children's needs can be met by staff members trained specifically to meet them. More than that, by working together with all the students, each discipline member can help inform the performance of the others, bringing a fuller approach to helping children meet their

potentials.

Children from six weeks to five years old are eligible for the program so a child at any development level can spend their formative educational years in an environment geared solely toward making sure they're working at their highest level from the first.

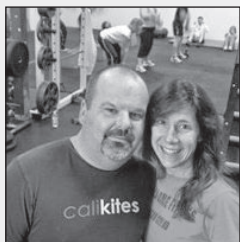
The staff at the Kuhn Children's Institute understands that school is only one part of the educational equation and in order that children become engaged learners parents have to have the ability to participate in their child's education. To that end they've adopted “Creative Curriculum” an in-person and online approach.

Parents, rather than lining up after school to have detailed conferences each day, can check their child's work and development on the curriculum website. Information on the site is personalized so parents aren't seeing reports about groups of children but rather the specifics of their child's day-to-day performance.

This, of course, doesn't mean the staff is inaccessible. They are always available and willing to make time to bring parents up to speed or answer questions but parents who need or desire that extra bit of involvement can find it through the website.

FITNESS ADVICE

Believe, You Can.



By David & Lisa Long

Encouragement and having someone believe in you can be the turning point in anyone's life. I had the pleasure of running the 2009 Baltimore Marathon and was surprised by the strength and motivation that absolute strangers can convey just by being there.

You do need to decide what you want out of life, and once you figure that out you may need some assistance getting what you've decided on. Do not be afraid to ask for what you want. Think about going to a restaurant and not ordering what you want. What would happen? You may or may not get something you like; this could lead to frustration and disap

pointment. Would you continue to do this over and over never getting the satisfaction of getting what you want? Begin to take notice of the things you like, the type of people you like to be around and the jobs you enjoy doing; then strive to continue along those very paths.

Now ask yourself, “What Would You Do If You Knew You Could Not Fail?” Those thoughts are your dreams, write them down! How can you make your dreams come true? Do not let the fear of failure stop you. Breathe deeply and accept that fear is natural; it is your rational mind talking to you.

Believing in yourself is one of the most important things you can do for you. Do not be afraid to stand up for what you believe in. Never pretend and never presume. Encourage friends and strangers if you notice them struggling, paybacks can be a good thing.

We specialize in helping people feel, look, and perform better. We sometimes take for granted that people should just know how and what to do for optimal results. There have been many days that I've had to believe in my clients before they would believe in themselves; the end result is they accomplish something that they previously thought was impossible.

When you do fail (because you will), learn from your failure and move on, why stop? Dreams come true all the time. Why not yours?

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