

The Abigail Lundquist Botstein Nursery School and Bard's Children's Center



Our Mission:

Our mission is to provide high quality, affordable, preschool education for Bard's youngest citizens. We mirror Bard's values on progressive education, thinking, inquiry and inclusive communities of learning.

The Children's Center, which sits facing Annandale Road, offers a cozy home-like atmosphere for our youngest children. The children have started a morning tradition of waving and blowing kisses from the front porch when parents drive away at the start of the day.

Our Values:

Relationships: Children, teachers and families know one another well. Learning emerges from trusting relationships. Central themes in our curriculum include forming identity, making friends, expressing emotions, collaboration and conflict resolution skills. A relational model of learning and teaching implies growth for all - children, teachers and parents. The teaching-learning relationship is reciprocal.

Family: We incorporate each family's perspective, beliefs, and culture into the life of the school. An important part of our program includes helping children separate and reunite with parents daily. We see our role as one that strengthens family bonds.

Care: Our program supports child wellness with healthy meals and outside play every day in all seasons. Caring rituals during meals, cooking, toileting, cleaning, dressing and rest time are respected as learning opportunities. Care is united with education and responsive care is a model for teaching and learning at all stages of life. In our program, children learn to care for plants, animals, and materials, as well as care for self and other.

Citizenship: Children are full citizens and our early childhood community fosters a culture of participation, stewardship, and belonging.

Play: Play is robust research and children in our program play deeply every day. Through play, children develop symbolic thinking, form theories, ask questions, solve problems and invent. Song, story, poetry, art, and movement are central to a pedagogy of play.

Environment as Teacher: We include and carefully consider the landscape, playground, classroom, materials, and schedule, to create a child's habitat.

Listening: The pedagogy of listening guides an emergent curriculum and places an emphasis on dialogue, being present, honoring the child's voice, and asking good questions. Teachers listen and document in the spirit of research and inquiry. Inspired by the curiosity of children, we form a community of shared pondering and wonderment.

The 4 and 5-year-old children enter the nursery under the school bell, which they take turns ringing daily to signal lunch time. The nursery school is named in memory of President Botstein's daughter, Abigail Lundquist Botstein. We are honored that Bard has placed a value on early education, and has made a place for preschool education on campus

