

# Kelly Lane in the Spotlight

## SOFT START



# How did you begin your evening?



Similar to adults, children need time before they are asked to do their work and feel successful

# What does KL Soft Start look like?

Choice stations that promote:

- Fine motor: play dough, beads, cutting
- Imagination: dramatic play, building blocks
- Creativity: painting, coloring, building, designing
- Curricular: Reading, Writing, Math

*(building snap words, building with connecting cubes & pattern blocks)*



# Recent Legislation



“Each local and regional board of education shall provide for play based learning during the instructional time of each regular school day for all students in kindergarten and any preschool program offered by the board. Such play-based learning shall:

- (1) Be incorporated and integrated into daily practice
- (2) Allow for the needs of such students to be met through free play, guided play and games, and
- (3) Be predominantly free of the use of mobile electronic devices”

# Skills from Play

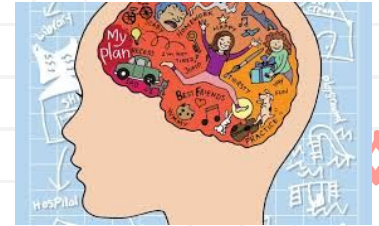
- Social Emotional Learning
- Oral Language development
- \* Math and Literacy skills integrated
- \* Fine Motor
- Executive Functioning

“Scientists have recently determined that it takes approximately 400 repetitions to create a new synapse in the brain- unless it is done through play, in which case, it takes between 10 and 20 repetitions!”

~ Dr. Karyn Purvis

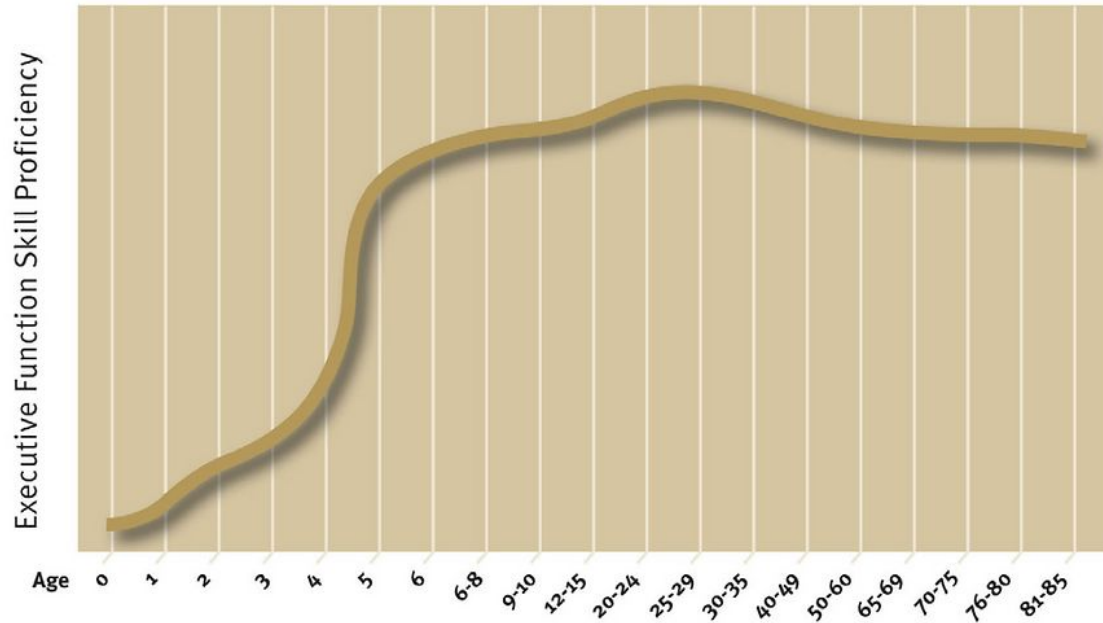
# Executive Functioning

Executive function is a set of mental skills that include working memory, flexible thinking, and self-control. We use these skills every day to learn, work, and manage daily life...Some people describe executive function as “the management system of the brain.” That’s because the skills involved let us set goals, plan, and get things done. “



- Paying attention
- Organizing, planning, and prioritizing
- Starting tasks and staying focused on them to completion
- Understanding different points of view
- Regulating emotions
- Self-monitoring (keeping track of what you’re doing)

## Executive Function Skills Build Into the Early Adult Years



Source: Weintraub et al. (Submitted for Publication)

# How have we supported this work?

- Connecticut Association of Schools PD in Cheshire (4 teachers)
- Connecticut Education Association PD for whole teaching staff
- Virtual Staff PD in September
- Site visit in Middletown in March (Bava and Diemer)



# Granby Educational Fund Grant Recipients

- Over \$3,000 for Kindergarten, First Grade, and Second Grade Soft Opening Materials & Activities



# Student Voice

My favorite soft start activity is \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_



Carpentry - Construction - Imagine



# Let's Pretend!



Let's build, design and pretend...

Let's Draw!



Let's Create!

# Intergrating Learning & Play

Literacy



Fine Motor

# Magnetiles - Construction, Imagination and Cooperation



## Let's Build!



# Let's Design & Imagine

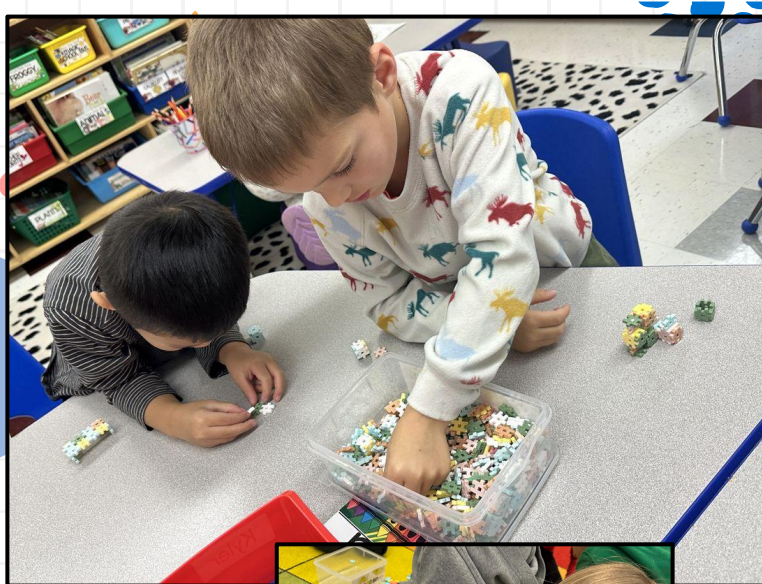


Playdough - Shapes - Fine Motor & Creativity



Patterning - Cooperation & Teamwork





# Let's Create!



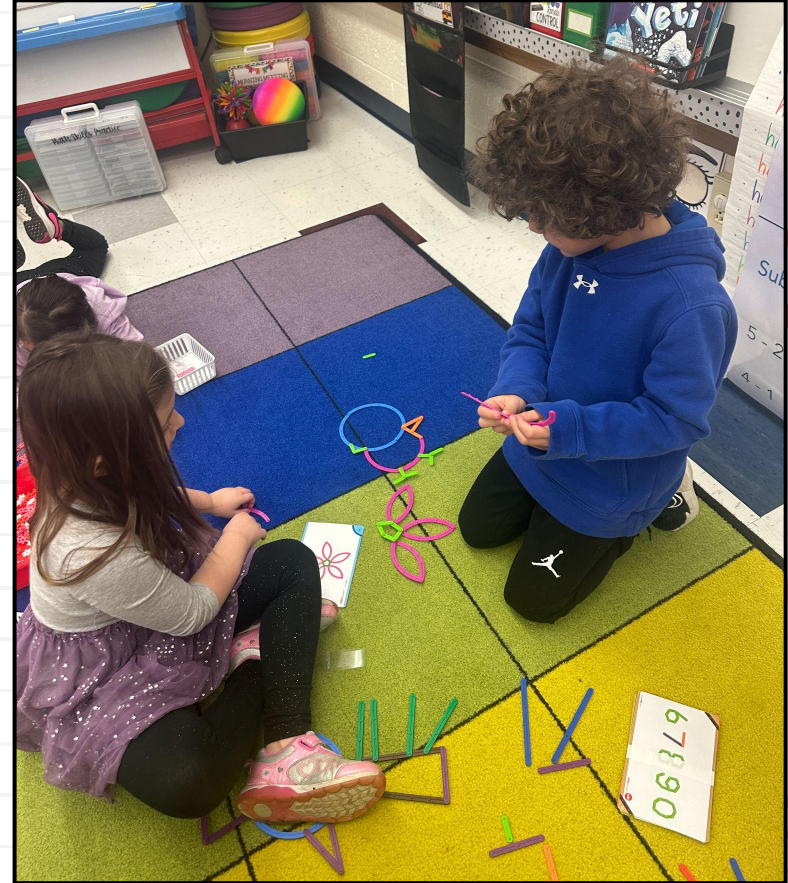


# Let's Play!



Playdough - Creativity & Imagination

GeoStix - Creative design skills, construction, improve fine motor



# Teamwork & Cooperation Skills



# Let's Create! Independence



# Let's Play!

Painting - Creativity



Beading - Patterning - Fine Motor

Puzzling - Critical Thinking

# Let's Play!

## Puzzling



## Critical Thinking



## Painting



# Let's Play!



# Playdough



Let's  
Imagine



Pyramids - Towers with cups

# Animals



# Dinosaurs

# Cooperation



Imagination

# Let's Build!



Creativity



# Building - Team Work

Magnatiles



Tinker Toys



# Dramatic - Pretend Play



Gardening

Kitchen - Restaurant



# Dramatic & Cooperative Play



Doll House - Socialization & Imagination

Building & Imagination - Tinker Toys



# MATH Connections



Teen Numbers -  
Connecting Cubes

**Reflection: How did you feel?**



**Any questions?**

# Our next steps..

## Play-based learning in kindergarten

- Collaborative
- Standards are driving force for planning and implementation
- Play planning
- Prop building
- Establish prior knowledge
- Field trips
- Related books (nonfiction and fiction) for read alouds and student reading