

# PRESCHOOL

## perks

Written by Sunshine Farris and Katrina Katsarelis  
Select Photography by Suzanne Box

In the past, a typical day at preschool meant singing a few songs at circle time, playing outside, and listening to a story or two. Now Katy preschoolers can dabble in ballet, gymnastics, Tae Kwon Do, acting, or even gardening.

Preschooler parents looking for more academic enrichment can sign their Katy tykes up for science lab, sign language, Spanish class, or special reading programs. Much more than kindergarten-prep, many Katy preschools now offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities too.



“As a parent, it’s fun to choose a class or classes that fit my child’s personality, and it changes the pace of their day.”

-Missy Geddes



# Local Preschools Offer Extracurricular Programs to Fill the Day with Fun



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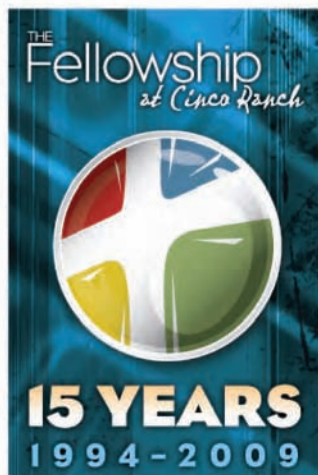
The Fellowship is celebrating 15 years by saying **THANK YOU** to our community! You and your family are invited to join us for our February of fun events that will have everyone celebrating the goodness of God!

**You're Invited**



Jerry Edmonson,  
Lead and Founding Pastor

- Grand Opening, February 1st
- Family Festival, February 7th
- In Concert Robbie Seay & Steve Fee Bands, February 13th
- Focus on Marriage Seminar, February 28th



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**Finding the Right Program**

Determining which kind of program you need is the first order of business. In Katy, we have a full gamut of programs including very part-time church-based preschools to full-day preschool programs within a childcare center. Ask yourself how many days a week will be best for your child – two, three, or every day? Will you need a half day or a full day program? Next, consider what kind of programs will appeal to your kind of child. A shy preschooler, for example, may not be ready to jump into a full-day program in a room with 11 other children. A rambunctious boy with boundless energy may be better suited for a play-based program than one that is focused more on academics.

**Ask the Right Questions**

After determining your needs, call the preschools to see if they have openings or when registration begins. You will also want to ask about class size, teacher to child ratio, ages of children in the class, dimensions of your child's classroom, and daily activities. After weeding your selections down, you can then set up a time to visit and find out which programs offer enrichment activities best suited to your child.

**Check Credentials**

If your preschool is offering a special enrichment class such as Tae Kwon Do, ask if an official instructor will be in charge. You'll want to make sure the instructor is CPR and first aid certified. Is a dance instructor teaching the ballet class or does dance class mean running around the room with scarves? One is enrichment; the other is playtime. Also, it's important to find out how much time the enrichment instructor has spent teaching very young children and if they have been background checked and screened thoroughly along with the regular staff.

Choosing a preschool for your little one is an important decision, and while the extra curricular activities shouldn't be the ultimate deciding factor, it certainly is the icing on the cake and can make the days more fun for the kiddos. KM

*SUNSHINE FARRIS is a freelance writer for Katy Magazine. She lives in Katy with her husband and three young children.*

*KATRINA KATSARELIS is the Editor-in-Chief of Katy Magazine. Prior to starting Katy Magazine she wrote many preschool and childcare related articles for local and national publications.*





The girls at A Child's Reflection love to dress up like ballerinas



Sports Class

## Visiting a PRESCHOOL

- 1 Meet your child's teacher and the director
- 2 Take a tour of the entire facility
- 3 Visit what will be your child's classroom
- 4 Ask to see the posted daily class schedule
- 5 Ask about the school's curriculum

## Finding a KATY PRESCHOOL

- ✓ Ask friends and neighbors for referrals
- ✓ Prescreen by phone or via the internet
- ✓ Check with local churches
- ✓ Visit [KatyMagazine.com](http://KatyMagazine.com)'s Preschool page for listings

# Katy Magazine's Preschool Fair

Sponsored by the MOMS Club® of Katy-SE

**Sat. January 24, 2009**  
**10:00 am - Noon**

**GrossPoint Community Church**  
**(700 S. Westgreen Blvd.)**



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*Cinderella*

Preschools - if you are interested in showcasing your programs, contact Katy Magazine at 281-579-9840 or MOMS Club® of Katy-SE at 281-395-6618.

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# KATY PRESCHOOLS WITH PERKS

## Many Preschools Offer Dance, Drama, Spanish, Martial Arts, and Other Fun Perks

### Primrose Preschools

Primrose Preschools offer gymnastics, dance, Sports Fun, Opus 1, art on Tuesdays, and the option of an extended day. Sports Fun is a popular program that introduces kids to a variety of games and introduces them to the concept of being a good sport and not a sore loser. Opus 1, a music class, exposes children to different kinds of music, encouraging appreciation for music as an art form.

### Faith West Academy Preschool

Faith West Academy Preschool is an all-encompassing school, meaning there are no extra costs for all the perks they offer. All of their extra curricular activities are built into their curriculum. “We incorporate creative play, drama, music, role playing, sign language, and Spanish into our classes and as a part of our curriculum every day to capture our children’s imaginations. This allows their learning experiences to be enhanced,” says director Seledia Smith. Faith West Academy Preschool is an all day, everyday program. School begins at 8 a.m. and students are released at 2:30 pm.



Introducing kids to sports at a young age can develop a lifelong interest in physical activity.



Savine and Wei Wei participate in the ballet class offered at A Child's Reflection.

far as extra-curricular activities, which are added to the cost of tuition, CrossPoint offers an array of choices, such as drama, passport fun (geography), art, science club, gardening club, the book beyond (reading club), tumbling and yoga, Espanol solamente (only Spanish), and more.

### A Child's Reflection

A Child's Reflection gives parents the option to choose from several enrichment classes, as they are referred to. Their classes include Spanish, music, gym station, sports fun and “You're a Star” dance. The goal of the Spanish program is to promote a good foundation of Spanish and to develop an understanding of language concepts. When a child is introduced to a foreign language at a young age, it's easier for them to learn additional languages in the future. Spanish vocabulary at this young age usually consists of animals, numbers, and colors. All enrichment classes at A Child's Reflection are offered for children ages two and up.

### CrossPoint Christian School

“CrossPoint Christian School offers an awesome program with great optional afternoon classes,” says Missy Geddes, the mother of a preschooler. “As a parent, it's fun to choose a class or classes that fit my child's personality, and it changes the pace in their day,” continues Missy.

Director Connie Robinson comments, “In the mornings we offer Spanish and Music and Movement as part of our curriculum. We also have an Eco-Station that currently houses our gardening class where each class has the opportunity to have a special lesson.” As

### Katy's Early Childhood Enrichment Center

Katy's Early Childhood Enrichment Center's extra-curricular activities include dance, Spanish, and gymnastics, all of which help to stimulate your child's thinking and increase coordination. The curriculum here encourages creativity and independence, builds self-esteem, and provides many hands-on experiences. Extended care is also available from 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

# SIGNS OF A GOOD PRESCHOOL PROGRAM



Discipline and dedication are two traits that are developed through preschool enrichment activities

- 1 Low child/teacher ratio
- 2 Teachers bend down and talk to children at their level
- 3 Colorful, kid-friendly classrooms
- 4 Kids are pleasantly engaged in activities or play
- 5 Teacher is calm and helpful to students
- 6 Daily schedule of activities is posted
- 7 Playground is safe and well supervised
- 8 Art projects are displayed
- 9 Offers structured activities and free play
- 10 NAEYC Accredited

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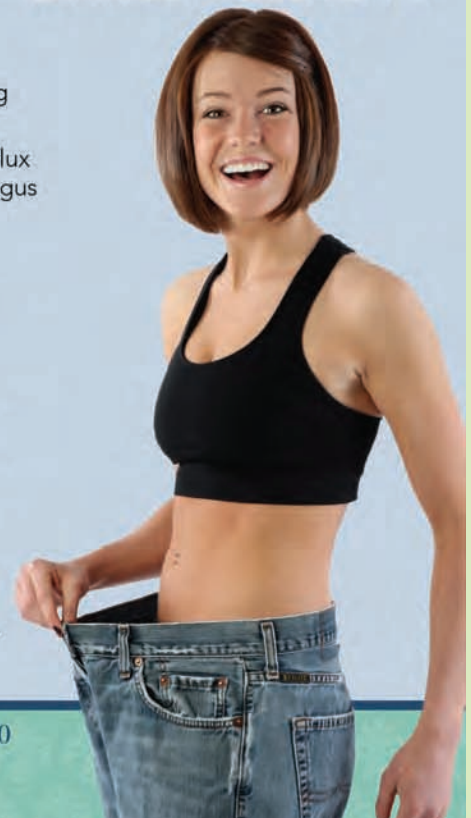
Dr. Bonnor has advanced training in minimally invasive techniques; he performed the first single incision gallbladder removal in the Katy and Houston area.



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— Dr. Bonnor



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## RED FLAGS Watch out for these possible warning signs

- ✓ Complacent staff
- ✓ High turnover among teachers, students, and director
- ✓ Drab rooms and broken toys
- ✓ Not properly staffed
- ✓ Bored, listless children
- ✓ Has a lot of openings

To check a center's licensing status, visit [dfps.state.tx.us/child\\_care](http://dfps.state.tx.us/child_care)

### KATY MAGAZINE PRESCHOOL FAIR

Katy Magazine is sponsoring the 2009 Preschool Fair held at CrossPoint Community Church on Saturday, January 24 from 10 a.m. to noon. In conjunction with the Moms Club of Katy SE, parents will have the opportunity to meet preschools and child care centers in one location! Katy Magazine's CINDERELLA will be there to take pictures with the kids!



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See ad on pg. 42

 **Grandma's House**

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See ad on p. 45

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**Knowledge Beginnings**

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