

January 2013 Newsletter
Read it here 1st...

What's New?

In our upcoming session, Play Tennis 1st students will learn about different cultures around the globe as we travel internationally to the 4 Grand Slams and other world destinations.

Classes begin Friday January 11th at the Children's House!

Explore Tennis 1st 4:40-5:20

Play Tennis 1st 5:30-6:20

Tennis Toddler Tip:

"Sometimes kids learn better when we stop teaching them so much"

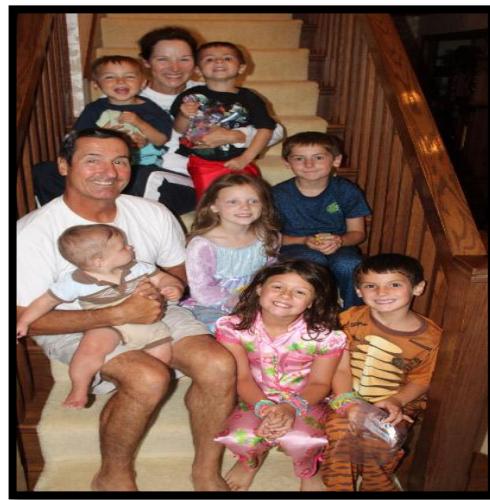
Ok, so maybe you won't start out with long rallies and perfect hitting at first, but here are 3 simple goals to ensure you and your child have a great time on the court...

1) Bring lots of balls! Chasing 2 or three balls is good exercise but can erode a child's (and parent's) enthusiasm if they spend more time chasing than hitting balls all the time.

2) Laugh first, hit the ball second! It is hard for a parent to toss a ball that is the right height and distance to a child, let alone hit a ball to the child with a racquet. You won't hit it perfectly to them, and don't expect the child to hit the ball perfectly over



Carol Keller with grandson Graeme working on hitting forehands over the net.



Mary Jo Schmude "Coach Grandma" pictured with husband Dennis Schmude and 7 of their 10 grandchildren.

Time For Tennis Grandma!

This month we are celebrating the huge impact that extended family, especially grandparents, have had on the Tennis 1st movement. Many children who participate in Tennis 1st classes come from dual income families and it can be a real challenge for parents to manage their busy work and family duties as well as shuttle their kids to and from different activities.

Carol Keller and Mary Jo Schmude, both tremendous role models, are each actively involved with their grandchildren's lives and have contributed their time and effort toward helping their extended families by connecting with them through Tennis 1st.

Carol Keller, Learning Specialist for the past nine years at West Middle School, has been bringing her grandson, Graeme, since he was 14 months old. Graeme was still learning to walk when he started in the "Explore Tennis 1st" class, but he has blossomed since.

"In the summer I took care of Graeme once a week," Carol recalled, "... and I wanted to do an activity with him that developed fine motor skills and build a relationship with him at the same time," she said. Graeme is now 20 months old, and, both his grandmother and his parents have been thrilled with his athletic improvement.

She plans to keep bringing Graeme next session. And, she's ready for the next challenge – running to catch up to him!

Mary Jo Schmude has had 6 grandchildren take part in the program – Simon, Oliver and newcomer, Gloriana Caldwell, as well as Eli and Melina Schmude, and Parker Schmude.

Mary Jo, known as "Coach Grandma," has done everything from assisting with lesson planning, introducing new learning stations, teaching classes, filming videos, snapping pictures, and stepping in to watch the Caldwell kids and help Josie when needed.

"It is simply amazing how fast the children learn to rally at such a young age," she said. "I will always treasure the excitement in their eyes as we rally together."

Schmude's background as an accomplished tennis player as well as her years of service in the classroom attending to her children and their classmates' needs has had tremendous influence in Tennis 1st programming and its overall growth in the community.

Thank you Grandmas! And thanks to all of our relatives and family members who support all our great kids!

the net either. Going in with eased expectations will make for a much better tennis outing. Make sure everyone's having fun first. Celebrate effort and enthusiasm as much as making good contact with the ball. **3) Be flexible on length of time...** If your child has a great time for 10 minutes and is ready to stop, take a break and do something else and then come back to it a few minutes later or quit when you are ahead. She'll remember the fun she had and want to do it again next time, rather than put her through 30 more minutes of anguish. Unfortunately she will remember that too!