

## PREFACE

Chester Co-op Preschool, Inc. is operated as a community service on a non-profit, non-sectarian basis. The school offers an educational program designed to meet the needs of both the individual child and the group. The parent's participation program provides the parents with the opportunity to further their knowledge and understanding of children, specifically their own.

The preschool is a cooperative preschool. Here you participate with your child in his or her first step away from home, into an environment which you help mold to your child's needs. The school offers you the opportunity to watch your child in a group of contemporaries, supervised by objective and sympathetic teachers. You gain perspective through contact with other children and parents while you share in preparing your child for future learning experiences.

The parent's participation, school's program, and the physical plan enrich your child's experience in a way unattainable in a non-cooperative preschool. The cooperation with parents and the teacher's professional guidance gives the school its special character each year.

## HISTORY

Chester Co-op Preschool was founded in 1948 by Irene (Pat) Bannister to meet the needs of a community without a kindergarten. When a kindergarten was established in the public school, she was persuaded to continue a program for pre-school aged children. The school was incorporated as a parent cooperative school in 1962. The school possessed few material resources and much of the equipment was either donated or handmade. Since that time the school has evolved through the process of full enrollment and successful fundraisers, into a school with excellent equipment and more adequate supplies. Chester Co-op Playschool officially changed its name to Chester Co-op Preschool, Inc. in 2003. After 23 years at old address of 9319 Mayfield Rd. our school moved to 12772 Chillicothe Rd. in May of 2006.

## **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

### PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

The primary aim of our school is to help each child attain maximum all around growth. Opportunities for positive growth experiences are provided in an environment varied enough to suit the needs and abilities of each child.

The school's goals are to help children:

1. Develop a satisfactory adjustment between home and school by learning that school is a fun and safe place where learning is rewarding and that teachers are sympathetic and stimulating people.
2. Develop their skills, talents and interests while expanding each to the fullest possible extent.
3. Develop critical thinking and enhance the ability to make decisions.
4. Develop self-discipline and independence.
5. Preserve a sense of excitement and interest in the world we live in, and an eagerness to learn more.
6. Understand the needs and rights of others while learning to share.
7. Develop skills in perceptual, motor, reading readiness and self-help.
8. Understand, accept and respect differences in people based on ethnic or cultural backgrounds.

### PROCEDURES

In order to meet these goals, the school subscribes to the following procedures:

1. It offers a program that revolves around learning centers and self-chosen activities.
2. It recognizes that process is as important as product. It emphasizes personal standards and pride of achievement rather than simple conformity to group standards.
3. It provides a wide variety of activities and experiences.
4. It emphasizes creative arts in additions to crafts and dramatic play.
5. The individual needs and wants of the children are always taken into consideration.

### LICENSE

At the end of the handbook you will find an attachment about licensing and other valuable information. Please take the time to read this information.

### ADMISSIONS

A child is considered enrolled in the school after the registration fee has been received and the required paperwork has been returned. All forms are required to be at the school before the first day of school. Medical forms need to be updated every 13 months.

## HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION AND OUTLINE OF CLASSES

CHESTER CO-OP WILL FOLLOW THE WEST GEAUGA SCHOOL CALENDAR THAT CAN BE FOUND AT THE END OF THIS MANUAL. WE WILL BE CLOSED DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER WHEN WEST GEAGUA DOES SO.

TWO-DAY CLASS- This class has between 8- 10 students and focuses on verbalization skills and social interaction. The importance of establishing a good image of school and one's self is stressed within a nurturing environment. Children must be toilet trained to attend. This class meets Thursday and Friday mornings from 9:00-11:00.

THREE-DAY CLASS- This class deals with building a good separation from home, building relationships with a teacher and peers as well as improving small and large motor skills. Kindergarten readiness is presented since some of these children may be attending kindergarten the following year. This class meets Monday through Wednesday morning from 9:00- 11:15.

PRE- K CLASS- This class is designed for the older four year old who will be attending kindergarten the following year. Emphasis is placed on academics as well as responsibility of one's self. This class meets Monday through Thursday afternoons from 11:45- 2:15.

## STAFF/CHILD RATIOS

We will maintain a ratio of 1:12 for the 3-year-old class and a ratio of 1:14 in the 4-5 year old class.

## POLICIES AND PRACTICES

### ORIENTATION

A mandatory parent orientation will be held prior to the first day of school. At least one parent from each family is required to attend. Required paperwork can be turned in on this day or no later than the first day of school. The paperwork is sent out during the summer.

## **SUPERVISION POLICY**

A major responsibility of the staff is to ensure the health and safety of the children entrusted in their care. Staff members are alert to the safety, needs of the children, anticipate possible hazards, and take necessary precautionary and preventative measures.

### **DROPPING OFF/RELEASING OF A CHILD**

A parent may accompany their child in class on the first day of school and may continue to do so as long as this is considered advisable by the teacher to foster a happy adjustment. The parent should always walk their child into the school and never leave them to enter the building unattended. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that staff is aware of the child's arrival.

The child will be marked in attendance at this time. At pick up time, all children will only be released to authorized persons. Please see the needed forms to have your child released to other people. Valid identification will be required at time of pick up. The children's safety is our priority so please do not be offended by this! Staff will not release children to anyone who seems to be under the influence. Alternative contact people will be called if needed. Police may be notified if necessary. Departing attendance will be taken since the parent is responsible for the child before and after sign in. Children will be supervised at all times. An ill child may be removed from the rest of the class until they can be picked up but they will always remain in sight and hearing distance of staff.

### **CUSTODY AGREEMENTS**

If custody issues are involved court papers must be given to the school indicating who has permission to pick up the child. The school may not deny a parent access to their child without proper documentation

### **FIELD TRIPS/ TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN**

The school will not transport children in emergency situations. If a child requires transportation either the parent or ambulance will be contacted.

Filed Trips- We will be taking periodic field trips where parents will be asked to drive. The teacher may not drive children in her/his car for field trips or for any other reason. The teacher will be the last car so if the need should arise she can administer first aid or CPR to the children in other vehicles.

Before leaving the school a head count will be taken and children will be assigned to parents. Emergency transportation forms as well as permission slips and a first aid kit will be taken on all outings. Once the destination is reached a head count will again be taken. All children are required to wear a nametag that lists the school's name, phone number as well as the teacher's cell phone number.

Upon leaving the field trip another head count will be taken and the teacher will check to make sure that all children are properly seat belted in the vehicles.

### FIRE OR TORNADO EMERGENCY

In case of an emergency certain precautions will be taken to ensure the safety of your child. There is a fire and tornado evacuation plan posted at both the front and rear door of the building. These are reviewed with all staff.

#### A. FIRE SAFETY

In case of a fire children will be ushered to the front door where they will exit and turn right. They will proceed to the stairs that lead to the post office, which is located next to the school. They will remain their supervised by the teacher until given further direction. A head count as well as attendance will be taken.

#### B. TORNADO

If this situation should arrive children will be ushered into the storage room since it is out of the airflow pathway and is free of any windows or glass. The children will take the desired position and remain until further directions are given. A head count as well as attendance will be taken.

#### C. THREATS OF VIOLENCE

If this should occur there are two plans of actions that will be taken depending on which is the safer choice for the children:

1. If possible they will be ushered out of the school and taken to a safe location, which is the government post office next door to the school at 12684 Chillicothe Rd. Chesterland, OH.
2. If leaving the building is not feasible they will be taken into the storage room where the teacher will call 911 by using her cell phone, which is always on her persons.

#### D. MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In case of a medical emergency the following steps will be taken:

1. First Aid will be administered while the second adult notifies 911.
2. The parent or guardian will be notified of the situation.
3. If they child needs to be transported immediately the teacher will accompany the child in the ambulance/ rescue squad since the school does not transport themselves.

All injuries no mater how small will require the school to complete an incident report, which will be sent home with the child the day of the occurrence. Once copy will be kept on file at school.

All Staff are trained in First Aid, Child Abuse Recognition and CPR. These are required by the state and are updated on a regular basis.

## INSURANCE AND LICENSING STATEMENT

Our school is a tax-exempt organization and therefore has a tax id number. This number can be obtained from the director upon request.

Our school's licensing records are also available upon request. Our school license is hung up in the classroom as well as our worker compensation form and other required information. The department of Human services toll free number is 1-800-282-1190 to report a suspected violation by the preschool.

Chester Co-op Preschool carries blanket insurance on children while traveling to and from school, field trips and hours spent at school. The policy number is 502-9575984 and is held through Nationwide at 440-247-2077.

## VISITATION POLICY

All parents and their families may visit the classroom at anytime. Please notify the teacher if you wish to visit the school at any time so the teacher can make sure that another visitor is not already scheduled.

## PARENT ROSTER INFORMATION

The school will compose a parent roster that will be given to all members in the class. You will need to sign a form giving permission to be placed on our roster. You may wish to decline participating.

## APPLICATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR

Open enrollment for the following year may be made in January. Current members and alumni are given the chance to enroll by filling out the registration papers and placing a \$25 non-refundable deposit down. After February 15<sup>th</sup>, enrollment will be open to the community. A \$100 deposit is needed by the end of the school year to hold your spot for the upcoming year.

Additional papers will be sent over the summer. Medical forms as well as other forms are due by the first day of school or your child will not be able to start school until we have them on file.

## WAITING LIST

Additional applications received after classes are full will be placed on a waiting list and names will be taken in order of the date the application was received to fill any empty spaces. All requirements will need to be met before the child can attend school.

## LATE ENROLLMENT

Late enrollment will be accommodated as openings permit. Registration forms and fees must be completed regardless of the date of enrollment. Tuition will be prorated according to the date of entry. The vice president will notify the president, teacher, and director of the starting date of the new enrollment.

## TUITION/ FEES AND PAYMENT POLICIES

Tuition is based on the class in which your child is enrolled. Payments can be made one of three ways:

1. In one full payment
2. In two equal payments- one due in September and the other in January
3. Eight monthly payments. If you choose this option there is an additional charge of \$2.00 per month.

All payments are due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. There will be a 5-day grace period at which time an additional late fee will be charged. Your child will not be able to attend until you are current in your tuition. If an emergency should arise please see the treasurer so arrangements can be made. A sheet outlining the above will be given out and needs to be signed and returned once you have decided which payment plan you are interested in. If we are not in school for any reason on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, it is your responsibility to have the tuition to us by the designated due date. Payments can be put in the mailbox at school, which is marked "treasurer", or they can be mailed to us at Chester Co-op 12772 Chillicothe Rd. Chesterland, OH 44026.

## CHAIN OF COMMAND FOR SOLVING PROBLEMS

Teachers are available to discuss the child's progress or needs at anytime. However dues to class times the parents are asked to make appointments or to call the teacher at home in the evening. It is sometimes hard to discuss certain matters before or after school since your child will want your full attention during these times. The following is a chain of command that is recommended until an answer or solution is found for any problems that may arise:

1. the child's teacher
2. the administrator
3. President or vice president of the school board

Please feel free to bring up any concerns when they occur. Often they can be addressed when they are little problems before they grow into bigger problems. Remember there is no concern too small to mention. If it bothers you enough to think about it than it is important enough to bring to our attention. We fully realize that you are trusting us with your child and we want our relationship to be a good one.

## PARENT PARTICIPATION

Since this is a cooperative preschool participation is mandatory. If you are unable to fulfill your parent helper responsibility please see if you can switch days with someone else in the class. Grandparents as well as other special people are invited to serve as parent helpers. If your child becomes sick on your parent helper day please try to contact another member in the class to cover for you. If after a few tries you are unsuccessful please call the teacher and let her know. You can either call the school and leave a message or call her at home before 9:30 pm. Your parent helper day is very important to your child since they are very excited to have you stay with them for the day. If you have younger siblings it is best to see if you can have a friend or even another co-op member to baby-sit them. We do not want to take away from your child's special day. We do understand that there are times when siblings will need to attend. This is completely understandable. Please arrive 15 minutes per the start of class on your parent helper day to greet the children.

Parents have unlimited access to the school on their special day and all other days as well. Participation on field trips is always appreciated since drivers are needed.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

It is the policy of the Chester Co-op Preschool to encourage parental participation and to keep parents informed about the program and its services. All members are responsible to serve as an officer, chairperson, or committee member of at least one of the following committees or offices.

### **A. OFFICES**

- a. President- Presides over all meetings. Presents items to be voted on and starts the voting process. Is responsible for working with the vice president to ensure that the school runs effectively. Is available to handle situations or problems that either the staff or parents may have.
- b. Vice President- Responsible for membership files and registration of members. Responsible for updating and meeting all day care licensing requirements. Also responsible for the coordination of the Mom and Tots program. Works alongside the President to help the school run effectively.
- c. Treasurer- Keeps account of all monies received and disbursed by the school. Works with the accountant to ensure that all government fees and taxes are taken care of.
- d. Secretary- Keeps accurate minutes of the meetings and distributes these minutes.
- e. Communication- Plans parent teacher workshops and chairs the committee of Hand to Hand Liaison.
- f. Publicity- Responsible for all publicity and advertising for the school.
- g. Ways and Means- Organizes any fund raising activity determined by and approved by the board to provide money for the school.
- h. Hand –Hand Liaison- Familiarizes prospective and new members to the school and answers any questions that they may have. Pre-K class holds the voting position
- i. Director- Oversees the daily running of the school. Works with parents to ensure that their child’s needs are being met.

### **B. NON BOARD POSITIONS**

- a. Newsletter- Completes a monthly newsletter on the events and information generated by school members.
- b. See Saw Book Club- Orders children’s books through the Scholastic Book Club for young children.
- c. Ways and Means assistant- Assists the Ways and Means chairperson in the preparation of all fundraisers.

### **C. MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- a. All members are required to attend two meetings per year- the first one being the orientation the second one being the member’s choice. Meetings are held monthly. See the school year calendar.
- b. Participation in two cleanups per year is mandatory. A date will be assigned to you. If you are unable to make that date please see either the vice president or director for alternative dates or activities to meet requirement.
- c. Participation is mandatory for school fundraisers.
- d. All members or their alternatives must fulfill parent-helping responsibilities.



**GENERAL GUIDANCE TECHNIQUES TO BE FOLLOWED BY PARENT HELPERS  
AND ALL STAFF**

1. State suggestions and directions in a positive rather than negative form.
2. Get the child's attention before attempting to speak to them. Children are so often absorbed in what they are doing that they do not hear us when we speak.
3. Avoid shouting across the room. Go to the child and give brief and simple directions. Use words and tones that will help the child feel confident and reassured, not afraid, guilty, or ashamed. Avoid labeling a child as either good or bad. The actions should be addressed not the child.
4. Give the child a minimum amount of help so they can maximize their growth in independence.
5. Give verbal direction instead of trying to do everything for them.
6. Children or their abilities should never be compared to other children.
7. Give children a choice only when you intend to leave the decision up to them. Do not ask if they want to do something that is necessary for them to do. This should be given as a statement not a question.
8. Position yourself so you are aware of all children in the school at all times. Sitting at the child's level is often more appropriate in areas of some play.
9. Know what a child is capable of achieving and do not make standards unreachable.
10. If you hear profane words notify the teacher who will determine the correct course of action. At times these words or phrases pass in a hurry if no fuss is made.
11. Praise the type of behavior that you want to continue and allow the children to learn through experience.
12. Never discuss a child in his/her presence or in the presence of other adults.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Chester Co-op strives to promote a positive and enjoyable learning experience for the child and between adults and children. Obtaining a value of self-value is an important goal of our school and one that we want to help the children master. Therefore, discipline will be approached from a realization that children need to learn self-control and to be able to internalize the rules of behavior. An attitude of firmness with kindness will be used when stating expectations for children's behavior

It is understood that healthy children "test" the environment through disruptive behavior at times. School rules and boundaries will be established and set clear throughout the year. At times it is necessary to redirect a child away from certain situations. This is done in a calm but firm matter when necessary. The parent helper may want to try and solve little disputes but should inform the teacher of larger incidents so the following steps can be taken.

1. The teacher will talk to the child in a quiet area discussing the issue at hand.
2. A second warning will be given asking the child to choose a smarter choice, actions or words.
3. The child will be redirected to either work on puzzles or find a book to look at. This gives the child a chance to remove himself from the stressful situation and become in control of his/her emotions.
4. After a few minutes the teacher will talk to the child about the situation and when the child seems to be able to handle the situation he/she will be reentered into that environment- This "regrouping time" is never longer than 4- 5 minutes.
5. If the problem continues to occur a parent teacher conference may be needed.
6. If a medical condition occurs due to actions of children an incident report will be completed without the name of the other child involved. This report will be sent home the day of the incident.

All children will be treated with love and respect. If children are treated with respect, they in turn learn how to respect. Our expectations will be kept within the child's capabilities.

**CORPORAL PUNISHMENT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN ANY FORM AT THIS SCHOOL.**

## MANAGEMENT OF ILLNESSES

Chester Co-op provides the children with a clean and healthy environment. However, we do realize that children do become ill from time to time. If this is your child's first school experience it is possible that they will experience more frequent illnesses before their immune system becomes more active. We observe all children as they enter the school. We ask that you do not bring your child to school if they are sick. They will be sent home.

A child with any of the following symptoms will be immediately isolated and discharged to the parent or emergency contact:

- Temperature of 100 degrees F in combination with any other signs of illness
- Diarrhea- more than 3 abnormally loose stool within 24 hours.
- Severe coughing which causes the child's face to become red or makes a whooping sound
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of the eye, obvious discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching
- Untreated skin patches, unusual spots or rashes
- Unusually dark urine or gray or white stools
- Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasite infections
- Vomiting more than once or when with other signs of illness
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing

Any child demonstrating signs of illness not listed above will be isolated and carefully observed for symptoms. The parent will be notified. If a child does not feel well enough to participate in the daily routine they will be asked to be taken home. All children will remain within the sight and hearing of a staff member.

A POSTED SIGN AS WELL AS A NOTE SENT HOME IN THEIR BOOKBAGS WILL NOTIFY PARENTS IF THEIR CHILD HAS BEEN EXPOSED TO A COMMUNICABLE ILLNESS. CHILDREN WILL BE READMITTED AFTER AT LEAST 24 HOURS OF BEING FREE OF SYMPTOMS.

A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CHART IS LOCATED IN THE COAT ROOM. THIS CHART SHOWS THE INCUBATION TIME AS WELL AS OTHER INFORMATIVE INFORMATION.

MEDICATIONS WILL NOT BE ADMINISTERED AT SCHOOL

## DAILY SCHEDULE AND PARENT HELPER DUTIES- 2 DAY CLASS

- 8:45            Parent helper arrives to assist teacher and to help greet the children.
- 9:00            Children arrive and are encouraged to hang up their own belongings.
- 9:15            Name Cards- Child spreads out name cards and rings the bell for circle time
- 9:20            Circle time- Children discuss topics, sings songs and share ideas.
- 9:40            Choosing time. Children decide on their first activity choice of the day. Teacher will work with the student on skill to be taught.  
Children will use the restroom if they have not already done so.
- 10:15           Clean up- Children will assist parent and teacher in cleaning up the room.
- 10:20           Quiet reading. Children will get a book after cleaning up.
- 10:25           Music and storytime
- 10:40           Large Motor room
- 11:10           Dismissal- Parent helper remains to help clean the room.

THIS IS A ROUGH DRAFT OF OUR ROUTINE AND SOME MINOR CHANGES MAY TAKE PLACE. THIS IS TO BE USED AS A GENERAL GUIDELINE.

## DAILY SCHEDULE AND PARENT HELPER DUTIES- 3 DAY CLASS

- 8:45            Parent helper arrives to assist teacher and to help greet the children.
- 9:00            Children arrive and are encouraged to hang up their own belongings.
- 9:15            Name Cards- Child spreads out name cards and rings the bell for circle time
- 9:20            Circle time- Children discuss topics, sings songs and share ideas.
- 9:50            Choosing time. Children decide on their first activity choice of the day. Teacher will work with the student on skill to be taught. Children will use the restroom if they have not already done so.
- 10:25           Clean up- Children will assist parent and teacher in cleaning up the room.
- 10:30           Quiet reading. Children will get a book after cleaning up.
- 10:35           Music and storytime
- 10:50           Large Motor room
- 11:15           Dismissal- Parent helper remains to help clean the room.

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## DAILY SCHEDULE AND PARENT HELPER DUTIES- PRE-K CLASS

- 11:30            Parent helper arrives to assist teacher and to help greet the children.
- 11:45            Children arrive and are encouraged to hang up their own belongings.
- 12:00            Circle time- Children discuss topics, sings songs and share ideas.
- 12:25            Group Time- Children will work in groups to complete craft and work of the day.  
Teacher will work with the student on skill to be taught.  
Children will use the restroom if they have not already done so.
- 1:15            Clean up- Children will assist parent and teacher in cleaning up the room.
- 1:30            Quiet reading. Children will get a book after cleaning up.
- 1:40            Music and storytime
- 1:55            Large Motor room
- 2:15            Dismissal- Parent helper remains to help clean the room.

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CHESTER CO-OP PRESCHOOL CALENDAR 2006-2007  
12772 CHILLICOTHE RD. 729-2043

AUGUST

- 20- school picnic for al classes 12:30-3:30
- 29- mandatory orientation at school 7:00/ board meets at 6:30

SEPTEMBER

- 5- phase in for 3-day class- half the class from 9:00-10:00, other half from 10:15-11:15
- 5- Pre-K class phase in- half of the class from 11:45-2:15
- 6- First full day for 3-day class all children 9:00-11:15
- 6- Pre-K class phase in- other half of class from 11:45-2:15
- 7- phase in 2-day class- half the class from 9:00-10:00, other half of class from 10:15-11:15
- 7- Pre-K all day full class 11:45- 2:15
- 8- full regular day for 2-day class 9:00-11:00
- 23- monthly clean-up 9:00 at school
- 29- Mom-n-Tot program starts- through Dec. 1 no class Oct. 13., Nov. 24

OCTOBER

- 10- monthly meeting 7:00
- 13- NO SCHOOL** Observance of Columbus Day and NEOEA Day
- 21- monthly clean-up 9:00 at school

NOVEMBER

- 14- monthly meeting 7:00
- 18- monthly clean-up 9:00 at school
- 23-24- NO SCHOOL-** Thanksgiving break

DECEMBER

- 8- Mom-n-Tot Session II starts- through Feb. 23- No class Dec. 22, 29, Jan. 5, Feb.16
- 12- monthly meeting at 7:00
- 21- Jan.5- NO SCOOOL- Holiday Break**

JANUARY

- 6- SCHOOL RESUMES
- 9- monthly meeting 7:00
- 13- monthly clean-up 9:00
- 15- NO SCHOOL MLK DAY**
- 19- open house

FEBRUARY

- 3- monthly meeting 7:00
- 10- major fundraiser
- 12-16 NO SCHOOL -WINTER BREAK**
- 19- NO SCHOOL PRESIDENTS DAY**

MARCH

- 2- Mom-n-Tot session III- through May 4- no class April 6,13
- 13- monthly meeting 7:00
- 17- monthly clean-up 9:00
- 18- Father Sunday

APRIL

- 6-13- NO SCHOOL SPRING BREAK**
- 16- school resumes
- 17- monthly meeting 7:00

MAY

- 4- last day for all Mom-n-Tot classes
- 8- monthly meeting 7:00
- 11- Last day for 2-day class
- 16- Last day for 3-day class
- 17- Pre-K graduation
- 18- last clean-up

**WE WILL BE CLOSED DUE TO WEATHER WHEN WEST GEAUGA SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED**

Dear parents,

After reading the handbook please sign, date and return this page to the vice president. This is required before the child enters the school. Please feel free to talk to the director, president, or vice president if you should have any questions about the policies in the handbook.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the parent handbook for Chester Co-op Preschool and have had the policies reviewed with me. I agree to follow all the policies outlined within.

\_\_\_\_\_  
signature of parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

\_\_\_\_\_  
signature of second parent if applicable

\_\_\_\_\_  
date