



CITY KIDS SCHOOL

Meet the Teachers
2018-2019

Sheryl Nelson

Director

Welcome to City Kids School (CKS). Our school has been excelling in educating preschool age children since 1998; and since 2008, we have offered the same excellent education to students in kindergarten.

CKS considers the early years the most important period of development in a child's life. A child's work is their play, and therefore children learn best when they engage in activities that encourage choice making, exploration and discovery, hands-on experiences, and authentic learning opportunities. Within our educational structure is the framework to come alongside parents in their efforts to raise children of strong character who will become world-changing young people.

We invite you to join our school community; join us in a journey of excellence and virtue. For more information or to schedule a tour, please contact me by phone or e-mail. I look forward to meeting you!

Sheryl Nelson, MIT
School Director

(425) 739-1227
sheryl@citymin.org



Kristy Lara

Assistant Director & Preschool Lead Teacher

Hello, my name is Kristy Lara. I have an earned bachelor's degree in Children's studies from Eastern Washington as well as an earned CDA (Child Development Associates) and love to keep learning. I have a sense of humor, love to guide children to new discoveries, am teachable, enjoy interacting with parents, and love God with all my heart.

My classroom is colorful, fun, and safe for the inquisitive 2.5 – 3-year-olds. We have age-appropriate activities that invite a child to play and learn through hands-on activities.

One of the most exciting things in my classroom is watching children learn through play. It is not hard—it's natural. I love to put a new activity out and watch as the children discover it, test it out, play with it, and get ahold of the "concept" without even trying.

My favorite verse is Philippians 4:6-7. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."



Malia Isenhardt

Preschool Lead Teacher

Hello, my name is Malia Isenhardt. Teaching young children is the most fun and fulfilling profession I can imagine for myself. I love what I get to do every day because it is always an adventure! I am a graduate of the University of Washington where I earned my Bachelor of Art degree in Sociology; and also a graduate of Hillsong International Leadership College in Sydney Australia where I earned a certificate of Pastoral Leadership/Children's Ministry. Most recently I got to use my passion and skill as a Children's Pastor for five years.

There is nothing more thrilling than to walk beside children as they discover more about the incredible world around them. Learning should be an adventure filled with curiosity, playfulness, creativity, laughter, and music. My goal is to create a classroom environment where children will experience God's unconditional love and develop a passion for learning at an early age.

Joining the outstanding team at City Kid's School has been a dream come true! I love the community of staff and parents who I get to partner with in seeing children learn and grow in their gifts and become who God has made them to be.

One of my favorite scripture verses is Ephesians 3:20-21 (MSG) God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us.



Sara Steele

Preschool Lead Teacher

Hello, my name is Sara Steele and I am passionate about being a teacher. I've earned a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from the University of Iowa in 2000 and a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Missouri at Kansas City in 2002. I taught for the North Kansas City School District for a couple of years before getting married. I also love teaching to the emergent readers and I am thrilled to be a part of the teaching team at City Kids School.

In my spare time, I love hiking, yoga, reading and spending time with my neighbors, friends, and family. I also enjoy spending time with our City Church Family and especially teaching the 4-5-year-old Sunday School Class on Sundays at Noon.

It is our prayer that your child will feel safe, loved, and excited to learn every day in our classroom! One of my favorite scriptures is found in Psalms 94 where our heavenly father's attention is always on us and he promises to keep us in his mighty care.

"He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection. Psalms 91:4"



Johannys Acevedo

Preschool Lead Teacher

Hello, my name is Johannys Acevedo. As a teacher, family therapist, and a mom, I believe the first five years of a child's life are incredibly critical. I'm thankful for every day I get to add building blocks to their foundation, helping them become all that God has created them to become.

I have an earned Bachelor's Degree in Special Education in 2008 at the University of Puerto Rico. I then moved to Seattle in 2011 to pursue my dream of becoming a Children and Family therapist and a Drama Therapist at Antioch University.

I am excited to partner together with the teaching team at City Kids School to help guide children to step into the dreams and purposes God has for them. Playfulness, creativity and empathic relationships are the three ingredients I think are essential for a healthy learning environment. My goal is to intentionally bring these three elements into our classroom every day. My passion is to create space for children to explore, grow and thrive, exercising their unique gifts. My teaching philosophy is based on this foundation that, "Play is the work of the child".

One of my favorite scripture verses is Romans 11:3 (NLT) "For everything comes from him and exists by his power and is intended for his glory. All glory to him forever!" I believe that it is because of him that we get to do what we do and be who we are, everything begins and ends in his love for us.



Dina Pan

Pre-K Lead Teacher

Hello my name is Dina Pan and I teach one of our amazing Pre-K classes! I am a graduate of the University of Washington where I earned my Bachelor's Degree in Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences with an emphasis on Culture, Literature, and the Arts. I also earned a Washington State Teaching Certificate in Elementary Education. Prior to coming to City Kids School I taught in the Northshore School District and at Bright Horizons.

From an early age I wanted to be a teacher. I grew up with parents who were both educators and their love for teaching inspired me. Now I feel so privileged to be teaching at City Kids School and working with such an amazing teaching team.

My goal for students is to make learning fun. I love to teach using songs, movement, repetition, and creative activities. One of the most rewarding things about teaching is watching a child have his/her "aha" moment. When a child finds understanding or accomplishes a task that they have been working diligently on such as writing a letter or number correctly I love to see the "aha" moment and this without doubt brings joy to my heart.

One of my favorite scriptures is Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through him who gives me strength."



Melody Lynch

Pre-K Lead Teacher

Hello, my name is Melody Lynch. I am passionate about early learning and sharing God's Word. I believe building a strong foundation in young children is critical to a successful future. While tailoring the teaching and curriculum to meet the needs of each individual child, it is awesome to have a front row seat as they grow, develop and learn!

I have an Associate of Christian Education Degree. Prior to coming to City Kids School, I had the privilege of teaching for 8 years in a quality preschool in Mill Creek, WA. I also served as a Co-Director within their music instruction program. I have many fun ideas to share and I look forward to being a part of each child's time at City Kids School.

I teach with enthusiasm and creativity! I enjoy relationships with both the student and their family. I love learning how each boy and girl is individually special and unique! My goal is that each new little friend will love to come to preschool because it is a fun, safe and a happy place to learn!

One of my favorite scriptures is Ephesians 3:18. May you be able to feel and understand how long, how wide, how deep and how high God's love really is...for you!



Heather Miller

Pre-K Lead Teacher

Hello, my name is Heather Miller. I believe one of the greatest rewards as a teacher is the supportive and active role to both the social and academic growth of a child. What a joy it is to teach!

I have an earned Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Vanguard University of Southern California, and have been certified in Early Childhood Education.

I am absolutely thrilled to be a part of such an incredible teaching team where the heart and the passion is for children. My goal is to see them develop in a safe, Christ-centered, and play based environment.

In my classroom you will find an emphasis on fun. It is important to me that each child is able to find the joy in learning! School is exciting, and energetic, and I find that children feel more successful when they are happy. I also love incorporating different learning styles into my lessons so I can see how each child excels. Being able to know children in their own uniqueness, and help them thrive accordingly is a rewarding experience.

One of my favorite passages of scripture is "For He, who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or imagine, according to his power that works in us". Ephesians 3:20



Lindsey Nipp

Kindergarten Lead Teacher

Hello, my name is Lindsey Nipp and I am thrilled to teach Kindergarten at City Kids School! For over 15 years I have enjoyed being involved in education. My Master's degree in Educational Administration from Nova Southeastern University and a Bachelor of Arts from Regis University in Elementary Education have allowed me to teach various elementary grades, middle school math, tutor, and instruct at the collegiate level.

I love seeing children excited to learn. In my classroom I strive to keep a lively, engaging, and focused setting where students find pride in learning new material. Music, movement, and manipulatives are some of my favorite ways to help students learn in a meaningful and fun way. When students enjoy learning, they are energized and hungry to learn more.

Kindergarten is such a monumental year in the lives of our children and I am grateful to be a part of it. My goal is that every child in my class would feel the success of educational progress, experience the love of Jesus, and know they are an invaluable part of their class community.

My favorite scripture verse: "Now God has us right where he wants us... Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish!"
Ephesians 2:7-8



Belle Ponce

Kindergarten Lead Teacher

Hello, my name is Belle Ponce, and I am so excited to be your child's Kindergarten teacher this year! I have an earned Bachelor's degree in Music from Northwest University and I love instilling a love for learning through music. Prior to coming to City Kids School I was a teacher's assistant in first grade. I absolutely love City Kids School and the heart and passion each teacher has for child development in a Christ centered and play based environment. I am honored to be teaching here!

When I am not teaching, I love spending time exploring new restaurants/café's, drawing, and creating music.

Kindergarten is such a monumental year in the lives of children and I am so grateful to be a part of it. My goal is that every child would feel successful in their education in their friendships, and experience the love of Jesus every day in school.

My favorite verse: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Corinthians 12:9

