

University
of
Wyoming
Early Care
and
Education Center



ECEC Summer 2011 Newsletter

Inside this issue:

Welcome Parents	1
Infant Classroom News	1
Toddler Classroom 1	2
Toddler Classroom 2	2
Preschool Classroom 1 News	2
Preschool Classroom 2 News	3
Preschool Classroom 3 News	3
School Age Program	3
Summer Recipes	4

Upcoming Events:

****Jubilee Days****

*Please see attached calendar for Jubilee Days Activities

Welcome Parents!

ECEC Families-

Happy Summer! I think I can safely say that we are well in to our summer here in Laramie. We have all of the tell-tale signs...warmer days, picnics, children playing in water, and mosquitoes! I know that all of the classrooms have wonderful and fun activities planned for the summer. The warmer weather definitely allows for much more outdoor exploration, field trips and wonderful science lessons.

Make sure that you get time in the next few weeks to check on the progress of the garden area on the playground. Each of the classrooms have planted vegetables, flowers, and herbs in specific bed areas of the garden. In addition, John Randall from Randall Fencing has volunteered his time to help build a small fence to help define the garden area a bit better. We truly appreciate all of his services, the garden is looking great!

We hope that the mosquitoes will disappear soon, but until then, we will continue to keep your child covered with bug spray as well as sunscreen. Please let us know if you have questions about the use of either of these items this summer. Of course, we always welcome parents to visit and participate in our daily activities and field trips. If you ever want to come to the Center to eat a meal or play, please feel free to let us know what day/time works best for you.

One of the best parts of summer in Laramie is our own local celebration, Jubilee Days. Beginning with the Freedom Has a Birthday celebration at Washington Park on Monday July 4th, the whole following week there are daily activities in the downtown area, as well as rodeos and events at the County Fairgrounds. We have included a schedule of events with this letter to help you find something special for your family. We hope you have a wonderful summer and look forward to having you all back in the Fall!

Mark

Infant Classroom: Michelle

What's Happening in the Infant Room.....

Summer is finally upon us and we're definitely enjoying it while it lasts! We have been playing outside a lot. Some of our favorite things to do outside include playing in the sand box and exploring water in the water table. Some of us have even been able to go on walks with Crystal's toddler class onto campus!

We are ready to investigate several other things including small and large boxes, music and dancing, and foods of different textures. One of the things we are most excited to explore this summer is dirt and mud. If you find mud in our hair or between our toes, you'll know that we've been having a lot of fun squishing it and squeezing it as we discover how much fun it can be!



Toddler Classroom 1: Brenna



We have been adjusting to summer. The children have been happy to get outside. We have been using this as an opportunity to get messy while we are outside. We have been exploring the properties of water: What happens when it freezes and what happens when it sits in the sun. We explored things that float and sink, and of course we had to play in the water and explore getting wet! We added colors to the water to investigate mixing colors too. The children showed interest immediately in mixing the colors.

The children have shown an interest in colors a lot. They have been pointing out and searching for things. We have been creating "color" books with things they find around the center that are that color. We are going to expand our search outside the center on color walks. We are going to continue to use the light table to explore color and light and see where it leads us!

Toddler Classroom 2: Crystal

It has been an eventful summer in the Toddler 2 classroom, especially since it has warmed up! We have been exploring the outdoors in our playground as well as on the University campus. Our weekly walks inspired us to collect natural materials around us, which became the basis of our curriculum. We have made paintings with these materials (pinecones, sticks, pine needles, etc.) and plan to do many other art activities with them as well. With the children's favorite materials we plan on making a natural collage to display in the classroom to remind them of the fun walks we went on throughout the summer. We have also been exploring the idea of hidden places where fairies live. The children made the fairies some food made of colorful cereal, fruit, and fairies dust (jell-o mix). The fairy food was dispersed on the ground and in the crevices of the trees for the fairies to eat with help from the teachers. We are going back to campus soon to see if the fairies ate it or not. As more natural materials are collected, we will construct houses for the fairies. The children are very interested in dramatic play and this has extended their imaginations by taking them into an entirely new secretive, "fairy world". Our garden has blossomed immensely within the past couple weeks and the children love watering them once a week and seeing how much watering helps the plants grow. In our experimental garden, near the mud pit, the children have really enjoyed digging up worms and counting how many they find in our time outside. We will continue to take advantage of the nature around us and implement into every part of our day, including having picnics at mealtimes.



Preschool Classroom 1: Tammy



We have welcomed several new friends into Preschool 1 this summer! Mackenzie, Callie, Stella and Emma have been a great addition to our class! Preschool 1 has been up to a lot so far this summer. We planted vegetables in the garden. The seeds are beginning to grow and we will be measuring their growth each week. In addition, we have been exploring flowers and learned the parts of a flower, including the petals, stem, roots and stigma. The kids have been representing flowers with drawing, painting, paper collage and wire sculptures.

The children have also shown an interest in construction. They have been using blocks of different sizes and shapes to represent buildings, dump trucks and dinosaur houses! Some questions the children have been exploring are, "How can I make the roof stronger?" and "How do they build buildings?"

As an extension of our classroom, we have explored different areas of campus. In addition to the spider web park, we have recently visited the Geology Museum to look at dinosaurs and the Conservatory to look at a variety of plants that are not native to Wyoming. If you wish to send a water bottle with your child on days when we go to the park, please feel free to do so.

As summer allergies are in full force, we are running out of Kleenex! Please bring in some Kleenex to take care of our noses and could you also please bring in a towel for water days.

Preschool Classroom 2: Linda



Preschool 2 is really enjoying climbing the mountain behind the hospital weekly. The children have been fascinated with the wild flowers, bugs, rocks, cactus, bones, etc. Each trip up brings a new question we need to research. This week the children wanted to know how deep ant hills were.

Trish Penny, Educational Specialist from Laramie Rivers Conservation District, is coming to our class to talk about bees and how they make honey. She will also help all the preschool classes make a compost bin. Worms will help us recycle our food to make good compost for our garden. We are enjoying the garden and have planted potatoes, flowers and wild flowers.

Our class has a new student with a hearing loss. We are learning sign language so we can communicate with our friend. Many children also make up their own, unique signs and tell the class what the word means. Our goal is to learn fifty signs this summer.

We continue to be excited about fishing. The culmination of this unit will be a fishing event with parents and children Saturday morning, July 16 at LaPrele Park. Parents will be asked to bring along fishing gear so every child has a chance to catch their own, live fish!

Preschool Classroom 3: Eleanor

Thus far in preschool 3, we have had very active, intent, and thought provoking adventures. At the art museum we're confronted with many thought provoking ideas such as how objects, sounds, and spaces are represented through art in ways that we may not have thought of before even though, for the most part, being three to five year olds, we knew it already. Afterwards we get to take the concepts that were "reintroduced" to us and mash and meld them into our own artistic masterpieces and works of genius.

Mallory has spearheaded the study of seeds and we have planting them in both the experimental and traditional gardens. Seth works in the garden often as well, but he makes us do things like hoe weeds and thistle, so we don't like to work in the garden with him as much. Mallory has also been showing us how to juice different kinds of fruit. We tried lemons, limes, and grapefruits and all had a good laugh watching each others' sour faces.

Outside we have been playing in the mud and recently we've shifted our attention to the sandbox where master architect Keenan and his subordinate foreman Seth have been helping us develop intricate canal systems with many different gates and levees.

Summer is cruisin' along nicely: fun is up, whining is down, and action and excitement are both at all time highs. In the coming weeks we'll continue spending time in our garden as the plants will be sprouting and our stomachs will be grumbling. You all may have forgotten, but when you're young like us eating an onion like an apple is a perfectly reasonable snack.

School Age Program: Bailey & Chris



School Age Room Parents:

Chris, Bailey, Brie, and Katherine have had a wonderful month of June with all of your children. The room is full, but we have had some great times already. We have spent our days playing outside with the other classes, going on walking field trips to campus and various city parks, as well as working on crafts, reading stories, and singing songs with Chris. In July we are hoping to continue some fun field trips. We are going to have a scavenger hunt in the hills behind the golf course as well as hopefully a trip to campus to visit Thomas' dad's work at Half Acre.

Please remember that many days, if it is warm enough, we hope to be outside. Usually there are many opportunities for us to play in the water, so please be sure to bring a swimsuit for your child or if you are willing to keep one at the school that is great. Also be sure to bring a towel with your child's name on it. We look forward to a fantastic remainder of the summer. Thank you parents!

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Visit Our New Website:

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Summer Recipe Corner

Layered Salad

Ingredients:

- * 4 Eggs
- * 1 Head of lettuce
- * 1 Onion, chopped (optional)
- * 1 (8 oz) Can Water Chestnuts (optional)
- * 1 (16 oz) Package frozen green peas
- * 1/2 lb bacon cooked & crumbled
- * 1 lg tomato, chopped
- * Favorite salad dressing

** (can add other vegetables if preferred)**

Directions:

1. Place eggs in a large saucepan and completely cover with water. Bring to a boil. Cover and remove from heat. Let stand for 12 minutes. Remove eggs and chill.
2. In a 9x13 inch bowl dish, layer the lettuce, onion, water chestnuts and peas.
3. Spread favorite dressing over the top of the peas. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
4. Peel and chop hard cooked eggs
5. Remove salad from refrigerator and top with bacon, eggs and tomato. Serve.

Cheesy Potato Skin Pizza

Ingredients:

- * 6 medium-size russet potatoes
- * Salt and pepper to taste
- * 2 1/2 cups favorite pasta sauce, warmed
- * Favorite Pizza Toppings
- * 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- * 2 cups grated mozzarella or other pizza cheese

Directions:

1. Heat your oven to 400°. Scrub potatoes, poke them with a paring knife, then bake them for 50-60 minutes, until they're tender at the center. Cool the potatoes briefly, then halve them lengthwise and scoop out most of the inside, leaving a thin potato wall. Cool the skins. (Can use inside for mashed potatoes).
2. Arrange the skins on a well-greased baking sheet, radiating out like the spokes of a wheel. Cut some skins in half the long way and tuck them into the gaps between the whole skins. Lightly salt and pepper the insides of the skins.
3. Spoon the sauce into the skins, dividing it equally. Sprinkle one or more toppings over the skins, if desired, then cover them evenly with Parmesan cheese. Sprinkle with mozzarella (or other cheese). Bake on the center oven rack for 15 minutes. Cool for several minutes, then serve.

S'mores Pie

Ingredients:

- * 1 (9 inch) Graham cracker crust
- * 1 (7 oz) Jar marshmallow cream
- * 1 (3.9 oz) package instant chocolate pudding mix
- * 1 cup chocolate shell topping (optional)

Directions:

1. Spread marshmallow cream in the graham cracker crust. Prepare chocolate pudding according to package directions and pour over marshmallow cream. Cover top with chocolate shell topping. Refrigerate for 1 1/2 hours, then serve.

