

Spring



ECEC NEWSLETTER SPRING 2014

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Well, spring has finally arrived (some days that is even debatable!), and the children and teachers are very ready to spend more time outside! We are looking forward to many fun activities as we head into the spring and summer sessions. Because the spring semester goes so fast, we want to remind you about a few upcoming important dates and events:

- Contract signing for the Fall 2014/Spring 2015 will be at the ECEC on Thursday May 8th at 11:30 and 4:00
- Last day of school for families on the B Calendar is Friday May 9th
- Last day of school for families on the C Calendar is Friday May 30th
- Last day of school for families on the A Calendar is August 8th
- For children heading to kindergarten next year, registration is April 21-25 and will be held at your neighborhood school. Also, look for registration for the Step Up program which is at the same time as kindergarten registration.
- We are hoping to hold another Transportation Fair this spring but the date has not been confirmed. Please be sure to watch for information regarding those dates.
- Class photos by Ludwig Photo will be held on Wednesday April 22 starting at 9:00 am.
- We will also be hoping to have a school potluck picnic towards the end of the semester. We will notify you as soon as we have this set.
- UW summer hours begin May 12th and the ECEC will be open from 7:30-4:30

A big thank you to all of you during the Week of the Young Child. Please know that we appreciate each and every one of you for all that you do to make the UW ECEC a great place!

Have a happy spring

- *Mark*

INFANT CLASSROOM: MICHELLE



We have finished up our exploration of different containers, and have moved on to taking care of our babies and exploring a variety of sensory materials. The older children have been interacting with Rylan and Oliver more, bringing toys to them, helping with their bottles, and giving hugs and kisses. To build off of this interest, we have brought out our kitchen set and have been feeding and bathing our baby dolls. We plan to add more materials for them to explore with their baby dolls in the coming weeks.

These last couple weeks we explored many different textures, including textures that are sticky and cold. Sensory exploration is important to how infants learn about their environment and world around them. It is exciting to see the different ways that each child explores the materials and how each of their personalities come out during their explorations. Some of the children do not like the gooey, sticky materials, so they use utensils to explore the material, whereas the other children use their hands and usually end up with it from head to toe. These open-ended explorations allow each child an opportunity to explore and learn at their own pace and in their own way. Remember our door is always open and we would love to have each of you come play and learn with us!

Even though the weather is getting warmer, the cold and snow still show up on occasion. Please make sure your child has the proper outdoor gear each day, including coats, hats, shoes/boots, and gloves. Thank you!



TODDLER 1: CHRISTY



In the Toddler 1 class this spring we have been celebrating independence as the children have been doing more and more for themselves in all aspects of their day. For instance, in the morning the children serve themselves breakfast, clear their own place setting, sit on the toilet, and brush their teeth at their own pace. This independence during every day routines has created a friendly and encouraging environment in our classroom. The children are regularly affirming their peers on their ability to complete a new task independently. We often celebrate and cheer each other on as each child grows. Looking forward, we are excited to see where these strong bonds lead our explorations this summer.

TODDLER 2: SHAILA

Emerging friendships are adding a lot of fun to the Toddler 2 classroom. The children are beginning to engage in early stages of cooperative play. Recently, this is most often seen as they try to save each other from monsters. They are asking each other to play, dance, and read and learning to negotiate the space so that each person can enjoy being in the area. The children are learning to feel empathy for each other, rejoicing and congratulating when they notice one of their friends accomplishing a task, and asking questions about why their friends are sad. As the semester goes on we will see these friendships continue to grow.



PRESCHOOL 1: JACLYN



The garden has become a huge hit in P1 recently! The class is particularly interested in looking for worms and trying out all of the different tools available to dig with. After no luck of finding worms while digging in the garden, we discussed how it is still too cold for them and when it starts to warm up we should be able to start finding worms. We had been taking care of worms the class found last fall in a compost bin, and a few of the kids wanted to dig through it to see if they could find any. Sure enough, we found quite a few worms! The children then began digging holes in the garden beds with their tool of choice to put worms in. After burying them, they were pretty satisfied and are excited to dig again to hopefully find the worms! If their interest in worms continues, we will be learning about how they help our garden and how we can take better care of them.

PRESCHOOL 2: ADINA

We have been having so much fun playing and learning together! It seems like everyone is learning so much and sharing what they have learned with the class.

We are finishing up our first name book and I can't believe how well everyone's names are looking. We'll be starting another one soon. This has led to an interest in writing. Kids are writing on paper and on dry erase boards. They are writing names, letters and using sounds and letters to do their own writing.

The kids have also been showing an interest in space. We have read some books about space and the kids love all the new facts they are learning. I've seen them using these facts in their play. I've seen planets being made out of play dough and several pictures of the solar system have been drawn.

We are getting outside to enjoy the fresh air and sunshine as much as we can! It feels so good to be back outside and we are looking forward to the warm spring weather!



PRESCHOOL 3: STEPHANIE



Preschool Three has found a new interest in everything writing. As a class we take the time each morning signing in and practicing our names. We have a shelf with all our sign in books, and new challenges ready to go. Working on letter formation and using a pincer grip, holding the writing instrument between the first finger and thumb, allows us to strengthen the muscles in our hands. Writing is a great way to communicate. The kids see that adults use writing on a daily basis and this observation has encouraged them to do the same thing. P3 friends are writing notes to go play in other classrooms independently and adding writing to their art and projects. We have added a new writing center to our classroom to encourage this interest. We have pre-made books, ready for all the stories our friends are writing, along with new pencils and our classroom dictionary. We add words, accompanied by pictures, to this book as a resource for writing. Looking forward to practicing how to write our LAST names next!

PRESCHOOL 4: LINDA

In the picture to the right, the children have planted dead sticks. Now as the season is changing we are noticing the greening of returning perennial plants in the garden area as well as around the playground. Children are still pretending to water the dormant garden beds but soon we will begin preparing the soil and planting seeds. Signs of spring are upon us and we are noticing and liking the change.



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Playing it Safe in the Sun

As the weather gets warmer and we all enjoy more time outside, here are 5 ways to help protect your child's skin from the sun!

1. Seek shade. UV rays are strongest and most harmful during midday, so it's best to plan indoor activities then. If this is not possible, seek shade under a tree, an umbrella, or a pop-up tent. Use these options to prevent sunburn, not to seek relief after it's happened.

2. Cover up. Clothing that covers your child's skin helps protect against UV rays. Although a long-sleeved shirt and long pants with a tight weave are best, they aren't always practical. A T-shirt, long shorts, or a beach cover-up are good choices, too—but it's wise to double up on protection by applying sunscreen or keeping your child in the shade when possible.

3. Get a hat. Hats that shade the face, scalp, ears, and neck are easy to use and give great protection. Baseball caps are popular among kids, but they don't protect their ears and neck. If your child chooses a cap, be sure to protect exposed areas with sunscreen.

4. Wear sunglasses. They protect your child's eyes from UV rays, which can lead to cataracts later in life. Look for sunglasses that wrap around and block as close to 100% of both UVA and UVB rays as possible.

5. Apply sunscreen. Use sunscreen with at least SPF 15 and UVA and UVB protection every time your child goes outside. For the best protection, apply sunscreen generously 30 minutes before going outdoors. Don't forget to protect ears, noses, lips, and the tops of feet.