From the Kitchen to the Classroom

Banana Bread

1 cup sugar
½ cup sour cream or buttermilk
½ cup shortening or butter
2 eggs
1 cup mashed bananas
2 cups flour
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp baking powder

Bake at 350 degrees for 40 to 45 minutes

The children liked pouring the sugar and flour into the bowl. They were surprised what the bananas looked like when they had been in the freezer and how different they are when they are fresh. They liked smelling the different ingredients and taking turns stirring the batter.

What Will the Teachers Be Doing March 17?
The teachers and director will be taking an Infant-Child CPR and Pediatric First Aid class to become re-certified. Our team will then have a staff meeting, prepare for Parent-Teacher conferences and do classroom set-up after carpet cleaning.

Childcare Alive

Childcare Alive is a FREE program that uses fun and engaging activities to teach children about healthy foods and active play. This program includes valuable resources for providers, education lessons for children, and helpful tips with recipes for parents. Childcare Alive will take place four times in both the toddler and preschool rooms.

- On February 23 at 9:30 the toddlers learned about MyPlate for MyBody and then at 10:00 Preschoolers learned about Go and Whoa Foods.
- On March 9 at 9:30 the toddlers will learn about Protein Power and then at 10:00 the Preschoolers repeat the activity.
- On March 23 at the toddlers will learn about Healthy Snack Attack and preschoolers will learn about Choose to Move: Reducing Screen Time.
- On April 6 the toddlers will learn about Movin’ and Groovin’ and the preschoolers will learn about Managing Movement.

Please join us if you can for this awesome learning opportunity!
Five Ways to Build Math into Your Child’s Day

Math is everywhere. That’s great news for parents, because we can talk with our children about math in fun, natural ways. Studies show that a child’s math skills at kindergarten entry are a better predictor of future academic success than reading skills, social skills, or the ability to focus. As parents, you can give your child a head start by helping him/her get comfortable with math concepts like measuring and counting at home.

Here are five ways to add math to your child’s day:

1. **Bake something together**—You can’t help but use math when you are baking. Allow your child to measure one or two cups of ingredients or break one or two eggs. Talk about a half of a cup or count out the number of chocolate chips in their cookie. Help your child make predictions by **asking your child**: How many chocolate chips do you think it will take to fill one cup? How many for ½ cup? Count together and see how close you came to the right answer.

2. **Measure, count and record**—Most kids love stopwatches, and watching the seconds tick by gives them opportunities to practice counting. Measure distances and heights. Count jumping jacks, push-ups, or consecutive kicks of a soccer ball. **Ask your child**: How far can you throw a ball? Take a guess, then throw the ball as far as you can and measure the distance. Or **How many jumping jacks can you do in a minute?** Try it! Or **How many times can you bounce a ball without missing?** Count and see.

3. **Build something together**—Big or small, any project that involves measuring includes counting, adding and multiplying. It doesn’t matter whether you are making a fort or a tree house. Legos and other building toys are wonderful tools for incorporating both numbers and spatial thinking into play. **Ask your child**: How high can you build that stack of Legos? Or **Can you make a square? A rectangle?** Talk about the shapes of whatever your child has created.

4. **Plan dinner or a party**—Whether you are planning a birthday party or just getting ready for a family dinner, there are plenty of math concepts involved. Have your child help set the table and count the plates, napkins and silverware. For a party, have your child help with shopping. You know you are going to have to do some math since all of those plates, balloons and party favors are packaged in different quantities! **Ask your child**: How many plates, napkins and spoons do you need for dinner? Or **If you are inviting 5 friends to your party, how many treats do we need?**

5. **Mix in math to your bedtime reading**—Most families read to their children at night. Why not add a math problem to the mix? Here’s one to try. **How Many Dips**—for a bedtime snack serve apple slices and yogurt. **Ask your child**: How many dips did you need for your slice of apple?

There are plenty of other ways to keep children thinking about math—board games and stickers. The important thing is just to encourage your child to see the numbers all around us and to keep things fun. This is how we’ll raise a next generation that thinks math is cool!

Adapted from Laura Bilodeau Overdeck. Visit her website at [www.bedtimemath.org](http://www.bedtimemath.org) for more math ideas to try at home.


**Why Recycle?**

By: Brittany Voulgarakis-Field Experience Student

Recycling is good for our environment in multiple ways and every little bit counts. Your children may ask why we should recycle and what happens when we do. Recycling helps reduce pollution caused by said waste and it helps us save our rainforests because we are reusing products instead of getting new ones, like cutting down trees in those rainforests.
Helpful ways your child can assist in recycling at home include:

- Make the recycling bin accessible. Whether it is a box by the back door that gets taken out every other day or in an attached garage where you have a garbage can just for recycling. Studies show that if the bin is accessible to children, they will be more likely to participate.
- Another way to get children to participate is to let them be creative and decorate the recycling bins. It could be a superhero recycling bin with a cape and a name (Recycling Robby) or a fashion recycling bin with glitter and bows (Pink Bin Betsy). By letting them put their creative spin on it, they may be more apt to use it.

The Center for Child Development recycles by using left over paper from the print and copy shop for children’s artwork and saves cans and plastic milk containers. According to the North Dakota Department of Human Services, children show progress in math and logical thinking when they gather, sort, and compare objects by attributes in the context of daily activities and play. This could be comparing different textures like plastic milk containers to tin cans and grocery bags. Recycling also helps demonstrate awareness of the need to protect and be good stewards of natural resources.

Products that are made from recycling include:
- Printer paper makes items like toilet paper and napkins
- Tin cans make things like car and bike parts.
- Plastic beverage bottles make things like backpacks and sleeping bag insulation.
- Plastic milk and detergent bottles make things like Frisbees, stadium seats and play sets for your backyard!

Recycling can be a fun learning experience for children and you can be happy to know that they are saving the environment one small item at a time!

Facts from:
- http://earth911.com/home-garden/6-tips-for-introducing-your-kids-to-recycling-2/

---

Spring Break Party
On Friday, March 10, we will plan to have a Spring Break party. The kids are welcome to wear shorts and t-shirts or even a bathing suit. We will have “summer” fun activities set up in the classroom along with a cool summer snack. A reminder will be sent home as it gets closer.

Sign Language
Last month, our children continued to thrive with the sign language. The younger ones are beginning to sign and our older children continue to learn new signs. We will focus on the signs hat, mommy, daddy, water, fish, dog, cat, please and thank you.

MSUM Practicum Students
Mid-February we had two MSUM students start in our classroom. Their names are Karley and Elyssa. They will complete 40 hours over 10 weeks and will plan some fun educational activities for the children.
Parent-Teacher Conferences
It’s that time again for parent conferences! Conferences will be held April 3-13. A Pre-Conference Survey will be placed above your child’s cubby the end of March. We will use this feedback to best meet your child’s needs, answer your questions, and focus on your child’s successes and future goals. We look forward to meeting with you soon!

Where’s Stacey?
- Stacey will be gone March 2 (Thursday) and possibly March 3 (Friday). I will be having day surgery.
- Stacey will also be gone March 15-16 (Wed-Thurs.) of Spring Break week. She will be taking a family vacation to Arizona. Stay tuned for more information on substitutes!

Spring Break Week
As you know during Spring break, our classroom will be closed for EML Hall electrical repair. Part of our room will be in the small preschool room and the other half will be with the toddler room. Please let your teachers know if your child will or will not be here that week. We will be working on staffing both rooms according to the number of children attending and planning for accurate meal counts. Stacey will be gone Wednesday and Thursday of that week.

Brain Games for You and Your Child
6-9 months:
2. Playing with pots and pans—hide a toy inside, then turn pot over to show the baby how to do this and help them try.
3. Peek-a-boo fun—cover your face with a scarf or your hands and then showing how you appear and disappear even though you are still there (Very important in wiring the brain).

9-12 months:
1. A stroller Game—take baby outside, stop at interesting things and talk about it. Repeat this game several times, pointing out the same things.
2. Fast and Slow Rhythms—give your child spoons. Sing a song and hit the sticks to the beat. Encourage them to hit as well, sing slow-tap spoons slow sing fast-tap spoons fast.
3. Let’s pull—take one end of a scarf and give the other end to the child, start gently pulling and show the child how to pull back. This game is good for muscle development.

MSUM Practicum Students
For the rest of this semester, our classroom will have two MSUM Practicum students.
- Miranda will work and play with us on Tuesday and Thursday mornings
- Megan will work and play with us on Friday mornings.
Both students will plan and implement developmentally appropriate activities and provide individualized care for your child. Welcome Miranda and Megan!

Happy Birthday to You
March 16th Amy turns 3!

Outside Play
With the unpredictable “spring” weather, teachers will assess going outside to play on a daily basis. Thank you to Deb, who spent time on the playground “chipping” away the ice to facilitate the thaw.
Spring Break Beach Party
On Friday March 10, we will be celebrating “Spring Break”! Please dress your child in summer beach clothing, keeping in mind we will be going outside. Pants that can slip on over shorts, for example, would be helpful. We will make a summer delicious fruit salad in the morning to be eaten at PM snack.

Mary Annual Leave
Mary is planning on taking annual leave March 16 (afternoon) and 31 (all day). A note will be posted for parents on specific times and substitutes.

Academics in a Toddler Curriculum
In a toddler curriculum the entire day is planned to meet four areas of toddler development including Social-Emotional, Physical, Language and Cognition. In addition, the content learning identified in the five Early Learning Standards are also incorporated in the toddler curriculum including: Literacy, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies and the Arts.

Taking a previous activity as an example, Sorting Animal Counters, offered mathematical learning. The goal of the activity was to give the children an opportunity to sort farm animals by type and/or color. This activity also met the criteria in science, social studies, language, fine motor, and nutrition/health/safety.

- Science-The children were given the opportunity to compared and classified the animals.
- Health/Nutrition/Safety- Awareness that each animal has basic needs that must be met to stay healthy e.g. food, clothing, shelter, talking about what the animals need to eat, where they would live and if they wear clothing so they can stay healthy
- Social and Emotional-Cooperating with others
- Language-Learning to and understanding increasingly complex language (horse versus foal), language to express thoughts and needs, solving issues by using their words, use of appropriate conversational and other communication skills (taking turns while speaking, volume of voice, eye-contact)
- Fine Motor - pincer grasp, fist grasp, eye-hand coordination
- Social Studies- What do the animals need to stay healthy? Who cares for them when they are sick? Add in the word “Veterinarian” and we’ve incorporated another language skill and higher order thinking.

Everything the children do here at school is preparing them to succeed at the next level of development. Teaching Toddlers is “So Much Fun!”

Resource: Teaching Strategies Gold; Objectives for Development & Learning; Birth through Kindergarten

Preschool Happenings by Monica & Robin

Keeping Healthy Inside and Outside
Child Wellness- We have had cold and flu symptoms this winter and are working hard to keep everyone healthy! Thanks for keeping in mind our Center health policies such as:

- Promptly picking up your child if he or she becomes ill
- Letting teachers know when your child is ill so we can post illness symptoms for other families

Please know there are other symptoms of illness besides fever. If your child does not have a normal appetite, not been active at home or seeks quiet play, your child may

Happy Belated Birthday to You
February 14th Suzy turned 4!
February 26th Annie & Victor turned 4!

Happy Birthday to You
March 20th Piper turns 5!
not yet feel well enough for the active day at school. When considering the needs of the whole group, your child may not be able to get the one-on-one “TLC” and rest necessary to get better. Please know that we are not able to keep your child inside due to illness when the group goes out for play.

Outside Clothing- Help us to keep your child warm and dry when playing outside by providing 2 pairs of waterproof mittens, large hat, snow pants and boots every day. Checking your child’s outdoor clothing for wetness at the end of the day is also helpful. We are unable to dry outdoor clothing except for hanging them up and sometimes items are still wet the next day. If possible, take them home for a quick dry or replacement pair will help keep your child warm outside. We will keep winter gear at the Center until our playground is dry.

Gearing up for Parent - Teacher Conferences
Robin and Monica are actively working on your child’s developmental goals and organizing the information in your child’s individual portfolio and spring assessment. We will have parent teacher conferences the month of April. A signup sheet will be posted in the classroom for parents to choose a time that works for their schedule. Early March, a Pre-Conference Parent Survey will be placed above your child’s cubby for you to complete and return. Please let us know of any questions or concerns you have about your child’s education and routines. We will look for information and resources on this topic for you.

Upcoming Classroom Events
- **Dr Seuss’ Birthday** –Thursday, March 2- We will be celebrating Dr. Seuss February 27 – March 3 and will have some extra events on March 2 in honor of this favorite author.
- **Movin & Groovin**- The children are moving in new ways to promote physical development and help university students learn how children develop.
- **Field Trip to Stevens Hall, March 6 at 10:00**– We will be visiting with Jessie Rock, a geologist in the Science Department at NDSU and former parent at the Center. She has wonderful fossils, rocks and a “virtual sandbox” that the children will learn about. Join us if you can.
- **Nursing Students** – **Tuesday, March 7 at 9:00** we will have a group of nursing students visiting our classroom to talk about doctor visits, germs & staying healthy.
- **Childcare Alive!** - **February 23, March 9, March 23, & April 6** – We have begun this 30 minute class promoting healthy eating & lifestyles with children. You will receive newsletters regarding how you can promote a healthy lifestyle at home.

Hands-On Learning Every Day!
Each month we would like to highlight one or two learning areas in the preschool classroom and what children are learning. We would like to help you get familiar with materials we are using, activities we are implementing and the learning that we see.

**Area 1-Discovery (Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, and STEM):** In this area we are promoting learning about science through our senses and experiments, learning about social studies by exploring jobs, transportation and social responsibility and learning math concepts such as counting, sorting, and patterning.

**Child is Learning:** prediction, analysis, counting, experimentation, world knowledge, cultural differences, environmental learning, etc.

**Materials Used:** color wands, magnetic pieces, recycling sorting cards, animals with habitats, 5 senses exploration/sorting, body parts labeling/matching, fossil casts, magnifying glasses, experiment sets, jobs/transportation matching, counting materials, numeral recognition, shapes, patterning, classifying materials, etc.

**Additional Learning:** This past month we have explored motion, numeral folder games, coloring mixing, shape matching, pattern creating, season sorting, 5 senses bingo, foot print tracing through small group and teacher directed activities.