From the Director

Center T-shirts Fundraiser

We are proud to offer you an opportunity to purchase a Center for Child Development t-shirt at $20.00 (includes tax). T-shirts will be available in NDSU Green or NDSU Gold with sizes ranging from 2T to Adult 5XL. If you chose to purchase a T-shirt(s), orders are due by Friday, March 2, 2018. The t-shirt(s) will be available the week of April 9-13 and placed above your child’s cubby or an email sent notifying you that it is available for pick-up. Your order form along with payment should be given directly to a classroom teacher. On the order form, please indicate whether you paid cash or check and makes checks payable to NDSU Center for Child Development. Questions?, please ask Mary Duggan 231-7565 or Deb Habedank 231-8281.

Wellness Curriculum

Did you know? On March 2, 2018 a group of NDSU nursing students will be educating the toddlers and preschoolers on three important health topics! These topics are:

1) Dental health: Egg carton flossing and laminated tooth cleaning

2) Healthy eating: Go! And Whoa! Foods

3) Hand washing: Glow Germ

These topics will include hands-on activities to engage the children and help them continue their learning at home. The students are excited to work with the children and can’t wait to begin the activities!

Childcarealive! Curriculum

The Center has applied for and will participate in the Childcarealive! Program designed for children ages 2-5 to promoted movement and nutrition. We will receive free professional development, a 116-page curriculum booklet to assist in planning activities for children, three demonstration visits by a registered dietitian and free active play or nutritional resources for a value of $150.00. We feel fortunate to participate in this educational opportunity!

“Today was good. Today was fun. Tomorrow is another one.” Dr. Seuss
What Will the Teachers Be Doing March 16?

The teachers and director will be continuing our professional development requirements, conducting Responsibility Reviews, having a staff meeting and preparing for parent-teacher conferences scheduled for the month of April.

Infant-Toddler Teacher Technician Position

Center staff have interviewed three candidates and did a pre-offer to one candidate who met our required and preferred qualifications and was an excellent team fit. This individual declined the position. The other two candidates have less developmentally appropriate experiences with infants and toddlers. Our search continues. We have contacted the Early Childhood Departments at UND, MSUM, and University of Minnesota Crookston about our open position. If you know of any excellent candidates please have them call Deb Habedank at 231-8281 or look at the NDSU jobs board. Our goal is to find the best candidate to fill this important position.

Are You Aware of Any Family Community Events Coming Up?

If that is a YES and you would be willing to share the website, the Director would be happy to inform other parents in the Center of the upcoming family opportunities.

How to Support Children’s Approaches to Learning through Play

As a parent, you want your children to learn all that they can—to grasp math concepts, to be curious about exploring the world, and to learn to read and write. Did you know that you can help your son or daughter academically by playing with them? Play and learning go together!

What kind of play helps children learn the best? Play that really engages children—play that they will focus on and stay with even when problems arise. This kind of play helps children develop their approaches to learning—in other words, the ways they respond to learning situations. Curiosity about the world, initiative and problem solving, and focused attention and persistence are just a few approaches to learning that children develop through play.

In the early years, parents can help children develop the skills to be better students by playing with them. Yes, as they enter kindergarten and the elementary years, children need to have some understanding of letters and numbers. However, if they have not developed solid approaches to learning, they will not be as successful in school settings.

Encouraging Toddlers at Play

Joey is 20 months old. He has a basket full of toys, including rattles, soft plastic blocks, set of stacking rings, stuffed animals, and cloth and plastic books. Joey’s dad often sits down on the floor with Joey and invites him to play with items in the basket. Joey’s favorite activity is to dump out all of the toys and put the basket on his head! This is typical toddler play behavior. Joey is curious about the world and is looking at it another way—through the slats in the basket!

Joey loves to shake the rattles to hear the different sounds or to stack two or three blocks and knock them down. His attention to each might be up to five minutes or so, which is just right for his age. He may solve problems as he tries to place the rings on the stacking post or to add more blocks to a tower.

Joey’s dad encourages his curiosity. He comments about what he is doing: “I see you are trying to get that last ring on the post, but it just won’t fit.” Or he asks him questions: “Where did that ball go? Do you see it hiding behind the chair?” He connects his play to learning by responding positively to his interest: “I can tell you like to look through the basket, you silly boy. Does everything look different from under there?” He also encourages him by asking him to keep trying even when he gets frustrated. “Oh, those blocks keep falling down, don’t they? Can you try to put just one on top of another gently? Let’s see what happens. I’ll help you.” This encouragement fosters his perseverance, his attention, and his initiative at problem solving, all positive approaches to learning.
Encouraging Preschoolers at Play

Alicia is 4 years old. She loves to dress up in her mommy’s clothes, jewelry, and shoes and then pretend to go shopping, care for her baby dolls, and cook dinner. Through her pretend play Alicia learns to think abstractly. When she holds a block in her hand and uses it to pretend to talk on the phone, she is using the block as a symbol for something else. That’s abstract thinking in action! And, since letters and numbers are abstract because they are symbols of what they represent, pretend play is one way a child develops her understanding of letters and numbers.

Alicia’s mom and dad have recognized that supporting her pretend activities keeps her engaged for 10 to 15 minutes at a time. They pretend right along with her, asking her to “bake some cookies” or to “go grocery shopping” for them. They give her paper and crayons so that she can pretend to write grocery lists. They encourage her to count how many items she has placed in her toy shopping cart. They accept her scribbles and letter-like shapes as her writing (just right for 4-year-olds) and help her when the numbers get a little mixed up.

Alicia will work with puzzles for long periods of time, too, especially if her dad joins her. Together, they figure out strategies for putting the pieces together. She may turn the pieces around, trying out different ways until she is successful. She is developing problem solving and persistence as she does so.

Your Role as Your Child Plays

Playing with your child helps keep your child engaged in the kind of play where learning occurs. Your interest, questions, and comments as you play alongside will help your child use toys productively. And the two of you will have lots of fun together! Most importantly, you will be working toward your child’s future success as a student by building important approaches to learning. Play and learning go together!

Taken from NAEYC.org for Families
Author: Gaye Gronlund, M.A., is an Early Childhood Education Consultant.

Infant / Toddler EML 161 Happenings by Stacey & Michele

Your Child’s Clothing and Supplies

Please make sure everything is labeled with your child’s name. This should include diapers, wipes, clothing, diaper ointment, hats, bottles, etc.

Traveling During Spring Break?

Spring break is just around the corner. Please let your teachers know if your child will or will not be attending that week. This will help us staff our room accordingly and provide accurate meal counts.

Happy Birthday to You
March 16th Leif turns 1!
March 27th Silas turns 1!
March 27th Stacey’s B-Day!

Featured Family: Huck
Check it out!
Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent conferences will begin the month of April. Stacey will be meeting with each family for conferences. A Pre-Conference Survey will be placed above your child’s cubby the end of March. Your feedback on this survey will be used to structure our conference based upon your priorities, questions you may have and will help with the development of learning goals for your child. I look forward to meeting with each of you!

10 Ways Babies Learn When We Sing to Them

By Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer

1. **Bonding** - When you sing to your baby, they bond with you and your voice. Singing makes yours the first and most important voice in her life. Your baby learns that you LOVE him!
2. **Transitions** – Babies feel safe when life is predictable. A song for waking up, sleeping, and other routine transitions and activities helps them know what comes next.
3. **Language** – Language is in itself musical, and when you sing and speak, your baby learns about words, language, and communication. Through your singing, baby’s language comprehension begins.
4. **New words** – While you sing and hold your baby, you introduce new vocabulary. When you hold up a stuffed dog as you sing about a dog, baby learns to associate the name of that toy with the words you sing. When you sing about parts of the body and kiss your baby’s feet or tickle his tummy, he learns new words.
5. **Rhythm and rhyme** – Music includes rhythm and rhyme, again, part of our language. In time, babies will recognize rhymes and rhythms.
6. **Play** – Singing is one of many methods of play and “sing-play” is a fun way to interact with babies.
7. **Family fun** – Singing is a great way to involve older siblings in welcoming a new baby to the home. Singing to and playing with the baby builds a bond between siblings. Make singing a family activity.
8. **Singing names** – A baby can learn his name by hearing it in songs. Try substituting your baby’s name for other words in songs so he hears his name sung over and over again.
9. **Listening skills** – Like reading, singing is an activity that requires listening. It's another opportunity for your baby to begin to understand language and feelings expressed through language and sing-play.
10. **LOVE** – All of the above boils down to using your singing voice as a way to express love. Babies don't care if you are a great singer. They only care that you are singing to THEM! In their eyes (and their ears), you'll be a star!

Homemade Sensory Bottles

This is a fun learning opportunity you can do at home with your child. All you need is empty pop or Gatorade bottles. For your child’s safety, make sure you super glue the top of the bottle once filled. We will be making sensory bottles this month for your child to take home! Items you can use to fill bottles can include:

- sugar and small objects
- oil and water
- rice and glitter
- pasta
- sand and small seashells
- ribbons
- small colored beads
- bells
The Ugly Duckling Theater Production

The NDSU Theater Department will be performing The Ugly Duckling on Tuesday, March 20 starting the performance around 10:00 AM in the toddler room. Eliza’s mom (Jess) is making this possible for the children! All parents are welcome to attend with their child.

MSUM Student Practicum Update

It was stated in the February Newsletter that we would have two practicum students from MSUM. We will have one student this semester, McCall, and she will work in our classroom Wednesday mornings. As part of her practicum experience McCall will plan and implement three developmentally appropriate activities and observe development of three children as part of a case study assignment.

Spring Break Attendance

The Center for Child Development is open Monday through Thursday of Spring Break week. If you have not already done so, please let Mary or Hayley know of any changes to your child’s regular attendance schedule so that we can staff our room accordingly and have accurate meal counts.

Outdoor Clothing

As March arrives we hope to be able to play outdoors more often. It has been many months since we started needing snow pants, gloves, coats, hats etc. Please take some time to check the fit of your child’s outdoor clothing to be sure that all winter ware still fit properly. It is not uncommon for the children to grow out of their coats, boots, snow pants by this time of the winter season.

Staying Healthy

It appears we are not through with the cold and flu season yet. Please support healthy practices at home by helping your child practice covering their cough and sneeze with their arm and hand washing for 20 seconds.

April Parent - Teacher Conferences

Please watch for a parent-teacher conferences sign-up sheet to be posted by March 22nd. We look forward to meeting with you and discussing your child’s growth and development.
Spring Break Attendance

Will your family be taking a mini vacation during the spring break? If so, please let us know if your child will be gone. This information helps us maximize staffing, develop our lesson plans and provides an accurate meal count to save dollars. Thanks!

Keeping All Healthy In and Outdoors

Our classroom has had some illness this winter and are working hard to keep everyone healthy! Thanks for your help by following the Center’s health policies, promptly picking up your child when ill and letting the teachers know when your child is ill by calling us. Please remember there are other symptoms of illness besides fever. If your child is not yet eating normal, not active at home or is generally seeking quiet play, your child is probably not well enough for the active play at our Center. When considering the needs of the whole group, your child may not get the individual “TLC” necessary to get better. If your child is not well enough to play outside, they are not well enough to return to the Center.

Outside Clothing to Keep Your Child Warm and Comfortable

Thank you for your partnership to keep your child warm and dry during outdoor play. We go outside every day when temperatures are 0°F or above. When the “melt” season begins, 2 pairs of waterproof mittens, a hat, snow pants and boots are especially important to have at school each 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 in the cubby and sometimes items are slightly wet the next day. If it would be possible to take home damp items for a quick dry or send a replacement, this would be appreciated. We will keep winter gear at the Center until our playground has dried up.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Robin and Monica are actively working on your child’s developmental goals and documenting the information in your Child’s Individual Portfolio. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for April and the parent sign-up sheet will be posted early March. A Pre-Conference Parent Survey will be placed above your child’s cubby early March. This survey helps us prioritize our conversations, answer your questions and learn about individual goals you would like to focus on for your child’s growth and development.

Responsibility Reviews Feedback

Thank you to everyone for providing feedback to Deb and Monica for annual responsibility reviews. Your feedback is valued and used in developing our professional goals for the upcoming year. We want to be the best teachers we can be and knowing what you value in your child’s education benefits all.

Upcoming Curriculum Opportunities

- **Wellness Curriculum – March 2nd** - We will have a group of nursing health promotions students enriching our curriculum on oral health, handwashing & germs and healthy eating practices.
- **Dr. Seuss’ Birthday - 2nd** - We will be celebrating Dr. Seuss February 26 – March and will have an extra celebration on March 2nd with dress silly day in honor of this favorite author.
- **Movin & Groovin continues** – The children are moving in new ways to promote physical development. This also benefits the Exercise Science students in learning how children develop.
- **Bowling Field Trip- 22nd** – The preschool room has reserved the Memorial Union Bowling lanes from 10:00-11:00 for the children to explore bowling. The cost for each child is $6.00. We ask for your child’s payment by Monday, March 19. Parents are encouraged and welcome to join their child (no cost for parents).