

# zero to three news



Campus Child Care  
division of student affairs

## DIRECTOR'S DESK

As summer is quickly fading I hope everyone has time to squeeze in some last minute fun before a new semester starts. It was great to see so many of you who took time out of your busy day to join us during our family gatherings. Attendance was great and it seemed like everyone enjoyed the 'ice cream' and outdoor activities (except for the school-agers who got rained out; but they made the best of things by setting up activities in the classroom and they also invaded the hallway)! The goal for most of our events is to get some great photos, so mission accomplished! We also hope you had the opportunity to have some fun with your child and meet some other families who attend CCC.

Our summer program is about to end and fall semester is just around the corner; that means we have another 'Interim' coming up. Remember you have to sign up for care during these times (between semesters). Also keep in mind that classrooms will be combined due to the lower number of children enrolled; and teachers will be scheduled out of the classroom at times to prepare for the fall semester, attend meetings, etc. Our entire staff will be meeting on Friday, August 14 to help us prepare for the upcoming year.

Our nine month teachers (Kellie, Diane M., Barbara, April) will be coming back as of August 10. There will also be some changes in the classroom staffing as we transition into a new year and from a summer program with 5 classrooms back to 8 classrooms for fall semester. The staffing will be as follows:

Infants: Sherie and Carol	Toddlers: Kellie and Dawn
2/3's-1: Kathy and Sarah	2/3's-2: Jen and Kristin
Pre 1: Diane C. and Kendra	Pre 2: Diane M. and Stefanie
Pre 3: Kristi and Dave	Pre 4: April and Barbara

Parents will receive a letter in early August stating which classroom your child is enrolled. Also, Jamie Peterson (current student worker and recent graduate of NIU) will be joining Kristin in 2/3-2 while Jen is on maternity leave.

Good-bye to those of you who are moving on; we will miss you! Enjoy the remainder of the summer and good luck with exams.

Chris Herrmann  
Director



*Dimitri and shaving cream - what a combination!*

## August 2009

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**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S DESK**

Hello families. We are winding down from a great summer. I will say that I have enjoyed the cooler weather at times, but still miss the hot days for the Water Wednesdays. It seems like the our Wednesdays were just not really hot!

As we start thinking about planning for the fall semester, there are a couple of things that will be different. Chris mentioned in her newsletter that families will receive letters letting them know exactly what classroom your child will be in for the fall. For the Toddlers, it is a non-issue. All of them will stay in the Toddler classroom except for the youngest one, Justin, who will move back with Carol to the infant room to remain with his appropriate age group. Children in the 2's classroom will either remain with Kathy and Sarah or move to the other 2's room with Jen and Kristin.

During these times of transition and everyone starting a new semester (starting a new school semester for parents can be difficult, too!), I encourage parents to find routines that work for your family and stick to them. Routines will help your growing toddlers and 2's feel secure and comfortable with their schedule and in their environment. Times during the day to think about having routines would be in the mornings—getting up at the same time each day and having a predictable “getting ready” routine; and bedtime is a great time to also have a routine. Make sure they have the time for winding down at night; maybe it's taking a bath, brushing teeth, and reading a book before sleeping.

Children this age crave routines and once they have mastered the routine, behaviors become automatic. Parents in the observation booth will see how the children transition from the lunch table, to throwing their lunch plates away, to the sink and wash up, to picking out a book and getting on their cots. How do the teachers get 12 children to do that?!? It's amazing really to watch it in motion; however, the routine is what is providing the framework for the child to know what is expected. The children do it every day and they feel confident and secure. The more the child feels comfortable in his/her routine, the less stressful transitions and daily interactions will be. Find those little routines in your days and let them work their magic for you!

Enjoy the rest of the summer and please feel free to see me with any questions or concerns.

Lisa Schmidt  
Assistant Director

**REMINDERS**

- The last day of summer semester is August 6. **Full day** child care is available during **Interim (Aug. 10—21)**. Enrollment is past due so talk with Janene ASAP if you need interim care.
- **The center will be closed on Fridays through Aug. 14.**
- Fall semester starts on Monday, August 24.
- Child care rates for the fall semester are posted on our Website ([www.ccc.niu.edu](http://www.ccc.niu.edu)). These rates become effective August 24.
- Remember to pay your child care bills in a timely manner. Anyone who misses a payment will receive a written notice. Missing additional payments could result in termination of child care and the inability to enroll for future semesters.
- We will be holding an Orientation for new families on **Thursday, August 20** from **9:00—11:30** and **2:00—4:00**. Currently enrolled families are welcome to bring your child(ren) for a visit during this time. We especially encourage you to attend if your child will be with different teachers in the fall.

**TODDLER ROOM**

What a delightful room of toddlers! We are having a fun summer with your little ones. It's a privilege to be with these busy people who are growing and learning so much! We are seeing huge strides in large motor growth in some of the toddlers and great expansion of language skills in others. Each day brings new changes in the life of our young ones.



The learning that occurs at this age often happens during daily routines. We also depend on developing relationships with the children where they learn they can trust us while you are not with them, that they can be safe and secure here. Toddlers are all about independence. Their self-confidence grows as they are able to sit on the toilet, wash their own hands, serve themselves at the table, clear their own place, hold onto a hand or a ring as we go for a walk, and as they freely explore their environment in the classroom and play yard. Teachers are there to give a hand, if needed, climbing up and down a climber; provide words, if needed, when a conflict occurs between two children; label colors, shapes, sizes, objects, and feelings that the children encounter in their play. We talk with the toddlers constantly, modeling language and behaviors that we want them to learn. Isn't that true that they'll learn them whether we WANT them to or not, so we might as well make sure that what we are modeling is what we DO want them to learn?!

July 9<sup>th</sup> was our family event. We had a beautiful day for granola bars, yogurt, and fresh fruit indoors and time on the play yard with our families afterwards. We had a ball pit, a bubble machine, music, and painting with colored water available. Thank-you to those families who were able to join us and participate! It's difficult to find a time for these activities that fits into everyone's schedule. There will be another family event in the fall and another in the spring. Hopefully you all will be able to make at least one. It's a great way to get to know the other parents, to see some interactions between the children, and to feel you know your child's teachers better. (We like to get to know you better too!)

It seems we haven't had enough water Wednesdays this summer! It's been too hot some days and too cold other days! The children all over the center enjoy the special activities that are put out on these days and love getting wet! Whether we have Water Wednesday or not, we are always providing your child with a variety of sensory activities such as water, sand, shaving cream, paint, and goop (a wonderful mixture of cornstarch and water that cannot be simply described as either wet or dry.) If these activities are inside the classroom, the children show us their enthusiasm by quickly grabbing a smock to get ready!

If you are reading our daily reflections posted on the bulletin board each day, you probably already know some of the other activities that interest your child through-out the day. The children choose the same books over and over again! They learn through repetition so this is expected and enjoyed. From Head to Toe by Eric Carle has been a favorite and many of the children participate in the actions of the animals pictured. They also love the same songs OVER AND OVER AGAIN. We sing "A Ram Sam Sam," "The Itsy Bitsy Spider," "The Wheels on the Bus," and "I Had a Little Turtle"

every day but we are trying to also introduce a few new songs to our repertoire of songs in which the toddlers can participate. Your children are also busy in the dramatic play area of the classroom. They wrap babies in blankets and cuddle them, talk on the cell phones, pour tea, eat pizza, carry bags over their arms and in many other ways imitate the ways of adults that they see every day.

Our summer semester is already coming to a close and we will have a few weeks of interim before fall semester. Kellie will return to Campus Child Center for interim. That will be a great time for her to re-new her attachments with the toddlers who were in the infant room last year and to get to know the new toddlers. Jamie will be moving up to the two year old room at that time to cover Jen's maternity leave. Dawn will continue with the toddlers into the fall. I will continue with the toddlers during interim but then Justin and I will move back into the infant room for the fall semester. We do our best to give your child (and family!) continuity of care, believing that that is how your child grows and learns best. I would like to say personally how much I have enjoyed working with each of the families in this classroom. I will miss interacting with your children every day but look forward to continued contact with them as they grow.

## Reminders:

- Please keep track of what is in your child's extra clothes box in the bathroom. Your child should have a complete change of clothing and perhaps a light sweater or sweatshirt.
- If you know that your child is going to be absent or much later than usual, we appreciate a phone call.



Enjoy the remainder of your summer!

Carol Schroeder  
Head Teacher

## TWO/THREE'S ROOM

"Nature is a mutable cloud which is always and never the same." -Ralph Waldo Emerson



One day at Group Time I read the book, Little Cloud by Eric Carle. The children were amazingly still. They pointed to the pictures and named the picture shapes the clouds formed. I thought it was interesting that this book in particular had captured their attention. Frank repeatedly asks to be read this book. Dimitri points to the clouds outside our window and says that he sees big and little clouds. This is something he learned about from the book. Amanda said that the white paint used during an art experience looked like a cloud. Nature has captured my interest since childhood. I am constantly observing weather, plants, insects, and animals. I even saw a cloud last weekend that looked like an airplane. So, I have been moved by the excitement the children have exhibited about clouds. This makes me feel that young children are in tune with nature and the world around them.

Simple nature based experiences have continued to make learning possible in our classroom and outside. As mentioned in the previous newsletter, sunflower seeds were planted inside our room. I'm happy to say that two seedlings have survived and have sprouted. The children are watering the plants and dipping their heads into the large pot to see the sunflower plant growth up close. Take a look at our bulletin board. Photos show the children involved in the sunflower growing cycle. One day, sticks were gathered and brought into the classroom. The children and teachers used these for counting and building three dimensional forms. O'mauri, Jayden, and Rose Mary enjoyed stacking and catching the sticks as they rolled off the table. Sarah recently moved our stick basket to the block area. This will encourage the children to incorporate the use of sticks as part of the natural habitat created for the plastic animals. Our children and their parents had the opportunity to use magnifying glasses to look at listed natural resources up close during our "Family Gathering." Holding the magnifying glass up against their eyes helped Katherine, Tad, Anthony, and Olivia get an insight about the texture of tree bark, the dirt on flower petals, and lines formed in a blade of grass.

We will continue to offer nature based learning opportunities. We hope to take a tree search walk in the near future. Our goal is to help the children learn about the likeness and differences in trees. A Crab Apple, Ponderosa Pine, Tulip Tree, and Oak will be explored using photos and branches cut from the tree after our walk. The children will have the opportunity to use these materials during play time as a basis for sensory exploration and further discussion.

What would summer be without "Water Wednesday"?

Well, just let me say it would be too quiet! There is nothing like hearing the joy of children screeching in delight as cold water falls over their heads while running through a sprinkler. How else can children experience shivers and smiles? Olivia, Rose Mary, and O'mauri formed a perfect letter "O" with their mouths when they landed in the pool at the bottom of the slide. Dimitri and Jayden explored the use of water toys in the pool. Each one was handled and used for assorted purposes such as scooping, pouring, and sprinkling. Katherine, Frank, and Amanda sat for 10 minutes under a sprinkler giggling. Their joyful sounds made me giggle too. Jayden and Anthony were so broken hearted when it was time to come in. They cried at having to take off their cold, wet swimsuit. So, obviously this time is well spent and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

"I made it myself!"

Simple cooking activities are being planned. Sarah will be making a fruit kabob with each child. These will be colorful and tasty. I plan on using a picture/rebus cooking chart to help the children make a fresh veggie salad. We will also introduce books, flannel stories, and play items focusing on food. Good nutrition will be discussed. Especially the importance of eating fruits and vegetables. More cooking experiences are being planned. Some recipes will explore foods that are common in other countries and ours as well. We hope to help our children learn to eat a greater variety of nutritious foods, use their senses to explore food, and eventually learn about basic sources of food.



## Thank You

- Thank you so much for taking the time to come and participate in our "Family Gathering". The frozen yogurt and toppings seemed to be a big hit. Sarah and I enjoyed having the time to get to know our parents and grandparents a little better. We hope to see all of you at our Fall and Spring events.
- Kari Kalas is our wonderful Student Worker this summer. She is the Teacher's Aide that Sarah, the children, and I have come to depend on in so many ways. We have all grown very fond of her and are lucky to have her in our classroom. Kari will be working at our center this fall.

## Reminders

- Please bring cardboard paper towel tubes to school. We will use these for 3-D art.
- Please make sure to sign your name at drop-off and pick-up each day. We use the attendance sheet as a basis for accounting for our children.
- If you have not brought in 3-5 family photos, please do so. These do not have to be "glamour shots". We put them on a piece of paper and laminate it. These are posted on our closet doors. The children all enjoy sharing the names of their families with their peers and teachers. It is a nice way to bring the ties from home to school.
- Keep checking our little notes on the attendance sheets. We appreciate your willingness to bring in the extra clothes and do the other small things we ask.

Kathy Coffman  
Head Teacher

## Water Wednesday!

