DIRECTOR’S DESK

Once again we are approaching the end of a semester, and more importantly, the end of another year! We hope it has been a good year for each of you, both at NIU and CCC. Our intent is to nurture your children as they learn and grow, and also support you in your ongoing efforts to balance a busy life of college studies, work, and raising children!

Thanks to those of you who took the time to get involved in our Week of the Young Child activities. It certainly was a busy week! And, thanks to Diane, Kristin, Barbara, Kendra and Carol for all of their hard work on the activities surrounding this week. Some parents brought in food for the staff, painted a picture with your child, shared a special talent, wrote a thank you note, or joined the classroom for a snack time. Some photos of these events are included on the last page of the newsletter. Thanks again for a great celebratory week!

The summer semester is soon approaching and we are starting to prepare. We will have 3 classrooms open this summer: the Toddler Room (for current infants and toddlers) with Sherie, Carol and Pam as teachers. Preschool 1 (for all 2/3-1, Pre 1 and Pre 2 children) with Katilyn, Klint, and Jaquida as teachers. Preschool 2 (for all Pre 2/3-2 and Pre 4 children) with Kristi, Christy, and Kendra as teachers. And, current toddlers will be charged the lower 2/3’s rate.

As of fall semester, the current toddlers will be placed into a 2/3’s classroom and the current infants (who turn one by Sept. 1) will move to the toddler room. Younger infants will go back to the infant room. Also, all of the children who are currently in a 2/3’s classroom will be divided into three preschool rooms. We will make every effort to keep small groups of children together as they move into new classrooms. We take into consideration current relationships among children, as well as teachers and children.

This is the time of year I often dread because we lose some staff members. First, congratulations to Krystal Kennedy (Pre 4) for completing her master’s degree in early childhood education. She has been with us since 2008, first as a student worker and then as a professional staff member, and, unfortunately, will be leaving our program as of May 8. Krystal has already moved to Chicago and will be seeking a job closer to home (which is understandable)! So, please join us in wishing Krystal and her fiancé, Adam, the best. We sincerely thank her for being such a steadfast team member at Campus Child Care. She has grown into an amazing teacher, and we hate to see her go. I know the children will really miss her, as will all of her colleagues. I will truly miss her quiet nature, cooperative attitude, and wicked sense of humor!

This is also the time of year when we make some changes to our staffing (at the beginning of Summer and Fall semesters). Letters will go out in early June
(and early August) indicating your child’s classroom and teachers for the upcoming semesters. Several of our teachers will be off for the summer and returning for fall; they include Kellie, Barbara, Diane M., April, and Jen.

Since we are nearing the end of the semester the teachers will be starting to close down their classrooms. The janitors will then be able to get into each room during Interim to do a thorough cleaning to prepare for the upcoming semester. So, you will notice things coming down from the walls and items removed from the classroom. We hate to do this but with so many teachers that are off during the summer, it’s really the only time they have together to get it done. We appreciate your understanding!

We wish all of you good luck with finals and congratulations to those who are graduating; what a huge accomplishment! For some, we will continue to see you, and for others we won’t see you until next fall, so have a great summer. For parents of preschoolers heading off to kindergarten, we have an early reader book we will send him/her off with. Know that we will miss you so please keep in touch and feel free to visit at any time. We love to see how our graduates have grown.

Chris Kipp

PRESCHOOL ROOM 1

Thank you to all the families who participated in the Week of the Young Child. It was a very fun and enjoyable week. The children enjoyed watching all of the parent performances and especially Tim’s (Daniel’s dad) performance; he sang a song and also juggled for us. We also had a basketball tournament between the preschool classrooms. We had 5 children playing basketball and the rest made egg shakers and cheered on our classroom. I hope you enjoyed the backpacks that your children decorated and all the fun activities inside.

We had a really great time going to the Wellness Fair at the Holmes Student Center! We stopped at many of the booths and learned about ways to keep our bodies healthy. We stopped at a booth where they talked to us about healthy food choices. The children received a placemat with the different foods that

REMINDERS

- The last day of spring semester is May 8. Full-day care is available during Interim (May 11—June 12); applications are now past due. Anyone who requests care after this date will be charged the ‘extra care’ fee; an additional 10%.
- Summer and fall applications are past due. See Janene if you have not re-enrolled yet. To see if space is still available.
- Campus Child Care will be closed on 2 Fridays for staff training—August 14 & 21.
- Child care bills must be paid in full by the end of each semester. Families with an outstanding balance will not be able to enroll for future semesters.
- If you are enrolling for summer semester, please remember that children must be enrolled for the entire semester and not just part of it. If you leave early, our withdrawal policy will apply.
- Child care rates for the fall semester will be posted to the CCC web site by the end of May.
we should eat daily. We also saw the NIU Police Officers and they let all of the children hit and kick the punching bag. There was also someone very special there – it was NIU President, Doug Baker! He stopped to shake the children’s hands and talk to them. When we were leaving the Student Center there was music playing in the MLK Commons, so we stopped and showed the NIU students our moves!

This month we have been really working on the children’s mathematical skills. We have been working on various counting activities and also matching different objects to a certain number. We also measured how tall each of the children are in the classroom. The children really enjoyed seeing how tall they are and seeing who is taller and shorter than them.

We also want to give a big shout out to Toni, the 4-C social worker, for coming in and doing social emotional group times with us. She came in every Tuesday for the whole month of April. Each week we read a story about feelings and how different characters in the book deal with their feelings. We also talked about different situations that the children may encounter in the classroom and how they could handle them in a positive way. One of the children’s favorite things that Toni brought in was the Super Silly Tango song. The children loved to sing and dance to this song!

We are going to miss all of our friends that are going to kindergarten in the fall. We hope you have a great time in kindergarten and we wish you nothing but the best!

Katilyn Ostenson and Jen Young

PRESCHOOL ROOM 2

Another preschool year has come to an end. We say goodbye and best wishes to our Kindergarten bound friends – William, Yazeed, Randal, KC and Harmony. We also wish Addison and her family well as they move to another state and start the next chapter in their lives. We will miss each one of you. We hope you come back for a visit! My last day for this year will be May 8th. Jaquida will be here for interim and summer semester. I will see everyone in August!

Looking back over this year, we have really focused on social skills. We believe teaching children how to put their feelings into words, recognizing emotional cues from peers, and showing kindness toward one another makes for a happier life for everyone. It really seemed to make an impact when the children had visual motivation. The helping hands, hearts, and bucket on the bulletin board really helped the children see their progress and made them feel good about their accomplishments in this developmental area. This may be something to use at home if this is an area families would like to encourage.
As many of you know by the spillage out of cubbies and the bulkiness of art folders, art and 3-D art have been extremely popular. Thank you to those who helped with supplies!

This class of children has been close to my heart – they have a strong love for music and movement. They love to sing, dance, and have fun with a variety of props during music time. They will ask for music throughout the day on their own. Some enjoy listening while others love to get totally involved! Music is a great way to increase language, social, math, cognitive, and gross motor skills. It also allows the children a chance to be creative with sound, rhythm, beats, words and body movement. It’s a great way to relax and to relieve stress, anxiety and extra energy! Keep music a part of your everyday life!

Throughout the year we had visits from NIU nursing students. They have planned activities for the children that encourage a healthy lifestyle. They also take blood pressures and use stethoscopes. They allow the children to listen to their heartbeat. This helps children to become familiar with these types of tools so it won’t be as scary if they need to visit the doctor. They have also helped with encouraging the children to eat healthy, rest, get exercise and brush teeth. We had the children draw and dictate what they think is inside their bodies. They were pretty creative! A student also came in recently and gave the children a lesson on water safety, which is a great idea with summer just around the corner and visits to pools and lakes. Our motto for Pre 2 has been “safety first”.

In the remaining few weeks we plan to discuss stranger danger, quantifying, and more science experiments.

We want to give a huge thank you to all families who met with us for conferences and for those who supported us during the “Week of the Young Child”. The performances and teacher treats were fabulous! We also want to thank Destiny (Randal’s mom) and Lisa (Sawyer’s mom) who help in our room daily; even though they don’t receive a paycheck! We enjoy having you with us! Thank you to Jason Hackney for spending the day with us. Thank you to Holly (KC’s mom) and Sharon (Will’s mom) for coming to read to us; the children love it when you can visit! And thank you to Stacy (Brody’s mom) for allowing us to visit your office and showing us the 3-D machine, as well as introducing us to the helping dog! We had a great time! We also want to thank the field house staff for always allowing us to use the space on cold days. It is a special treat to be able to run in such a huge open space! We hope you have a great summer!

April Kaiser & Jaquida Wynn
We had such a busy month in Pre 4! Thank you to everyone who joined us for Family Night! I hope you are enjoying your “Quality Time” buckets. We had a great time with guests this month. Detective Mojica and Officer Smith, from the NIU police department, taught us about gun safety, police equipment, and told us they are here to help and protect us. They answered the children’s questions and let us sit inside a police vehicle and push the siren buttons. The children signed their name on thank you cards for each of them and were super excited to see them again when we delivered them. We attended the Wellness Fair where we saw the NIU police department demonstrate self-defense moves. Another special guest was Sadie’s brother, Jaxon. He taught us about stretching and exercise and how important it is. He had the children doing exercises as he showed them how to do them. They did this on their own with each other for a few days after his visit.

We roasted veggies after children were talking about what they had for dinner the night before. We tried beets, broccoli, peppers, carrots, and cauliflower. We also made fresh juice from a masticating juicer. We had a green juice with kale, pineapple, pear, lemon, green apple, and cucumber and an orange juice with mango, red apple, orange, and carrot.

During Week of the Young Child, we were excited to see Lily Salvani and her dad, Jon, perform a Filipino dance during the Talent Show. We saw a variety of talents and will continue to talk about things we do well along with things we need help with. We will discuss ways to be there for each other and who to go to for help in certain situations.

We also had a CCC basketball tournament. Each preschool classroom had jerseys with their classroom name on them. We used two hoops on the north playground area. Pre 4 was victorious! We did some team building exercises and put our hands in the middle for a Pre 4 cheer! We had a few family members join us for the family snack during WOYC. When some family members could not be present at that specific time, we had a few children who became upset. We reassured the children that they could invite their families to come to one of our mealtimes when it was convenient for them! We brought over the family photos that are on display so the children could feel their loved ones presence while they ate snack. Please let us know if you can join us for a mealtime or if you would like to participate in a classroom activity. We would love to have you in our classroom.

Thank you for your participation in Spirit Week and all the other activities during Week of the Young Child! We hope you finish the semester strong! Thank you for a great year!

Kristi Hayward & Krystal Kennedy
What do Children Learn in a High Quality Early Childhood Education Program?

**Approaches to Learning:** how children become curious about learning new things. It is also how children think about what they have learned.

**Environmental Print:** the words that are all around us, such as store signs, a menu board, or a poster with the daily schedule.

**Print Awareness:** when children understand how print works. For example, after listening to lots of stories, children notice that letters make words, words make a story, and reading goes from left to right in English.

**Cognitive Development:** how children learn to think, make decisions, and solve problems.

**Physical and motor development:** how children use their bodies to make large movements with their legs and arms (gross motor) and small movements with their fingers and hands (fine motor). Children learn with their legs and arms when they run, climb, or ride a tricycle. They learn with their fingers and hands when they cut with scissors, use a pencil, or put together a puzzle.

**Constructive Play:** when children use blocks or Legos to make buildings or towers.

**Exploratory Play:** when children discover how materials work. For example, when playing with water or sand children explore how to fill and empty buckets.

**Dramatic Play:** when children pretend to be someone else, such as a firefighter or doctor, and they make up scenes and dialogue.

**Developmentally Appropriate Practice:** teaching strategies that are based on knowledge of how young children develop and learn, what makes each child unique, and the child’s community and family culture and home language. DAP activities are not too difficult or too easy, but just right. For example, in most cases it is developmentally appropriate to introduce a 4-year-old to the letters in his name, with the expectation that over time he will learn to write his name on his own. It is not developmentally appropriate to ask 4-year-olds to write letters over and over again on worksheets.

**Social and Emotional Development:** how children learn about feelings. It helps them feel good about themselves and understand the feelings of other people.

**Self-regulation:** how children learn to control their feelings and their bodies. For example, if a child wants to play with a toy her friend is using, she asks for a turn rather than grabbing it.

**Scaffolding:** when an adult helps children learn more and faster than they would on their own. For example, when an adult holds a child’s hand as he goes up the slide ladder, the adult is scaffolding his learning to climb.
Parents and student staff shared their special talent with us.

Families joined classrooms for a snack time.

Week of the Young Child
Special Events

Family members painted a picture together.

Guest Readers from the NIU community came in to read to the children.

Parents and student staff shared their special talent with us.