

zero to three news



Campus Child Care
division of student affairs

DIRECTOR'S DESK

We had such a busy beginning to the semester that October seems to have slipped by. Both the Open House and Book Fair were a big success so thanks to any of you who assisted with either of those events.

Janene has been adding more resources to our Web site (www.ccc.niu.edu). So far she has added the fall semester calendar, along with some commonly used forms (extra care and schedule changes). These are all posted on our web site under Parent Resources. Two of our teachers have written articles for parents as well; one is by Kristi Hayward on Toilet Learning, and the other is by Kendra Nenia on the Art Process. Look for more items to be added in the future. Janene also changed the re-enrollment application form so you don't have to fill out nearly as much information — primarily your desired schedule (yeah)!! She will provide you with a copy of the other info we have on file for you (phone numbers, etc.) so you can make changes as needed.

I want to highlight a few more additions to our Parent Handbook for this year. I added a section on 'Safety Practices'. We have been practicing a variety of emergency drills for years but we keep adding to them and working on improvements. As all of you are aware, the center was in lock down status for a few hours on Feb. 14th. After talking with the Chief of Police, we are setting the practice that lock down means parents may call the center (you may get a recorded message) but you should not come over to the center and expect to get in. It also means that anyone who is inside the building will have to stay until the police determine it's 'all clear'/safe to leave; the same practice will be in place during tornado warnings. One way that both parents and students who work here can assist with safety is to refrain from sending individuals to the building to drop off items, deliver messages, or meet you here. Also, keep the number of people who come to pick up and drop off your child to a minimum. It helps us to not have to deal with a large number of people with whom we are unfamiliar. We continue to work on our safety planning and attend as many meetings and workshops on this topic as possible. I also wanted to let you know that the NIU Police have been stopping in at various times so don't be alarmed if you see them; they are just here to help, if needed. They are just checking on things, as they are throughout the campus, on a more regular basis; we are happy to have their support and presence.

An extremely important policy that parents need to pay close attention to is that your child needs to stay with you while you are in the building; they cannot run to their classroom ahead of you, be left alone in any part of the center, or exit the building without you. This is a strict DCFS policy, and also an important safety practice, that parents must obey.



Sienna making her way to Amanda

November 2008

In this Issue:

Infant Room

Parent Conference Reminder
Birthday Reminder
Social Growth

Toddler Room

Take Home Bags
Interacting with Nature

Two / Threes—1 Room

Dramatic Play Highlights
Nature Walks
Block Building

Two / Threes—2 Room

Classroom Highlights: Dramatic Play, Science, Food and Cooking, and Art

Other

CCC Trivia Questions
Commuter & Non-Traditional Student Services
Calendar of Events
Developmental Screening for Birth to 3-year-olds
CCC T-shirts



Another policy, in which everyone should be aware, is that CCC is required to provide all food to children throughout the day and parents are not permitted to bring in any food for other children to eat. Every year we have a few children who have a peanut allergy so we would also like to ask for parents and children to refrain from bringing any food into the center. So, children and adults should not be eating any type of food in the hallway or front area because bits of food could be dropped, and someone may be unaware if it has some form of peanut content.

We do not have access to monthly payment reports for students at this time (due to the switch over to MyNIU), but please be aware that we will be checking with the Bursar's office at the end of this semester. Anyone who has a balance due will not receive a contract for spring semester. They expect to get the reports going again, we just don't know exactly when that will be.

We have a **new set** of trivia questions to 'test' your knowledge of Campus Child Care. Anyone who submits the highest number of correct answers will be placed in a drawing to win a Campus Child Care coffee mug. Congratulations to Amy Waddle (Levi's mom) for winning our first mug with 6 correct answers (it's harder than it looks)!

Here are some of the answers to last month's trivia questions. Diane Coleman, Janene Boyer and I have all worked here for 19 years BUT Diane and I also worked at CCC as students; and Diane beat me by one month! The center was originally located in Gabel Hall, with one classroom, and we moved into our new facility in 2000; our first set of parent pockets was actually a Legg's pantyhose display case (check out the photos if you don't believe me); and, we had a lofted book area, fire pole (to get down, of course) AND an indoor sandbox in the original center; so that question was a freebie! Best of luck on the next round!

Chris Herrmann, Director

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S DESK

Hello families! With the fall semester being about half over, the teachers in your child's classroom are gearing up for a very busy time. Parent conferences are soon going to be offered in your child's classroom. The teachers spend a great deal of time working on each child's portfolio and Child Development Summary. Since there are new families to the center, as well as new preschoolers from the 2/3s classrooms, I would like to spend just a moment to talk about the Child Development summary. The summary is a developmental assessment tool used to document what skills a child is in the process of working on and what skills s/he is proficient at concerning all areas of

REMINDERS

- Although classes are not scheduled on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, CCC will be open for business as usual. This means everyone will be billed their regular daily fee even if your child does not attend. The Center will be closed on Nov. 27 & 28.
- Interim requests have been sent out. You must return this form by the due date if you need full-day child care any time during the Dec/Jan break.
- All children who are well enough to be in attendance at the center will be taken outdoors on a daily basis. As the weather turns colder, please dress your child appropriately for outdoor play and walks.
- The teachers will be holding parent conferences from early November through early December. Dates and times will be posted by your child's sign-in sheet. **All** parents are expected to sign up for a conference.
- Remember to pay bills by the specified due dates. A reminder is sent out after one missed payment and child care is terminated after two missed payments.
- Please remember to check your parent pockets daily; they fill up quickly!

development. The same assessment form is used for both semesters (fall and spring); as this is a good record for growth and progress that you will see. After reviewing the Child Development summary, you and your child's teacher will have the opportunity to discuss goals for improvement and growth for the upcoming semester. The teachers will often document goals based on their developmental assessments of each child and parents are welcome to add to these goals.

I would like to thank all the parent volunteers who helped to make our book fair a success again this year. Our book fair is our only fund raiser for the center and we appreciate support through volunteering and/or purchasing of books. Our center roughly earned about \$1000 in cash and free books. On top of this, we also had a large amount of books purchased by parents from the teacher's Wish List cards. Thanks so much for all your generous contributions.

I would like to take this time to welcome a new student volunteer in our toddler classroom, Sara Dunlop. She is a student at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. She will be spending time each week in the toddler room through the month of November. Most of her time will be on Fridays and a few Mondays. Sara's primary goals for spending her time here will be simply to gain the experience working with the children and to work on conducting an assessment called the Infant and Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS). We are happy to have Sara and that she chose Campus Child Care to volunteer her time at.

With the upcoming colder weather, we are finding that our supply of CCC extra winter wear is really limited in our infant room. If you have a child who has outgrown their infant mittens, hats, coats, etc.; we would be happy to accept them as donation to our own stock of extra winter wear.

Good luck with the rest of your semester.

Lisa Schmidt, Assistant Director



Calendar of Events

Nov. 3 - Dec. 5 — **Parent Conferences**; check with your child's teachers for specific dates

Nov. 11, 12, 13 — **Vision and Hearing screening** at the center for all 2.10 to 5 year olds

Nov. 17 — **Spring Semester Applications** are due

Nov. 24 & 25 — **Vision and Hearing re-screen** for those who were absent or failed the first test

Nov. 27 & 28 — **CLOSED** for Thanksgiving Holiday

Dec. 5 — Spring Semester **Contracts are due**

Dec. 8-12 — **Finals Week** — Fees are charged as usual, regardless of attendance; extra care may be requested, but switching days is not permitted

Dec. 15-23 & Jan. 5-9 — **Interim** (for those who have requested care; only full-day care is available)

INFANT ROOM

It is time to think about parent/teacher conferences. This semester Carol and I will be scheduling the conferences for our primary children during the week of November 10 - 14. Each of us has a sign up sheet posted next to the sign in/out book. We encourage you to meet with us for 30 - 45 minutes to talk about your child's development. At this time Carol or I will share your child's child development summary along with his or her portfolio. Please talk to us if the times we have set aside do not work into your schedule so we can work out a time to meet with you. Once you choose a time you will receive a pre-conference form. The form serves as a reminder for the conference on the top half and the bottom half of the form is for you to complete and return to us by the date indicated. It helps us prepare for your conference by knowing some questions you may have ahead of time. We look forward to meeting with you soon. We spend a lot of time preparing for conferences so please keep your scheduled appointment.



We will begin having some of the children in our classroom celebrating 1st Birthdays. We do celebrate birthdays in the classrooms here at the center. Each classroom chooses ways to celebrate the day. In our classroom we have a special birthday plate the birthday child eats off of for snack and lunch, they wear a sticker, we sing "Happy Birthday" and we send home a birthday card. If you do not want your child to participate in the classroom birthday celebration please be sure to talk to Carol or I before your child's birthday.

The children have become more social through the semester. We are noticing them being more comfortable with each other and adults both in the classroom and outside. When we take walks outside the children smile and wave at people who walk past us. In the classroom the children play near one another more frequently. They will explore the same toys, babble with one another and follow each other around the classroom. The children are also touching one another. Sometimes they are not so gentle with one another because this is something they have never experienced before. They may scratch, pull hair or hit. We guide them by telling and showing them gentle touches. We put our hand over their hand and show them how to feel hair and skin without hurting their friend. While we are showing them gentle we also say "soft or gentle" touches. This is normal development and will take many experiences of modeling and redirecting for children to learn to be gentle.

We are still requesting family photos to display in the classroom. Each child will have an 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of paper with photos displayed at their level in the classroom. Please remember to write the names of the family members in each photo so we can refer to them by name. If you do not have pictures we can keep we can make color copies of them and return them to you. Another option is emailing them to Janene at jboyer@niu.edu and then we can print them. Please give us photos soon so each child can have his or her family displayed.

Reminders:

- Please have extra clothing here at the center for your child. We change the children throughout the day because they get messy from spit up, leaky diapers, eating or art activities. You may check your child's extra box at any time to be sure he or she has enough clothing here.

- If you bring breast milk or formula from home please make sure your child has an adequate supply here at the center. If your child runs out we will have to give your child our formula.

Kellie Fuss
Head Teacher

TODDLER ROOM

It's hard to believe that November is here already! We're really enjoying this fall weather and hope that winter holds off for awhile. We would like to thank you for visiting and supporting the book fair. We had many books donated to our classroom and the center and the children have really enjoyed reading them! This first week of November is our parent teacher conferences. We look forward to meeting with you all and sharing information about your child and their development.

We have a variety of take home bags that are available to be checked out. They're located at the end of the children's cubbies. Inside the bags you'll find different activities that you can do with your child. We have ones with music, books, art materials, and more! In the bags are activities similar to what we're doing at school, things that your child is interested in. Please check them out for up to a week at a time. Enjoy!

Research shows that today's child spends more time indoors and less time interacting with nature than at any other time in history! Children who regularly spend unstructured time outside play more creatively, have lower stress levels, have more active imaginations, become fitter and leaner, develop stronger immune systems, experience fewer symptoms of ADD and ADHD, and show greater respect for themselves, others, and the environment. You may be thinking that your child is just a toddler and does it really matter how much time they spend outside? Yes! It's never too early to foster a love for the outdoors and a toddler's natural curiosity makes it easy. Take advantage of a toddler's curiosity and help them investigate and learn from nature. For more information about the nature deficit today's children face you can find more information in Richard Louv's book, [Last Child in the Woods](#). In our classroom we have been trying to provide more experiences with nature. You may have seen pictures on our daily reflections from our recent walks. One morning we took a walk and stopped to gather sticks. The children were all actively looking on the ground taking in the natural surroundings. We found all different sizes of sticks. We talked about how there were sticks in the trees and how some fell on the ground. Some were big and some were smaller. We talked about how we could hold the sticks and how we could use them to explore the mud. We talked about how it's important to walk when we're holding sticks and watch out for our friends. We brought the sticks inside that we had gathered and used them as painting tools! On another day we took a nature walk and gathered pine cones, pine needles, more sticks, and different colored leaves! We talked about the leaves on the trees changing color, there were some trees with green leaves and others had changed to red, yellow, and orange. We gathered everything in a bag and took it inside. There we emptied it into our media table and were surprised to find that we had also gathered a daddy long leg spider and a tiny baby ladybug! The children were fascinated by this and a few stayed at the media table for 30 minutes – exploring our treasure and watching the spider! That's a very long time to hold a toddler's attention. (Even on days that we play in the water or shaving cream at the table 15 minutes is usually the maximum time that we've held their interest.) We also gave them big plastic magnifying glasses to take



a closer look. I think it says something that these natural materials were so much more fascinating to them than any of the toys we have in the classroom. I also brought in different sized gourds for the children to explore. The big one the children have learned about weight by trying to pick up – “heavy!” you will hear them say. They also have tried to ride on it and push it over. The smaller ones we put in dramatic play and they have added them to the meals they pretend to serve. The different colors and textures provide a unique sensory experience! We will continue to search for ways to bring nature into our room and to make our outdoor time meaningful.

Reminders:

- Please make sure that your child has appropriate outdoor clothing here. Some days start off cold and get warmer, and others may do the opposite. It's a good idea to have both a lighter and heavier jacket here just in case. It's not too early to bring in a hat and mittens as well and they can be left in your child's cubby. Please label everything!

- Please make sure to check the extra clothing box by the sign in sheet. That's where we put clothes that we're unsure of who they belong to. You can help us out by labeling everything your child comes to school in. Often after lunch we are changing the clothes of up to eleven children at a time and then washing them! When we have different student workers throughout the day and different ones in the morning it's easy for your child's clothes to get mixed up. Also many of the children have the same clothes in the same size.

Thanks for attending conferences! Let us know if you have any questions or concerns, and enjoy November!

Jen Young
Head Teacher

TWO/THREE'S—ONE ROOM

Hello again! We seem to be moving at a fast pace through the semester. Our young children keep us busy with their curiosity, energy, and need to socialize.

We are still setting out a variety of creative art experiences. Thus far shaving cream, arranging leaves on paper, and blowing paint bubbles have been the most popular.

Dramatic play has helped fit the need for our children to socialize; further develop problem solving skills, and add meaning to real life experiences. First, this area revolved around “babies”. Our group is certainly one of nurturers. They fed pretend baby food and bottles to their dolls, dressed and wrapped them in blankets, played with rattles and read to their own “babies.” The dolls were carried all over the room to share in other play experiences. This has been so enjoyable, that we are continuing to have the dolls available in our Group Time area.



Later, Stefanie had set up a "Veterinarian Clinic". Once again important skills have been fostered. The children were eager to feed, immunize, give first aid, and cuddle the assorted stuffed animals. They looked very professional when wearing the veterinarian jackets.



We were able to go on our "Nature Walk". Hooray! The children, Student Workers, and I had a very pleasant outing. We made tape bracelets to fit on the outside of each child's jacket. Frequent stops were a must at different places around campus. We searched and found these small items of nature; dandelions, assorted color and shape leaves, pebbles, mulch, berries, acorns, petunias, grass, and seeds. The children carefully attached these natural finds to their bracelets. At one stop we watched a squirrel gather acorns and bury them. It was amazing to see and hear excitement expressed about the small wonders that make our world so interesting and beautiful.

Our group tends to gravitate to the Block area at some time during the day. We are quite surprised to see so much building going on at this early age. Stefanie and I will be putting out a variety of materials to enhance creative play. You may look in this area and eventually find more block shapes and sizes, multicultural human figures, different types of transportation, and assorted nesting and stacking cups. There is an incredible amount of learning that comes from freely building. Problems solving with respect to weight, balance, and size is especially encouraged through trial and error. Social skills such as verbal give and take and sharing are required to complete a task. Creative art is expressed in three dimensional forms. As the holiday season approaches, I suggest adding a set of basic wooden blocks to your gift giving list.

Dana Gautcher (Carys' Mom) donated pages for the children to make a poster about themselves. We want to invite each child's parent to come in and help them complete this project in our classroom. A sign-up sheet will be available by our daily sign-in and out sheet. If there is not a convenient time for you to come, talk to Stefanie or me to set a time up.

Reminders

- Please dress and send appropriate outside clothing for late autumn weather. Layering clothing can be a weather wise way to dress. For instance, your child may be more comfortable in a short-sleeve t-shirt. Just let us know, and put a sweatshirt and a light jacket in the cubby for use as needed. You may also want to include light gloves and a hat.
- Please make sure you have appropriate clothing available in your child's extra clothing box. Children like to wear their own clothes. They can become really upset when we try to put "borrowed" clothes on them.
- Please be sure to take your child's art work home on a daily basis. It is necessary for the children to share cubby space. It is hard to fit everything in when a cubby is overflowing with art papers.
- We sometimes go on walks or rearrange our schedule for special activities. It is really helpful when parents call to tell us if their child will be late or absent for the day!
- Our Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled toward the end of this semester. Watch for a notice and sign-up sheet posted by our daily sign-in and out sheet. Stefanie and I work hard all year long to take photos and document our children having fun, interacting with peers, creating, and learning. It is really enjoyable for parents to be able to get more details about their child's school experience. You do not want to miss this!

Thank You

- Kristin Schulz (Graeme's Mom) donated money for us to purchase pumpkins for each child. They enjoyed a variety of activities based on the use of pumpkins!
- Our parents have been really great about bringing in diapers, wipes, and extra clothing when we have requested.

Kathy Cregier
Head Teacher

TWO/THREE'S—TWO ROOM

Happy November to all! The semester is still as busy as ever and the children keep growing and changing every week! I always amazes me the transformation the children go through in the two/three's room. The room has been changing too. In the dramatic play area the children enjoyed the laundry room, complete with an ironing board and irons. When the laundry was finally all clean we had the farm animals, tractors and barns out for them to explore. I brought in



a real chicken which was a big hit for all the classrooms to see. Aiden wanted to take the chicken home with him!! We made a classroom book about Kaylee on her Grandmother's farm. I love making personal classroom books. For a science project that tied in with the Farm we scrambled eggs to eat and then made glue mobiles with the shells. Barbara had the fantastic idea to bring in the Bakery for the dramatic play area. She and the children made white playdough to use for the cookie dough and added trays, cookie cutters and aprons for the children to wear. The children's creativity and exploration is so endless. We made real cookies with the children too. If you ever want to do a fun project (i.e. cooking, art, science, etc.) let us know- the children love to experience new things with people other than their teachers.

Another fun fall activity we did one week was talk about apples. We tasted a variety of apples and made a chart to show which ones the children enjoyed. We counted the seeds we found inside the core of the apple and made applesauce. The children participate in a new finger play called "Two Red Apples." We will be bringing in pumpkins and gourds for the children to paint and explore. One of my favorite things to do with the children is gathering pumpkin seeds from a pumpkin and roasting them. The children are always apprehensive to put their hand inside to pull the seeds out. But once a friend shows how much fun it is –others are willing to try.

The few art activities have been especially thought provoking for some of the children. We talked about making tracks- so we had the animal print stamps out with different colored ink pads. We talked about which animal would make that track. We also painted with trucks and the tracks the tire left behind with the paint. We are very fortunate to have a wonderful supply of art materials and one of those things is diffusing paper. I wanted the children have a hands on experience with color blending and how two separate colors can make a new color. The children loved this activity. They used yellow, blue and red markers on the diffusing paper and then took a spray bottle to wet the paper. When the paper dried the new colors were exposed. It was awesome to see them absorb the information. Come to think of it, the reason they probably liked the activity so much was because they got to use the spray bottle!! We also had colored foam paints for the children to mix together .

The foam painting is a wonderful sensory activity that the children love to do. In the afternoons we will often get the shaving cream out for them to have fun with.

We have a few new classroom books in the room. The children have really enjoyed the Feelings book. They love to see their pictures in the books. The other classroom book we have been enjoying is our book about a favorite thing to do at home at the end of the day.

Barbara and I would like to "Thank" everyone who helped with the Book Fair and buying books for our classroom. We have enjoyed the books over and over again!!

Our conferences will be November 17- 21. If you have not scheduled a time with your child's primary –please find a time that is convenient for you. Barbara and I have been working hard on your child's portfolio and Child Development Summary. We will be sending out a pre-conference form, so write down any questions you may have for us and we will try to answer them at the conference.

Reminders

- Please remember to sign IN and OUT
- Check your child's extra clothes box to switch out summer clothes for Fall clothes.
- Please take home art work that is in your child's cubbie.

Please dress your child in appropriate clothing for the weather.

Sherie Newman
Head Teacher

PARENTING TIP

Does your child bring home a lot of art work (some bring home nothing and others bring home massive amounts; both are typical). An idea shared by a parent is to mat (and frame) some of your child's art work to give as gifts to family and friends. What a great suggestion!



DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING FOR CHILDREN BIRTH TO THREE YEARS OLD

Child and Family Connections is holding a free screening that is open to residents of DeKalb. If you have a child under the age of three and are concerned about your child's development, you are invited to participate in a FREE infant and toddler screening. Call Mary Hess at Child and Family Connections to reserve a screening appointment (815-895-0481).



Friday, November 21st
8:30—11:30 a.m.
Brooks Elementary School
3225 Sangamon Road, DeKalb

COMMUTER & NON-TRADITIONAL (student services)

Hello! Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Services is proud to announce the creation of a new program geared towards non-traditional students. We are beginning a program called the Sunday Series: a monthly event held in the Northern View Community Center to provide educational and social options for students to learn, grow, make connections and have social interaction with students with similar college experiences. These workshops will feature guest speakers from campus including staff members from different NIU departments. We hope that the workshops we offer will help relieve some of your stress and provide you with options to better manage your hectic student lives.

Please save the dates for the tentatively scheduled Sunday Series (the fourth Sunday of most months during our academic year):

Sunday, October 26, 1pm-2:45pm, food provided: Toddler Rearing Workshop: I'm a Big Kid Now (potting training and child discipline).

Sunday, November 23: How to Host a Thanksgiving Dinner on a Budget (food preparation demonstration and workshop)

Sunday, January 25: Winterizing Your Car and Preparing Your Child for Winter

Sunday, February 22: Women's Health and Wellness 101

Sunday, March 29: March Madness (a kick off to Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Appreciation Week)

Sunday, April 26: Parent's Day Celebration

If you would like more information regarding this exciting series for non-traditional students, please contact us, we would be happy to assist you!

Please stop in and visit our office and lounge space, call us (815.753.9999), drop us a line at CommNonTrad@niu.edu, or better yet, join our Facebook group (**Commuter & Non-Traditional Student Services: What's the 411?**). Any way you chose to contact us we would be happy to assist you.

Hope to see you at the Sunday Series!

Jill Zambito
Director
Commuter & Non-Traditional Student Services
815.753.9999
zambito@niu.edu

T-Shirts

We have a few extra CCC t-shirts available (size 2, 3, 4 and adult S, L, XL) if anyone would like to purchase one.



30th Anniversary Trivia Questions

Those with correct answers will be entered into a drawing
to win a CCC Coffee Mug

Put an 'X' by the correct answer:

- Who, of our current professional staff, did NOT start out as a student worker?
 Jen Young (Toddlers)
 Stefanie Echols (2/3-1)
 Kristi Hayward (Pre 3)
- Who prepared meals at CCC before the expansion in 2000?
 the teachers student workers the director
- Who did the grocery shopping for the program before the expansion?
 the teachers student workers the director
- How many full-time professional staff were employed at CCC before the expansion?
 3 5 7
- How many full-time professional staff are currently employed at CCC? 20 25 30
- How many student workers were employed prior to our expansion? 15 20 25
- How many student workers are currently employed at CCC? 40 50 60
- Where did the professional staff hold their weekly staff meetings?
 in a closet in the full-time classroom in the director's office
 in a conference room down the hall
- Who does Campus Child Care report to?
 Finance and Facilities College of Education Student Affairs
- One CCC family had how many children enrolled in the program (not at one time)!
 4 5 6

Name: _____ Child's Name: _____

Please return this form to the drop box on the front blue counter by November 14. Good luck!!