

# preschool news



Campus Child Care  
division of student affairs & enrollment management

## DIRECTOR'S DESK

Wow, it's October already. I'm not quite sure how that happened! We hope the semester is going well for you; it is hard to believe we are quickly approaching the mid-point.

We are very sad to tell you that Kristin Schultz (teacher in 2/3's-2) resigned on Sept. 18. She is venturing into a new career opportunity and will be working as a financial aid counselor at American Intercontinental University Online. We will also miss Graeme, who has been in our program since he was an infant. We wish Kristin and her family all the best and will sincerely miss all she contributed to our program during the past 5 years.

In an effort to help you (those who are students) succeed and get the most out of NIU, we have enhanced our selection of brochures from on-campus departments—ones we felt would be the most beneficial to you. Please feel free to take whatever you need; they are located on top of the book shelf in the Parent Resource Room. We have brochures from the following departments: LGBT Resource Center, Office of the Ombudsman (resolve your college concerns); Off-Campus and Non-Traditional Student Services; Academic Advising Center (exploring majors); Center for Black Studies; The Family Center of NIU; Women's Resource Center; Counseling and Student Development Center (counseling and coaching for academic success); and Career Services.

We have recently launched a Character Counts initiative for our program that will run through the entire academic year. The teachers will be doing some activities in the classroom in an effort to be purposeful in 'building character' in young children. Lisa also put up a fabulous display in the front lobby to kick off this program. I encourage everyone to take full advantage of any information we put forward regarding character development. It is one of the most basic and precious gifts you can give your child!

Also keep in mind that it's important for us, as adults, to model behaviors that are reflective of a positive character. Our policies and practices are in place for everyone's safety and well-being, as well as the smooth functioning of the program. Some things you can do include: remind your child to stay with you as you are walking through the hallway and out the front door; bring your One card with you every day so Janene does not have to be interrupted in her work quite so frequently; put your cell phones away when you are entering the classroom—be available to talk with the teachers at drop off and pick up; pay your bills on time—don't leave it up to us to remind you what you owe and when to pay.



Grace (in Pre 1) showing her creative side.

## OCTOBER 2009

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*Did You Know.....?*

*Character Counts!*  
Mutual Respect

I will continue to update you regarding the H1N1 flu, but at this time, there is no new information to share. The best thing you can do for now is to conduct a health check of your child each day before you bring him/her to the center. Look for signs such as: crankiness; fatigue; decrease in appetite; and any flu-like symptoms. Let Janene know if your child has any flu-like symptoms (fever over 100 degrees, sore throat, cough, difficulty breathing, headache, chills, fatigue) because we have to report this to the local health department. Also remember that children must stay home if they have any flu-like symptom along with a fever, and cannot return until they are **fever free for 24 hours** without the use of fever-reducing medication. I know a child may seem just mildly ill, so one thing to look for is if they are feeling worse, not better, or they have a reoccurrence of a fever with a worsening cough. Also, please do not bring sick siblings into the classrooms. We understand they may need to enter the building because you have them with you and cannot leave them in the car. Then, please let Janene know and Lisa or I will sit with them up front until you are finished dropping off your child who attends CCC.

Please feel free to talk with any of us if you have questions or concerns. I know the teachers have been meeting with all of you so please continue to talk with them about your child's growth, development and adjustment to CCC.

Chris Herrmann  
Director



## ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S DESK

Greetings to all preschool families. It is the start of another new school year at Campus Child Care and we have been busy with getting to know all the new children and families. The new children to the center are picking up on the routines and the teachers are learning more about them daily. It is fun to see all the personalities emerging and friendships forming!

I want to thank all the families who were able to come out for the Family Night. It was an hour (at least!) full of conversation, fun, and food! It was interesting to see how each classroom did different activities relating to our *Character Counts!* initiative. The teachers are very creative in brainstorming ideas! I am certain everyone had something tasty to eat as well – pot lucks are always a hit. Sometime during October, look for a new display table for *Character Counts!*. Sarah Kakkuri (2/3-1) and Carol Schroeder (Infant) will be creating a table display that highlights

## REMINDERS

- Please call the Center on days your child will be absent; our number is 815-753-0125. Remember to let Janene know your child's symptoms so we can document all flu-like illnesses.
- Child care fees need to be paid on time to avoid late notices and termination of child care.

This statement has been added to our payment policy: Individuals who are repeatedly place on the Hot List and pay the minimal amount in order to continue child care will need to be **paid in full** prior to the approval of Interim or summer care.

- Please **save your invoices** so you can track the amount you are spending on child care (for tax purposes).
- Those who repeatedly need to be buzzed in will be charged a \$5 fee.
- CCC does not celebrate holidays so the children will not be wearing costumes or distributing treats for Halloween.
- 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.

character development in our infants, toddlers, and 2's.

Book Fair time is here! Every fall Campus Child Care hosts its annual Children's Book Fair. The book fair is the only fundraising event we do all year long. This year it's going to be held on October 12-16. The book fair is in the large motor room and we always have a large selection of at least 1500 children's books, calendars, and some adult selections. We still need parent volunteers to work this and a sign-up sheet is on Janene's counter. I added two volunteer sign-up spots for the 4-5:30 times at the end of the day. This tends to be a very busy time because a lot of families will stop at the book fair at the end of the day on their way home. Without the parent volunteers, it would not be possible to staff this event as it is extremely time consuming through the entire week. We appreciate everyone's assistance in making this fair a success. Have a great rest of the semester and my door is always open if you have a question, concern, or comments. Enjoy the rest of the newsletter!

*Lisa Schmidt*  
Asst. Director

## Preschool Room 1

We are now at the point in the semester where the newness has worn off and everyone is feeling quite comfortable. The children have all settled in and have been keeping themselves very busy. The block area has been utilized quite a bit. The children have been building houses, airplanes, boats, as well as many other structures with the big blocks. One of the structures they were making a lot was a stage. We decided to take advantage of this interest and make a stage and dress up area in dramatic play. We have been lucky enough to witness some wonderful performances. Some of the children are singing familiar songs while some are creating songs all their own. It is really interesting to watch and listen to their creative process. We might not always understand the lyrics and they might not always sing in tune but they are having a great deal of fun.



This year the entire center is focusing on helping children develop values and social competence with our Character Counts program. Throughout the year there will be a table set up in the lobby with information on a variety of character development topics. Kendra and I will also be presenting activities and projects in the classroom. We have started the semester by reading the books Have You Filled Your Bucket Today?, and Fill a Bucket. These books present the idea that we each have an invisible bucket. When we do kind or helpful things for others or when others are kind and helpful to us we fill our buckets with love and good feelings. When we are unkind to others we actually take some of those good feeling out of their bucket as well as taking them out of our own. When our buckets are empty we feel lonely and sad. When our buckets are full we feel happy and loved. We have discussed different ways that the children can fill up their buckets and the buckets of those around them, helping a friend clean up, giving a hug, telling our mom or dad we love them, as well as listening when others talk to us. To extend this idea we have created a classroom bucket that the children can fill with colorful shapes when they are kind to others. The children can pick out the shape that they want and the teacher will write down the date and the positive action. Some of the children have become really excited about getting to put a shape in the bucket. Our goal is to have all of the children understand the concept and become involved in the process of filling our classroom bucket. The term invisible had some of the children confused, they kept telling us they didn't have a bucket so we began using the term pretend. That

seemed to help more of the children grasp the concept. We will be continuing this project throughout the semester.

Kendra and I have also begun to present small group projects and activities to the children. Instead of doing an activity with the whole group we are inviting smaller groups to join us at a table to do something interesting. One of the activities we have done recently was to dissect a wasp's nest that the librarian at the DeKalb Public Library gave me. Instead of doing this at group time where we might have children who are not interested, the smaller group setting allows the children who are really interested to participate with no distractions. As the semester continues we will involve our student workers in this approach and they may conduct small group projects with the children as well. Our goal is to involve all of the children at one time or another in an activity that truly interests them.



I have been thrilled to see the children so excited by the books in the book corner. They really look forward to a new batch from the library. They usually have one or two favorites that they want read over and over again. While adults might find this repetition a bit boring it is really helping the children develop the skills they will need when they begin reading. They begin to recognize specific words in the text and find other words that begin with the same letter or point out that the word begins with the same letter as their name. We also see the children pretend to read to their friends or re-tell the story which helps them develop language skills. Being read to frequently and developing a love of books has been proven to be a predictor for future academic success. I encourage everyone to take advantage of their local library and read, read, read.

Please feel free to come to Kendra or me with any questions or concerns. We are always happy to talk to parents about their children.

*Diane Coleman*  
Head Teacher

## Preschool Room 2

The month of September has flown by in Pre-2. The children have been getting to know one another and making friends. We would like to say a sad good-bye to Graeme. He will be missed by all his friends and teachers. Graeme will be starting a new school and we want to wish him the best of luck. On another note, we would like to welcome Mya and her family to the center.

Earlier this semester I sent home a letter regarding "Second Step." We have been incorporating these lessons into our group times. Second Step is a program geared for Preschoolers and Kindergarteners. It is designed to reduce impulsive and aggressive behavior in children and increase their level of social competence. It does this by teaching skills in empathy, impulse control, and anger management. These past few weeks Stefanie and I have introduced 5 calming down steps to the children. We have them posted in our book area to use as a visual when someone gets upset. Here are the following steps:

- How do I feel? (children recognize sensations that tell them they are angry)
- Take three deep breaths
- Count slowly to five (older children may count backwards)
- Say “calm down” to yourself
- Talk to a grownup about it (children talk about their feelings and reflect on the situation)



Please feel free to try some of these steps at home with your child when they are upset.

During one of our group times we read the book, Michael Recycle, written by Ellie Bethel and illustrated by Alexandra Colombo. We then had a discussion on how our classroom could “go green”. We have added a recycling box that the children will be using throughout their day. The children will be encouraged to throw empty water cups and scrap paper away in our special box. During our discussion we talked about ways we could also “go green” at home. Here are some things we talked about: 1) Turn off the running faucet while you’re brushing your teeth; 2) Turn off the TV, lights and computer when you are not using them; 3) Take shorter showers; 4) Don’t litter! Make sure your trash ends up where it belongs – in a trash can. The children were very excited to use our new recycle box.

This month the children have been very interested in our small group activities we have planned for them. Stefanie and I have enjoyed spending more one-on-one time with your children. When engaged with the children we are able to focus more on your child’s individual needs and interests.



Here are some of the activities your child has been engaged in: 1) cutting pictures from a magazine to make a family collage; 2) family guessing box game; 3) color treasure hunt; 4) alphabet bingo; 5) counting activity with pennies, etc.

### Reminders:

- Please remember to check your child's extra clothes bin to make sure there are plenty of clothes for them when needed.
- At the end of each day make sure you are checking your child's art folder.

Diane Mathison  
Head Teacher

### Did you know ....?

NIU's **admissions office** is open on Saturdays during the academic year---September through May. Here is our website:  
<http://www.niu.edu/admissions/visit/index.shtml>



## Preschool Room 3

Welcome to the Fall 2009 semester at NIU! We have had a very exciting start to the year. We have had time to get to know our new friends Andy, Antonio B., and Juliana who all started their first semester at Campus Child Care. We have spent the first month doing a little bit of everything in the classroom. We have taken a few walks on campus where we each picked something we wanted to look for on campus and then revisited that list and added what we actually found. We went on another mission to see a few parents busy at work as well as revisiting some of our favorite spots from our first walk. These included seeing the ducks, fountains, art sculptures, bikes, Huskie buses, and riding the elevator to see things from up high. We also pointed out the mailboxes since we had the Post Office in our dramatic play area. As always we talk about safety throughout our entire walk and chant N I U Gooooooo Huskies!



We would like to have the opportunity to see all of you on campus. Please put where you are between the hours of 10:00 and 11:30 on the sheet posted in the classroom. If it's possible, we would love to check out where you work and maybe set up a little tour. If you have time between classes we can plan to see each other in passing. If you would like to join us for a walk please let us know as well and we can figure out a good day for the both of us. We have many exciting things we can do on campus. We also welcome you all to join us in the classroom for a mealtime, group time, or special activity! Please let us know if you are willing to do anything in the classroom. We can give you ideas if needed. Some popular parent activities in the classroom have been to play an instrument, make a healthy snack with the children, talk about and show items reflective of your culture, dance, read books, make play dough or other sensory item, and a visit as a community worker, to name a few. These are great times to get to know the children and experience the kinds of things your child does on a daily basis in the classroom.



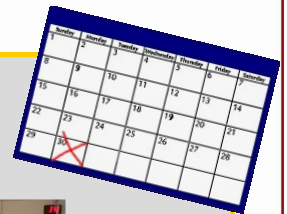
### Calendar of Events

Oct. 7—Vision and Hearing Rescreen (for children ages 2.10-5 years)

Oct. 12-16 — **Children's Book Fair** in CCC Large Motor Room

Nov. 26 & 27—NIU and CCC closed for Holiday

**Billing Deadlines** for MyNIU — Sept. 21, Oct. 26, Nov. 30



Thank you all for bringing in your family photo displays and favorite summer activity. They all look so fabulous and it sounds like many of you had fun outdoors in the great summer weather. Participating in these displays helps to create a warm family atmosphere for our classroom. We know it takes time out of your busy schedules and we appreciate you taking the time to participate. Your child feels a sense of comfort being away from you as well as their home environment. In addition to the home, we feel it is important to stay connected with the community outside of NIU as well. You may have noticed flyers from the DeKalb Park District, Kishwaukee YMCA, and DeKalb Public Library by the sign in/out sheet. We will do our best to keep you informed of happenings in the community. If you come across anything that our families may be interested in feel free to bring in flyers or information of such events as well. You can find additional information by your parent pocket as well.



I hope you are all staying well informed with the mailbox notes, documentation board, weekly goals, and daily reflections. If you ever have any questions, comments, or concerns please feel free to talk to Dave or myself at any time. Enjoy the Fall weather!

*Kristi Hayward*  
Head Teacher



## Preschool Room 4

Hello and welcome to Pre-4!! Barbara and I are very excited about the new semester and getting to know your family!!

We want to thank all of you for taking the time to meet with us and filling out the in-take forms. This helps us tremendously in getting to know your child on a more personal level and when we work on the goals that were set for your child.

We would like to welcome Pam Yockey to our classroom. She is an intern from Kishwaukee College and is in our classroom Monday through Friday 8 – 11 a.m. this semester. We are very excited to have her with us! We would like to send out birthday wishes to Joe Fuss this month! We can't believe that Joe is turning 5!!

The magna tiles have been a great way for the children to build their small motor skills, creativity and imagination! They have been very popular this semester! We have set up a writing center to help the children gain control with writing tools, work on number and letter recognition and printing our name.

### Did you know ....?

The **Women's Resource Center** is celebrating it's 30th anniversary. In addition, the Women's Center is for women AND men; and they are very parent friendly.



We have spent a lot of time focusing on name recognition, looking at how the letters look in each name. To make it easy we started out with photos on the name cards. Now we have removed the photos and want the children to recognize names by the letter their name starts with. Some of the children have already mastered this skill.



We were very excited to have Andrew's mom, Michelle, come to join us at group time and teach us a different way of communication – sign language. She taught us how to make signs for the alphabet and taught us the song "Rain, rain go away! Thank you Michelle for spending time with us! We learned a lot! We are looking forward to Natalie's mom, Kathy, coming in and reading stories in Spanish! Remember, if you have a talent you would like to share, we would love to have you visit our classroom!! Another super fun language activity we came across is the Soup Opera by Jim Gill. It has opened the door to a different type of music. It is such a fun story and teaches what an opera is and also teaches how to problem solve. The best way to solve a problem is to ask questions, especially if you need help. We absolutely love this book!

Science is a popular topic in our room. The children are learning to care for pets by reminding Barbara to feed the fish. They are learning to be responsible by only giving the fish "a pinch" a food. They have learned animal names and how fish breathe under the water. We read the Dr. Suess book A Fish out of Water to help us remember that adults give us rules to help not only us to stay safe, but to keep our pets safe as well! We also had the vet's office in dramatic play so the children could learn how to take care of pets and to know that to keep pets healthy and happy they need to visit the doctor just like we do!

This semester we have introduced "Character Counts" throughout the center. Be sure to check out the table in the entrance! In our classroom we have developed a plan to help the children understand the concept of helping one another and treating each other with kindness and respect. We are using the "super friends" chart. Each time Barbara or I see a child showing an act of kindness or helping a friend on their own, we acknowledge the act by placing their name on the chart.

You have probably heard about the "taster's club" from your child. We are encouraging the children to try each food at lunch time. It is still their choice if they want to put certain things on their plate, but if they do and they take a tiny bite of everything, their name goes on the chart. This has worked out great to encourage trying new foods or foods children may think they don't like. Please check these charts daily – the children are very proud of their accomplishments.

### Did you know ....?

Services at the **Counseling and Student Development Center** are free and completely confidential. We offer a Parents group for students with children. This group focuses on handling the unique challenge of being a parent and a student simultaneously.



**Reminders:** Our classroom tends to be chilly in the morning and with the weather changing with the season we ask that you bring in a sweater, sweatshirt or jacket for your child daily to keep in your child's cubby. This will help your child will be more comfortable throughout the day. We also want to encourage you to help your child become independent. We encourage each child to put on their socks, shoes and jackets by themselves. If they need help we will certainly help them *after* we see them try to do it themselves!

Parent teacher conferences will be coming up soon. Please look on cubbies for sign-up sheet. We will be meeting with each family. Thank you for your cooperation.

If you are looking for a fun family outing, there is Jonamac Apple Orchard; it's about 5 miles west of Dekalb in Malta (on South Malta Rd. just south of Route 38). They have a fun outside play area for children, a pumpkin patch, apple orchard and a store with a variety of food and craft items. It's a great way to have a little special family time!! We enjoy connecting home and school.

Some of you have already had the pleasure of having a weekend visitor from our classroom. Spunky is making his rounds! Please make sure when it is your child's turn to write down Spunky's adventures in the notebook, take a couple photos with the camera, and take time to read the puppy story with your child. Return Spunky on Monday so your child can share Spunky's adventures at group time. We are also making a classroom book with the photos that you take!

If you ever have questions or concern, please don't hesitate to talk to us. We are here for you and your child!! Have a great month!!

April Kaiser  
Head Teacher



## Did you know ....?

The majority of **scholarships** are awarded in the spring for the upcoming academic year. It is important for students to plan ahead by almost a full year. Students can start searching for and applying for scholarships this fall for the 2010-2011 school year. Many scholarships have application deadlines around February 1. Students should visit the Scholarship Office website for more information. <http://www.scholarships.niu.edu/scholarships/>

**MUTUAL RESPECT**

Children who are treated disrespectfully have no model for respectful behavior. Robert's parents call each other names, belittle Robert, and sneer when he objects to anything. However, when Robert behaves similarly in public, his parents become angry. Joe needs training, experience and examples of respectful behavior.

The parent who passively allows a child to belittle her or call her names isn't modeling respect for herself. She must tell the child, "I won't continue to listen to disrespectful language," and then calmly walk away. Please note she does not say, "I won't allow you to call me names." The former statement clearly states what the parent will do, not what she will try to make the child do. The difference is critical. With the first response, the parent shows respect and models self-control without trying to control the child. It is likely to produce improved behavior, especially if followed up with a dialogue when both parent and child are calm again.

Whatever the situation, one of the best tools parents can use is control over their own behavior. Here are some suggestions for building mutual respect:

1. Model respectful behavior. Before approaching a situation that's making your blood boil, take a moment to calm down and regain your composure.
2. Take time for training. Teach children what respectful behavior is. Demonstrate respectful ways to approach and respond to others, and let the children practice them.
3. Encourage children by letting them know when you notice their efforts to practice new behaviors. Be specific: "Mary, you explained to Susan how much her whistling during lunch was annoying to you. That shows respect for Susan as well as respect for your own needs."
4. Use your Intuition. Typically a child who is hurting others is feeling hurt herself. Some children may be disrespectful in order to get attention or to show power. Identifying the likely hidden message helps the parent figure out the best way to respond.
5. Develop an atmosphere of trust by helping children to see that you are more interested in solutions to problems than in punishing them for misbehavior.

The following kind and firm phrases will help you avoid disrespectful language and increase cooperation:

- Your turn is coming.
- I need you to say that in a respectful way.
- I care about you and will wait until we can both be respectful to continue this conversation.
- I know you can think of a helpful solution.
- We'll talk about this later. Now it is time to get in the car.
- I only respond to pleasant voice tones.
- (When child is having a temper tantrum) We need to leave the store now. We'll try again tomorrow.

Information adapted from [Positive Discipline A-Z](#) and [Positive Discipline](#) by Jane Nelsen.