

Fall 2008



UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION CENTER

Fall Newsletter

Welcome UWECEC Families!

Welcome to all of our University of Wyoming Early Care and Education Center families. We not only welcome back our returning families, but also our new families who just joined us this fall as well.

By now most of your children should be settled in to their classrooms and have begun working on various projects, getting to know each other, and staying quite busy with play. Each room has various ways of updating you all with the exciting things that are going on in your child's classroom. All of the rooms will do monthly newsletters to send home to you and all of the rooms have either begun or are in the process of creating a web blog for you to view

your child's activities in the class. The blogs are by invite only, so they are secure and can only be viewed by you as parents or whomever else you want to have view it with permission of the blog creator (your child's teacher). Please be sure to talk with your child's teacher to get directions to access the blog if you have not already done so.

We also want to note that as the semester and year progresses we are trying to find more ways to get feedback from families. We understand that although it is not entirely possible to meet everyone's needs, one of our missions is to involve and respect the individual needs of children and families. One way to

do that is through appropriate lines of communication. We plan on doing this through face-to-face dialogue as well as parent meetings and surveys. The surveys will be disseminated both with hard copy surveys as well as online surveys through SurveyMonkey.com.

We hope that this fall semester is a great one for



Beckett and Karlie taking a moment to read a wonderful story together in the big room.

Welcome Nikki!

This past month, Nikki Baldwin was officially hired as the new Curriculum Coordinator at the UW Early Care and Education Center. This is the roughly the same position that Cleta Booth held, but with a different title.

Nikki comes to us from Kemmerer, Wyoming where she was the Education Coordinator with the Lincoln/Uinta County Child Development Corporation. She originally came back to Laramie to pursue her Ph.D. in Curriculum

and Instruction through the College of Education and found out about this opening. She will continue her graduate work as well as teaching courses this semester and will officially join us on December 14th. We welcome her aboard!

Dates of Note:

- November 5th, 7:00 pm, screening of PBS Documentary, "Where Do the Children Play?" at UWECEC
- November 26-28, Thanksgiving Break
- December 4th 6:00 pm, ECEC Annual Potluck Supper
- December 8-12 Finals Week
- December 15 - January 9, Winter Break



News From the Infant Room

Building Relationships

Over the last couple months we have watched the children become comfortable and secure in their new surroundings. They have started forming special friendships with both their teachers and friends. At this age we see emerging relationships through body language, facial expressions and some babbling. It is neat to see the older children going up to the children who can't quite sit by themselves, and smiling at them and "talking" to them. We have also started seeing more parallel play rather than solitary play. Parallel play is when two children are playing beside each other with the same toys but not interacting together. Where as solitary play is playing by themselves, not by anyone. We have also observed children starting to share with each other. One child may have a ball and hand it to the other, who in turn gives it back. This has gone on over and over with

both children smiling and giggling.

Exploring Reflections

Just within the last month, we have started exploring reflections. We have brought in a mirror that is at the children's level. It is really interesting to see how each individual child reacts to seeing themselves, objects and others in the mirror. I have observed one of the older children look in the mirror and see me behind her. She smiles, but also has a look of wonder. She then turns around and sees me behind her and then looks back at the mirror again. This continues on for a little while longer. I am not sure if she quite understands what is going on yet, but is very curious. We have also observed a child look in the mirror, then crawl around to the back of the mirror and look. It's as if they think what they see in the mirror is really behind the mirror.

We look forward to exploring many more sensory activities and will keep you updated with our room blog.

Each child has changed so much and we can't wait to watch each child grow more and more. We are taking lots of pictures and documenting what each child has been doing for their portfolios. I will have Parent/Teacher conferences at the end of January, where we will go through your child's portfolio. Remember that our door is always open, so please stop by anytime and explore with us!



Jackson observing his reflection in a mirror in the infant room.

News from the Toddler Room

Our year in the Toddler Room has started off wonderfully! The children and staff in our room began the year getting to know one another and some wonderful friendships among the children have already formed!

After watching the children learn and explore in the classroom and outside, we as a staff noticed that the kids in our room LOVE to get messy while learning. With this knowledge we began a project exploring textures and senses. Over the past month we have explored everything from bubbles to mud and have discovered that the children's favorite exploration of tex-

tures has involved sticky textures. The kids have really enjoyed the hands on, and often full-body, messy experience! Some of our favorite activities have been making Ooblek (glue and liquid starch), painting with our feet, and opening up and exploring pumpkins!

A great way to keep updated on all of the exciting happenings in our classroom is to take a look at our blog. Our blog is regularly updated with pictures and information about what the children are exploring and learning about in our classroom! We'd love to share our days with you and this is a great way to do so!

We are looking forward to what the rest of the year has in store for us!



News From Preschool Room 1

We have spent most of the semester getting to know each other, learning to use our words to communicate with each other, and recognizing our emotions. We are making huge progress with our problem solving skills! It is exciting to watch the children say things like, "I am not done with that" or "I don't like it when you do that"! We have a very caring group of children! When someone gets hurt or is sad there is always someone who will help soothe them by rubbing their arm, giving them a hug and usually asking them if they are okay.

We are also learning about ourselves and what we like! We are making All About Me clouds. We are finding our favorite foods, toys, animals etc. and

putting them on a paper cloud to help us discover what we like and to let others know more about us!

We have been using different balls that are different sizes and textures. Some are bouncy, squishy, hard, heavy, light, big, orange, etc. The children are exploring with them to see how they roll differently and some bounce differently etc. We also been very interested in the magnet blocks and learning to build towers and being very careful not to knock down anyone else's tower unless they give us permission.

We decided to do cooking activities on Monday's. We have learned about squash for right now and the children are very interested in what is inside of different foods. They seem to love to

pick out the seeds and explore the textures of the goop inside. We also cut open pumpkins and we will cook the seeds in them and try them. We are hoping to make something good out of the pumpkin....like bread or cookies or pie. It seems like they are having a lot of fun and the teachers are having fun watching all of the learning that is taking place!



Enjoying some of the art sculptures at Prexy's Pasture

News From Preschool 2

Time Has Flown By!

Throughout these last nine weeks, Preschool 2 has explored a variety of themes in order to find a common interest amongst the children. These children have shown a great interest in Rockets and Space! We started exploring this subject by first building different abstract buildings and rockets with the magnet blocks. Afterwards we started discussing the American Sign Language Signs for "moon, stars and sun." Many items have been added to the dramatic play area in order to enhance the learning of the theme. Cur-

rently we have been discussing the planets and their differences; we will soon have a solar system on the wall that the children created!



In addition, the blogger (<http://ececpreschool2.blogspot.com/>) is updated weekly with the activities that the children have been doing in the classroom. Please take some time to take a look! Your children have been very busy!

Lastly, with runny nose season approaching fast, if every family could bring in a box of Kleenex it would be very helpful. Also, if families could make sure that their children's box of extra cloths has weather appropriate clothing in it that would be great (they are located in the bathroom).

News From Preschool 3

In Ms. Sue's preschool class we have been working on many different things, for example we have discovered that painting does not have to be done with a brush!! We have worked with our fingers, sponges, and even toy cars!! We also love to work

with lots of goeey things which get our hands messy!!

Working as a community is especially important!! As a class we work together to keep our environment clean whether it is the outside or inside!! We are also working Carrie Green to de-

velop an environmental unit. We are currently talking about recycling and may do some field trips to the recycling factory as well as a visit from the garbage truck!



UWECEC

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION CENTER

250 N.30th St
Laramie, WY 82072
Phone:307-766-4816
Fax: 307-766-4093
Email: early-care@uwyo.edu

Learning Through Play

The principal goal of education in the schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done; men and women who are creative, inventive, and discoverers, who can be critical and verify and not accept everything that they are offered.

- Jean Piaget

News From Preschool 4

I am so thankful that I get to spend my days with inquisitive, energetic young children. I am constantly reminded of the importance of their play. Every morning they go about their play with drive, enthusiasm, and purpose, showing that it truly IS their work. Don't you wish that you could feel that way when you go to work each day?

Our class has had a wonderful semester thus far. We've been enjoying making new friends and catching up with old ones. We've learned about new art tools and techniques, and how primary

colors can be mixed to make new colors. We discovered that we LOVE cooking projects, whether it be play-dough or homemade tortillas. And we've had lots of fun with all the materials and projects the college students have shared.



Daniel and Gracie explore the colors and shapes with reflective light at the light table.

News From After School Program

In the After School Program here at University of Wyoming Early Care and Education Center we like to create a comfortable, engaging, fun and caring environment. Every day when the kids get dropped off we greet them with a smile and welcome them in to have snack, answer the question of the day and give them choices to read, write, rest, draw, do puzzles or come to a quiet work room to do homework. After welcoming time we have a fun activity to do! Some of these include; arts, crafts, puppets, cooking, playing group games, reading to our buddies here at ECEC, free day....etc. After our fun activity time, we like to give them free time for the rest of the day, they need it! Some fun activities that we have done already this year:*Class BINGO, Musical Chairs, Reading buddy/library day, Class Puzzle, Loop the Hoop, Community Building Games, Folded Paper Games, Rose and Thorn, Leaf creatures, Leaf rubbings, Fall Creatures, Kick ball, Red Light Green Light, Wild Whiskers, Watched Puppet Shows, Practiced being Puppeteers, Gone on Field Trips, Baked different yummy foods....etc!