DIRECTOR’S DESK

Hello CDL families! We have been off to a great start this spring semester. The new practicum students have really jumped into their roles and have been busy learning the routines and practices at the CDL. Prior to the semester beginning, the students were here for a 2-day orientation. During this time, the students were able to connect in the classroom with learning the safety, supervision, health, and mealtime protocols; as well as, getting to know many of the children, staff, and parents.

On Friday, January 15, the CDL hosted a Family Open House in the morning. This was an excellent time for getting acquainted with your child’s primary and for your child to get re-acquainted with the classroom. I have received a fair amount of informal feedback from parents—in conversation and email—about how much they appreciated the opportunity for the Open House. Parents had the opportunity to experience a little slice of the daily schedule and routine and watch in the classroom how their child interacts with others. Some parents got right in the thick of things with painting and playing! It was a joy to see this.

The CDL will be requesting for parents to be part of the CDL Parent Advisory Board. This is a great opportunity for you to be part of the discussion surrounding a variety of topics that impact the center and the classrooms. An email will be sent out as a formal invitation with dates, time, and location. We hope that many can be a part of this important group!

As a reminder, all families received a copy of their child’s Ages & Stages Questionnaire and informational letter in their parent pocket at the beginning of the semester. The primary caregiver will also be completing this screen tool as well; and around week 7-8, you should receive a results letter from your child’s primary. If there are any concerns resulting from the screen and a referral is needed, the primary caregiver and one of the classroom teachers will be following up with you as well.

While you completing the ASQ at home is not required, we do appreciate and welcome parents to complete this and turn back in to their child’s primary for scoring.

The CDL is happy to continue their partnership with the Nursing program again this semester. Each semester we have nursing students come into the classrooms to facilitate an interactive teaching activity; e.g.—going to the Doctor’s office; dental hygiene; exercise; healthy eating; handwashing; etc. Each student also has with them a stethoscope and takes pulses to experience vital signs. The university environment affords us so many rich opportunities for the children!

Thank you and have a wonderful month!

Lisa Schmidt

REMINDERS

- Please remember the CDL does not celebrate Valentine’s Day. As always, we reserve these celebrations for families to decide how best to do this.
- Spring Break is just around the corner! Applications were emailed—so please get these turned in by Feb. 19th!
- As we approach April we will be celebrating Week of the Young Child (April 11-15). More to come!
- Save the date! Our family night is April 11th! I can’t wait to see what the practicum students will do this semester!
- For tax purposes—our FEIN number is 36-6088480. Please save your invoices to record your child care spending for the year!
We would like to welcome our new friend John, and his family to the CDL! We are very happy to have him and he is very eager to play in the classroom. Please take some time to read the “Big Body Play” display panel outside our door. This gives more information about the benefits of movement and big body play. Some activities were mentioned in the January newsletter and more pictures are in the panel too. We introduced the children to the art folder system. It is a crate with file folders in it. Each child has their own folder to store art when it is complete and ready to go home or as a place to save what they are working on. This should eliminate art getting lost or placed in the wrong cubby. Make sure to check the folder each night so that you can have a conversation with your child about the art they did if they choose to talk about it. Block area has continued to be popular building structures for the animals and people with magna tiles, blocks, & Legos.

Please remember to bring back snow pants and boots each day. Thank you!

Kristi, Jamie, Macy, & Elena

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Eowyn created a 3D house out of recyclable paper. It was for her pet rock she has at home. The house includes a swimming pool, a bed, a window, books, rugs, chairs, a table with food and chocolate, a nightstand, a bed with a stuffed cat.

Laureen painted a picture for her mom.

Justin made a road out of blocks and drove his car on it.

Liam used the couch to relax as he read a book during choice time.
Happy February ITT East Families!

After the New Year we have gotten back into the swing of things and are excited to be able to welcome some new families to our classroom and the center in February. We also like to welcome our first lead teachers Alyssa and Shawna, they will be teaching for the next four weeks. We are really looking forward to seeing their fun and innovative activities. Please stop by to join us during group time!

We have been taking advantage and exploring the snow whenever possible. Some of the children were playing in the snow, while other children have been interested in scooping, dumping and piling it into buckets, chairs and in the tires on our playground! We also had the opportunity to walk on campus to the bridges and observe the geese.

While staying indoors, we have gotten to take many walks down the hallway to play on the ramp and explore NIU a little more. In addition, we have been using gross motor equipment (rainbow mat, the climber, bikes and the tunnel) and dancing in the classroom to get our wiggles out when we can’t go outside. The children have all taken a large interest in baking and we have been using the baking pans and spoons to make cakes and apple pies. The children have also been interested in water play, so we have done a lot of water play with soap, loofas and baby dolls.

Although outside time as been somewhat limited, we ask that the children still have plenty of warm clothing for the days we can go outside; including snow pants, boots, gloves and hats. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Clarissa, Jessica, Natalalee, & Krysten
Hello ITT West Families!

Thank you to all who attended the ‘Meet & Greet’ at the beginning of the semester! We appreciate everyone taking the time to come out and welcome our Spring interns!

Hannah                            Elizabeth

The students are all very eager to start the semester and spend time with their primaries! Starting on February 8th, our morning intern Hannah, and afternoon intern Elizabeth, will begin their roles as lead teachers. Both are excited for what the next four weeks have in store for them!

Lately, the children have been showing heightened interest in different sea animals and living creatures in the water! If you would like to build upon their interest, the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago offers ‘discount days’, in which general admission is lower in price. Those dates are noted as February 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 29. If you go, please feel free to share your experience and any photos you take, as we would love to hang them up in our room!

We now have “Artist of the Month” in our classroom! The bulletin board is located over the cubbies on the same wall we share with the East classroom. Archie was our January Artist of the Month, so stay tuned for our February Artist!

In our classroom, we like to encourage the children to be independent and build on their self help skills. The young children are working on their ability to self soothe, feed themselves with their hands and drink from sippy cups, while the toddlers and two year olds are learning to dress themselves, go potty, and express their needs by communicating both verbally and nonverbally.

Warm regards,

Casey, Ecila, Brittney, and Katie
Math and the Myth of 1, 2, 3

Children begin to count on their own as they grow, and they learn from everyday experiences with length, quantity, time, temperature, money, and more. Through hands-on activities, children expand their true understanding of math. Adults recognize that games such as sorting and putting objects in sequence are actually early experiments in math, even if they don't look much like geometry!

Here are some everyday opportunities at home for children to begin thinking about numbers:

- **All about me** - Children get a sense of pride in knowing their own address and phone number. Early on, children can identify their own age. They want to know their height -- both in inches and feet. Putting a child on a scale represents an opportunity to compare pounds and ounces, and heavy versus light. Children may learn what size clothes they wear, and be able to judge what will fit and what won't (that's an early exercise in "spatial relation").

- **Cooking** -- Adults pour, measure, divide, estimate time, and read labels every time they prepare a meal. Why not include even very young children in on the action? Before he can pour pancake batter or read recipes, a child can stir with a wooden spoon in a plastic bowl. Show a child how you follow a recipe step by step, and how you set the oven temperature. Remember to warn children about what's too hot to touch or eat!

- **Managing money** -- Children can touch, count, save, sort, and spend money (with supervision, of course). What better way to teach children about the value of money than by taking them shopping and showing them how much they must pay for items -- and how much they will save with discounts and coupons!

- **Around the house** -- Household repairs offer children excellent opportunities to practice math skills. Let children watch as you measure a door frame, or hang a picture in the center of a wall. Children can help you make a list of items you will need to complete a project, including the number of tools. Everyday activities like setting the dinner table are opportunities for children to count and work with numbers.

- **Play** -- Children keep score during store-bought games such as Sorry and dominoes. Children may also race against the clock or measure the distance they can hit or throw a ball. Help children make neighborhood activities and sports more than just good exercise. When children pretend, they often create lifelike situations in which they may check a bus schedule, or gauge how much fuel is needed for a long car trip. Pretend play sometimes takes off from reading literature, much of which contains information about numbers and counting. Also, don't forget about math concepts involved in puzzles and blocks, both of which involve the whole child in learning.

- **Travelling** -- Even a short car trip offers children experiences with math. Ask children to identify the speed limit on a passing sign. Estimate the number of minutes it takes to get to a relative's house. Remember games you played in the back seat of the car, like counting yellow school buses and identifying the numbers on license plates.

(NAEYC—the National Association for the Education of Young Children)