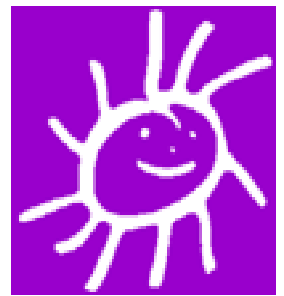


The Children's Center at Caltech



March 2008

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Upcoming Activities

Evening Under the Stars
Saturday, May 10th

As we move into spring it's time for transitions. Children will be moving into the next room and new families will be joining the Center. Transitions can be stressful for parents and children alike. We realize the delicate nature of these moves and the importance of good communication.

Lead teachers have a pivotal role in this communication. They meet once a week with Liz and me to discuss, among other things, transitions. From the Lead teacher meeting the information is carried to the team meetings. Leads are responsible for informing parents of the up-coming moves and Liz notifies families from our wait list of openings.

During these meetings, we look at the schedules of openings, fit children from the waiting list into new spots, and choose the children who will be moving from younger to older classrooms.

There are many things that factor into this decision. We begin by considering the child's maturity level; age and developmental readiness; emotional/social relationships; and vacation schedules. Each of these is a factor that weighs into the order and timing of each individual move.

As a parent you may wonder, "Why is our family vacation a factor?" It can be hard for a child

to move to a new room and a week later be gone for month and then return to the new room. To minimize the number of changes that a child must navigate through the teacher may choose to postpone the move until your family returns.

Sometimes we are able to move friends together. A close friend can offer support in a new environment. Other times a teacher may opt to separate friends for a short duration in order to give one or both some independence. The shy of two friends may need the opportunity to establish their own personal bonds with new teachers before their friend joins the room.

Fondly - Susan

Evening Under the Stars



Catch the bug - "Fireflies" that is - and join us Saturday, May 10th, 2008 at the CCC's Sixth Annual **Evening Under the Stars** event, as we raise money for improving and beautifying our children's outdoor environment (grass and other landscaping, benches, murals, lighting, etc.)

The fundraising committee is busy fine-tuning the party details and procuring donation items. A few items have started

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coming in for both the silent and live auctions, including a wonderful "new" vacation home donation. (You will have to show up for more details!) Lead teachers have chosen the room basket themes as follows:

- Bunnies - Family game night
- Dolphins - Art
- Penguins - Animals
- Koalas - Chocolate
- Raccoons - Cooking
- Beavers - Science

If you are new to the Center or just have not had the opportunity to join us, please do so this year. The evening will include music, cocktails, dinner, auctions, and relaxation with CCC teachers and administrators, as well as other parents.



Please support your classroom by donating to your class basket and, of course, by buying tickets to the event. Invitations should be mailed shortly. Donations items, money, and your help are always accepted; just contact the office or Fundraising Chairperson, Coleen Roehl (coleen@gps.caltech.edu).



From the Science Lab

The lab has been very exciting this month as we witness the first signs of spring. One of the children brought in tadpoles he found with his family during a weekend field



trip. We will be watching them grow over the next few months. We are planting potatoes, Swiss chard and carrots.

Although we, as adults, are so familiar with these processes, to children they seem almost like magic. Something that looks like a fish turns into a four legged jumping animal. A tiny fleck turns into a plant that we can actually eat.

As you are out and about with your children this month, look for signs of early growth such as leaf and flower buds in the plants and help your children notice them. Consider taking pictures or making drawings to record your observations over time, noting the changes that you see.



Bunny Hopping

Greetings Bunny Families!

The Bunnies have been exploring Sight and Sound. Earlier in the month, they enjoyed seeing pictures of animals and playing with small animal figures. They explored how animals make sound. The "Mooooo" of a cow seemed to be a class favorite. On rainy days we listened and looked out our "good-bye" window to see the raindrops as they fell from the sky. We also looked at Transportation and watched different cars and trucks drive by.

The fire engines, with their bright lights and loud sirens, were also a Bunny favorite.



Right now the Bunnies are exploring people using the sense of sight. People-watching is one activity we've been working on, either through our window or when we go on walks. We are talking about what we see people doing as they go by. We have seen people

walking or running by, waving bye-bye, pushing strollers, and picking up and dropping off other friends.

While on our walks on campus, the bunnies found it funny to see people riding on bikes. They also enjoyed waving bye-bye to everyone as we strolled along in our buggy. Of course, we cannot forget to mention another class favorite, visiting our friends the turtles and fish at the campus pond!

One of our favorite daily activities is singing songs using our Bunny's names in them. Songs like *Who Came To School Today*, *Bibbity, Bibbity, Bumble Bee*, *Won't You Say Your Name For Me*, and *Show Me Your Jumping*. Our older Bunnies get so excited to listen out for their name in the song, or when they can point out a fellow Bunny's name to go next.



Three of our Bunnies celebrated birthdays this past month. Our friends, **Joanna**, **Molly A.** and **Itamar** all turned one. How Exciting! Teacher **Aleesha** also celebrated her birthday in



February. We hope everyone had a wonderful time on their special day.

Bunny Reminders:

1. Remember to check your child's cubby to make sure there are extra clothes for the following day. We suggest bringing clothes for both warm and cold weather.
2. Also, we would like to remind all parents to bring children in clothes that can be soiled. Our paints are washable but sometimes may not completely come off some fabrics. The bunnies are encouraged, but not forced, to wear smocks so some clothes may get stained.
3. Rest-Sitting Opportunities: Thursdays from 1:30pm-2:30pm and the third Wednesday of the month from 1:15pm-3:00pm
4. Remember to sign the Sign In/Out Sheet everyday. It is very important! In case of an emergency, this sheet will let us know if you child is in attendance.



Music Time

used for hearing. This is enhanced by finger painting, measuring arm lengths, and asking cognitive questions like "how many blocks tall are you?" or "whose eyes are these?"

The children have been using hand held mirrors to see themselves and create drawings using what they see as inspiration. A few of the other activities that the children have worked on have included making silhouettes and making footprints. As is age-appropriate, the children are centered on "I can do it myself," saying "No" and giving opinions to various situations. These are sure signs that they are truly expressing their independence.



We have continued with a structured music time on alternating Mondays and Tuesdays each week beginning at 10:30 a.m. The children have the opportunity to shake bells, play the tambourine, ring chimes, and much more. Remember this music is in addition to the already daily scheduled circle time music. We would like to thank Todd (**Phoebe's** Dad) for coming to the classroom during music time to play the guitar, the children really enjoyed it.

Recipe for Success

Sing to your child the tune of *Where is Thumpkin?* with the following words: Where are your ears (Twice), There they are (Twice), Touch them with your finger (Twice), Just like me (Twice). Expand on this song with other parts of the



The Dolphins have been focusing on how people change and grow. They have been pointing to eyes that are used for seeing, the nose that is used for smelling, and the ears that are

body such as arms, legs, feet, and nose.

Transitions

Many of the children are ready to transition to the Penguin class, but we have to wait for space availability. Therefore, if there is space for a full time child in the Penguin class then a part time child may have to wait for the next transition space. By licensing standards each classroom is only allotted a particular number of children in the classroom daily. For the Dolphin classroom that number is 12.

Annual Fundraiser

The theme for the Dolphin auction basket is *Art*. Suggested donated items for the basket are displayed in the classroom, but don't limit yourselves to our list of suggested items. Any item you bring related to the theme of Art will be greatly appreciated.

Thanks for your continued support of the Dolphin classroom.



Penguin Parade

The Penguins have been busy learning about different types of transportation. We've learned two new songs *Twinkle, Twinkle Traffic Light* and *I'm a Piece of Tin*. The Penguins enjoyed listening to the story *Five Trucks*, by Brian Floca.



The Penguins enjoyed wheel day and also had a fun walk and visit to the Pasadena Fire Station. There are pictures of the trip available for viewing on the CCC web site.



After our trip The Penguins were asked "What did you see at the Fire Station?" Here's what some of the Penguins said:

Lilah: "Like the elephant...black!"

Erin: "Big fire truck."

Amy: "Wee-o-wee-o-wee."

Rhea: "A ladybug."

Euan: "I didn't see a dog."

Ken Ken: "Big fire truck"

Ian: "I see my mom come to the fire engine."

Zohar: "Fire."

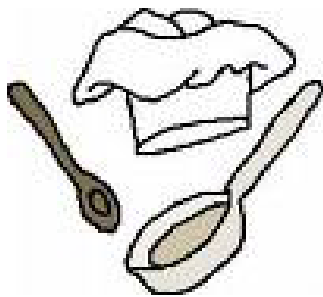
Ryan: A big fire truck."

Sasha: "And the men."

Hanning: "Peoples."

Christina: "All red."

The Penguins are currently concentrating on the Form and Function of cooking utensils. We will do a lot of cooking projects in March!

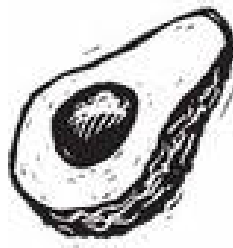
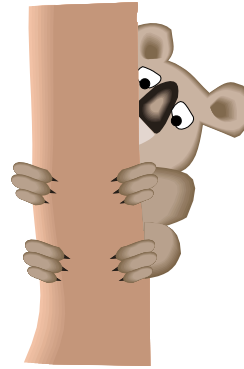


The Penguins would like to thank Jinny (**Sasha's** mom) for teaching us about incline planes, pendulums, and pulleys.

Koala Korner

Hello Koala Families!

The Koalas have been exploring changes through water. We have discovered endless avenues that water can change or affect all kinds of things. Just recently the Koalas took the avenue of living things and the effects that water has. We put some celery in colored water and watched how the colored water was absorbed through the celery sticks.



We have also watched the change of some Narcissus bulbs that were placed in water and we were able to observe the roots, stems, and even the blooming of the strong fragrant flower. Other areas of exploration are the avocados that we first saw on the branch, picked it, waited for it to ripen, tasted it, and are now growing the seeds in water. Some of them have hatched open and we can see the beginning of its roots.

The Koala room is always busy. Some other things that we have started to explore for change are lima beans that have been planted, walks to the pond on campus, which will continue to present changes that the Koalas can explore.

Other wonderful things that have happened in our room: a big congratulations to **Jasmin** on the birth of her first child **Lily**, who

was born on February 16th. While Jasmin is on leave, we welcome **Filmeena** who is filling in for her. We also welcome **Christina** from the Penguin Room and give warm hugs to **Hanu** who moved to the Raccoons.

Reminders:

1. Need parent hours? You can:
 - Rest sit
 - Do flannel board stories
 - Purchase picture paper for the printer or film for the camera
2. It is that time of the year for our annual fundraiser. This year the Koalas have a "Chocolate Basket" to be filled with our donations. Please be sure to bring receipts for the donations and receive a parent hour for every \$25 donation in the basket.



Raccoon Roundup

Hello Everyone!

Wow what beautiful weather we been having! Well I would like to welcome **Betsy Padilla** to the CCC. You are welcome to read her bio in the classroom. The Raccoons also welcome



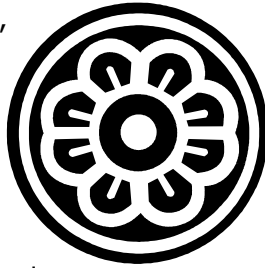
Hanu and his family into the classroom. We say good bye to **Naru** and **Yu Matsumoto** and their family. They will be leaving CCC on March 19 to return to Japan.



We have been having wonderful parent participation. Gerry (**Tyler's** dad) had a construction safety demonstration. The children liked the mini show that Gerry and his friend Hue gave. We also thank Julie (**Jason's** mom) and Portia (**Samantha's** mom) for reading books during circle time. Finally but not least we would like to thank Todd (**Nolan's** dad) for sharing his musical talent. The children had a blast.

It was nice to see so many parents were able to make it to our family lunch. We will be having one more of these in April stay tune for more information.

Patterns, patterns, patterns . . . we are surrounded by them. The Raccoons loved walking on campus and hunting for patterns. They found patterns on the pavement, buildings, or even on a construction site. They were also very proud to wear their patterns to school on Pattern Day.



Our friends have been very busy planting all kinds of things. We are growing carrots, potatoes, chard, chayote, and paper whites. The growth of vegetables and plants also has a pattern. We have journaled their growth. In the next few weeks we will be measuring their growth over time.



Reminders

1. The Raccoon Theme Basket for the CCC Auction on May

10th is Japanese Cooking. Earn 1 parent hour for every \$25 spent. Please bring the receipt!

2. Earn parent hours rest sitting every third wed. of every month.



Beaver Tales

Hello Families!

The month of February was busy as we explored different aspects of scale and structure. By looking at our classroom displays, we did a few surveys and activities on ramps. Turns, incline planes, and speed are some of the ideas that we touched upon. By taking walks on campus, the children gained a further understanding of the different uses of ramps. In addition, the children created a book of ramp designs which includes each of their individual, unique drawings. The book will be given to each child. Thank you Nathan and Karen Bridges for providing the books!



The Beavers have incorporated cooking into the curriculum which was highly successful and a fun opportunity for the children. This past month we made Zucchini Bread and Chapatis with hummus! We all enjoyed shredding, stirring, measuring, and mixing the ingredients. It turned out to be a delicious treat!



Our afternoon bike day turned out well, as the children rode safely and speedily around the campus. Thank you to Aidan Walters McDonald for his violin presentation. The children were excited to hear him play and discuss the structure of a violin. We support the children to share their interests and hobbies!

With the constant activities, we encourage the families to check out the displays on our classroom walls!



Life is a process of becoming, a combination of states we have to go through.

Where people fail is that they wish to elect a state and remain in it.

This is a kind of death.

~ Anais Nin

The Run Away Toddler – Teaching Personal Safety

Kimberley Clayton Blaine, MA,
MFT
www.TheGoToMom.TV

At any given moment your toddler can take off and run out in to a potentially dangerous situation.

Here are some gentle tips on how to keep your little one safe from harm:

1. Set the expectation before you go out: “We are going to the park, no running away from Mama”
2. When you get to your destination, plan a few minutes for your child to run around to release some energy.
3. While at home in the yard, practice saying “Stop” with your child and let her know that when you are out and say, “Stop” her body needs to stop.
4. Always supervise your child no matter where you are.
5. If your child begins to take off, catch up and let her know that you need to keep her close. Don’t get angry; running is a normal stage of development.

Let her know if she can’t refrain from running off, then she can either hold your hand or go in the stroller and have a snack.



From the Editors

Before kids, my dreams of parenthood were moments in the park, times spent at the piano with my child, and gardening together. Of course, these dreams were complete with rainbows and birds twittering. But we all know that this isn’t the real parenting experience.

This morning while driving in to work with Anneliese happily sitting in the back seat I replayed in my head last night’s Jon Stewart’s The Daily Show. The guest wasn’t remotely funny as he talked about computer models predicting severe droughts 50-100 years from now. I started wondering if my selfishness for children was fair to those kids I so dearly love.

I’m tired of the excuses

Everybody uses

He’s your kid

Do as you see fit

But get this through

That I don’t approve

Of what you did

To your own flesh and blood

~What’s the Matter Here by
10,000 Maniacs

The lyrics of the song playing from the car’s speakers shocked me out of the moment. I laughed at myself and at the irony and timing of the lyrics. The next moment I glanced up out the windshield; motion had caught my eye. There were two wild parrots rapidly beating their wings as they pumped across the sky. Far, far behind the birds a jet followed, scraping a white line across the blue.

The beautiful juxtaposition of these flying objects reminded me of something Sam said at a service marking the one-year anniversary of 9/11. Sam spoke of the hopelessness she had felt for her children and for the world during the weeks following that horrible day. And then she thought about her own parents; how they started their family with Sam’s birth just before the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Bobby Kennedy. For my own parents I can only imagine their thoughts for their children during the Bay of Pigs or when I was born two weeks prior to John F. Kennedy’s murder.

As I thought of that, my iPod’s Irony Play List transitioned to Mary Black’s No Frontiers:

*If your life is a rough bed of
brambles and nails*

*And your spirit’s a slave to
man’s whips and man’s jails*

*Where you thirst and you
hunger for justice and right*

*Then your heart is a pure
flame of man’s constant night*

*In your eyes faint as the
singing of a lark*

That somehow this black night

Feels warmer for the spark

Warmer for the spark

To hold us ‘til the day

When fear will lose its grip

And heaven has its way

Heaven knows no frontier

Our parents maintained hope for our future. In that spirit I must have the same hope for our children’s future.

-Erin & Sam



