



The Children's Center at Caltech



October 2009

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Upcoming Activities

Back to School Night

October 2nd, 6-7pm

PTP: Kindergarten Registration Process – Monday, October 19, 2009, 12-1pm. Place TBD. Presented by Beaver teachers.

CCC Board of Trustees

meetings are held at 7pm on the 3rd Monday of each month in the Moore Laboratory, room 239.



From the Director

Kindergarten Preparedness. The sound of those words is enough to send chill down the spines of parents who are agonizing over where to send their 4-year-olds next year. I personally think that the Kindergartens should be ready for children, not the other way round. But

prescreening, play days, and



assessment are part of the process of getting into the right school for your family.

We will be posting the dates for Options Night on our web page. This will give you a chance to see 10 schools in one evening. There will also be more information coming on the times and dates for the parent information workshop regarding the screening tool used by these schools -- Integrated Learning Solution.

Veronica Dayag (Beaver Lead) will be hosting a workshop, **Kindergarten Registration Process** on October 19th, 2009 at noon (place TBA; watch for posting or check website).

Here are some important tips on preparing your children for the rest of their lives.

1. There is no support for the rumor that the kindergarten you choose will affect where they get accepted to college.
2. Knowing all your colors is overrated and is not part of the screening at most schools.
3. Children, much like the rest of us, do their best when they are not pressured and are well rested.
4. Drill and rote learning has its place but not for the preschool child.
5. Creativity is a gift that all children possess and it needs to be nurtured.
6. Critical thinking skills are more important than knowing your state capitals.

Take a minute to check out this video link on creativity and then dance with your child:

http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity.html

Susan – Director



Science Lab

Hello everyone! I hope your summer has been fantastic. As the new school year has begun and transitions are slowing or coming to a close until the next time, most of the preschool classrooms are changing the central concept for their curriculum. I have been supporting the staff with their curriculum, know what their plans are, and I will say that it will be a fun year of explorations and experimentations. I am impressed with the ideas and activities that our teachers are formulating. I am proud of all of them. I am also thankful for them because my daughter is currently a Koala.



Since this will be my first full year as Science Curriculum Coordinator (SCC), I would like to take this time to introduce myself. I began as interim SCC in August of 2008 and became the permanent SCC in March of 2009. Part of my role is to support the Penguins and all preschool classrooms in curriculum planning. I also spend most of my time in the outdoor science lab either with the children or maintaining the

cleanliness and organization of the lab. I am in the office on Fridays. This is the time I take to plan (for the month or field trips), do research, type up notes, look for and write grants to support the center, etc. Feel free to email me, visit me in the lab or in the office if you have any questions or concerns.

Kheng Ly-Hoang
Science Curriculum Coordinator
lkheng@caltech.edu



Bunny Hopping

Hello Everyone,

We would like to welcome our newest Bunny, Jacopo Rossi, and his family to the CCC.

Thank you parents for bringing a ball to share with all of us. The children were able to enjoy the variety of balls and experiment with them in different ways. They spent some time using their large motor skills to throw, roll, and kick the balls around the room and in the yard. The children watched the balls bounce and roll in different



directions. They also enjoyed rolling the balls through the large tube and collecting the balls in the basket. This month will to introduce watercolors to the children.

Hope to see you all at Back to School Night!

Bunny Reminders:

- Please keep extra clothes in your child's cubby.
- Label all items brought to school (clothes, lunch boxes, bottles).
- Fill out the entire top half of the daily sheets.
- Closing time is 5:30pm.

Jasmin Alvarez - Lead Teacher



Dolphin Splash

Welcome to Gali and Raluca, our new Dolphins. Congratulations to Kira, who is now a Penguin. Happy Birthday to Omri, Kylin and Francesco. Some of the Dolphins have asked about Mila. Mila is on vacation, and she will return to school soon. Sadly the Dolphins had to say goodbye to teacher Ling. We will miss her, but we wish her much success in her studies. Thank you to Jenny and Manisha for your help in the Dolphin room. Parents, you will see more of Manisha in the Dolphin class.

On hot days we are enjoying lots of water play. The Dolphins are taking great care of the flowers that are in bloom on our deck. The Dolphins are learning how to take care of nature by watering our plants. We have

enjoyed incline planes in our water table. We are learning about the form and function of kitchen tools, so we would appreciate magazine cut outs of kitchen tools. We are enjoying short walks on campus as the weather permits.

Need parent hours? Here are two suggestions: *make play dough* for the class, or *volunteer* in the classroom. Activity suggestion to try at home: Try a water table activity and incorporate balls and incline planes into the activity.

That's all for now! See everyone at Back to School Night.



Dolphin Reminders:

- Please remember to sign in and out daily.
- Label all clothing, including socks, underwear, and shoes.
- Keep your child's cubby stocked with extra clothing.
- Label lunch containers and specify if anything needs to be heated. Please do not send breakable containers.
- Each day, please check parent and art files for new items.

Retha Jones - Lead Teacher



Penguin Parade

We would like to welcome everyone. This is only the beginning of a beautiful friendship that we hope to develop with all of you. We would like to welcome all of you to join us at Back to School Night on Friday October 2, 2009 from 6-7pm. Come and spend some time with the teachers and get to know us a little more. You can also find out about all the wonderful and fun stuff you can do with your child at home. Hope to see you there.



As the months pass, we will see not only physical but also mental/emotional growth in every child. They will change from a toddlers to young preschoolers. One of our new Penguins, Caroline, said, "I'm not a Dolphin. I'm a Penguin," and beamed when we told her Yes! Dean was working with clicks (small plastic squares), and when he was done he said, "I made an air conditioner." When they can ask a question and answer it on their own, or build something and tell us about it, that is how we know that they are slowly going into the preschool stage. This month we are focusing on

creativity. We will continue to explore painting with different gadgets and other tools, as well as using hands and feet.

Penguin Reminders:

- Please label all clothes, sunscreen and any other items.
- Please sign in and out.
- If your child is going to be out please call and let us know.
- Please check cubbies for wet or dirty clothes.
- Make sure you take your child's blanket home on Friday.

Martha P. Cisneros – Penguin Teacher



Koala Korner

Hello to everyone!

The Koala Staff would like to welcome Houston, Kasra, Vikki, Ludovico, Thomas, Isaac, and their families to the Koala room. We said farewell to former Koalas Niku, Hadar, William, Amy, Daria and Adytian. We had a goodbye snack for Koala Ma'ayan Zadok; she moved to Israel!

In the month of September we continued with *form and function*: how things work, by selecting tools the children use for creativity such as tools to sculpt clay. The children have been working with the scales in the Science Lab and inside the classroom. They balanced rocks, plastic teddy bears, buttons, hex nuts, and colored pebbles. We used the scale to estimate the weight of the hammer. At the carpentry table, the Koalas are working on their eye-hand

coordination skills, turning the hand drill to make a hole for threading screws with screwdrivers. Last month we practiced how to put on gloves and goggles. The Koalas come to the carpentry table ready to hammer nails or to saw wood.

Clay was introduced with some of the tools the children will be using to sculpt. Here is some feedback about what is clay: Peter said, "You push it and put water on it and make things". The way Koalas described two different clay tools: "It's a roller" – Houston, "It's for cutting off" – Liong.



Venn Diagrams help with writing and literacy. The charts show the children's words, comparing and contrasting the balance scale vs. the hanging scale. Jesse and Teddy said, "This has two baskets" about the balance scale. The hanging scale differences: Vikki said, "This is for putting rocks and it has no hook" and Paloma said, "This one hangs and has numbers". The balance scale was used for testing which object's weight balanced the hammer's weight.

The children play a spy game to find screws. On our campus walk, the Koalas spied screws on the wooden benches, light post, truck, pathway signs, and a

metal garbage can. The Koala Staff hopes to see you for Back to School Night on Friday October 2nd, 2009 from 6-7 p.m. *Please pick up your child at or before 5:30 p.m.* to allow time for you and the teachers to prepare for the event.

Koala Reminders:

- Please latch the small white door on your way in and out of the room.
- Please sign roll sheet at drop off time and pick up time.
- Suggestions for Parent Hours Opportunities: read a story at circle time, make an activity (e.g., cooking, making a picture book), plant in the garden, and more.

Hilda Llamas- Koala Teacher



Raccoon Roundup

Welcome to the Raccoon Room!

The Raccoons have been exploring lines — vertical, horizontal, intersecting, etc. They have journaled their findings on campus walks and in the classroom. We have also created intersecting lines with geo boards. They have become aware of shapes and how lines are important. A child has said, "Look, I drew intersecting lines, and it is also an X." We are slowly diving into symmetry. If you have any other ideas about lines that are developmentally appropriate, let us know.

Summer is over and we are getting into the swing of things. We hope the classroom will be a wonderful experience for you and your family. The teachers

are excited for the upcoming year with you. We have been observing the mornings and we would like to suggest some things to get your child's day started off smoothly. First off,



we know many of you have newborns, and it is hard to establish a routine, or some of you have said it's just hard getting out the door. The CCC is very flexible on the times children can be dropped off. So the teachers are suggesting that, whenever possible, please arrive before 9:15am. When saying goodbye, most children do so much better when it is earlier in our classroom schedule rather than at 9:30 or later. Anytime later than 9:30, the majority of the class is already here and the classroom may seem overwhelming to a child who has just arrived and needs extra TLC. Silvia's wonderful snack is also served at 9:30, which is another reason to get here early.

With the start of October, we also begin building up parent hours. We cannot stress it enough -- begin knocking off some parent hours right away. Here are some ways you can earn parent hours:

- Attend a work Saturday
- Attend a PTP meeting
- Sign up to rest sit (every 3rd Wednesday of the month)
- Come in and share a talent: a

musical instrument or cooking

- Purchase Canon ink/paper for our classroom personal printer

Reminder: You are responsible for writing down your hours in the Parent hour book; teachers will initial later.

Veronica Gama - Lead Teacher



Beaver Tales

The Beavers staff would like to officially welcome all children and families to the 2009-2010 school year! A majority of our children have transferred from the Koalas and Raccoons, however we a few new families who joined our center. We would like to welcome Srijani Bhattacharya, Maya Elizabeth Fisher, Owen Johnson, and their families to the CCC community!

Fall has arrived and the Beavers are still gearing towards *Form and Function* as the central concept for our curriculum. We intend to stick with gardening as we just transplanted our "hanging jewel" plant to our garden by the driveway. The Beavers will continue to focus on learning about gardening concepts and the process of growth and change. Our lace cards have been a hit, so we plan on transitioning to sewing in the next month. The children have been exploring different art materials by creating beautiful paintings; see bulletin boards throughout the classroom. We have also investigated the different eating utensils they are familiar with and identified their use. We documented the



wildfires that recently occurred in our area. Check out our previous science journals for your child's response. Please continue to read our dry-erase board, located next to our daily sign in/out sheet. Notices, reminders, and daily curriculum are posted on the board daily.

Here is a list of our current room parents, webmaster, and scholastic book organizer, with e-mail addresses if you would like to contact them.

Room Parents:

Jessica Arlett (Ryan's mom): arlett@caltech.edu
 Linda Good-Hart (Sam's mom): lgood01@lausd.net

Scholastic Book Organizer:

Jennifer Sun (Dario's mom): jen@whyville.net

Webmaster:

Cheng Tong (Liong's mom, Koala): chentong_2000@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editor:

Colette Caggiano (Dante's mom): colette@asimow.com

Beaver Reminders:

- Keep an extra change of clothing in your child's cubby.
- Apply sunblock in the morning. We will reapply throughout the day.
- For water play, bring a bathing suit and a towel.

Veronica Dayag- Lead Teacher



Parenting Tips

Benefits of Toy Rotation

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

You're probably tossing out toys left and right because toy clutter

is mind-boggling. Or if you're a pack rat, you're storing all the outgrown toys in every crevice of the closet or attic.

Because children play with toys differently during their stages of development, don't be so quick to toss out a toy that they've lost interest in.

Your two year old may play with the barn doors and stomp the horse around. However, when your child turns 4 that same barn will be played with differently. At four, dramatic play is in full effect, they will now have the farmer talk and brainstorm ideas on how to have the horse pull the hay. To get the most out of your child's toys, store their favorites away or put them on a rotation schedule so that when you bring them out again, they spark new interest.

Try storing toys away for 3-5 months at a time. You'll be pleasantly surprised at your child's response to their old toys.

TheGoToMom.TV

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From the Editors

As always, you can e-mail us at colette@asimow.com

