



# The Children's Center at Caltech



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## Upcoming Activities

### Back to School Night

October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 6-7pm

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

I would like to welcome all the new families to the CCC. As we move into the fall and the dust settles after all the transitions, we will begin the 2009-2010 school year. The teachers will begin to branch off from the form and function of tools into areas of interest in each classroom. We are all looking forward to a great year with the children.

The CCC is not just about the children. You, the parent, are also a



part of the curriculum in many ways. Parent hours are one way to include you in the Center. Another great way to participate is to join us for *Back to School* night on October 2nd from 6 to 7pm. That night you will learn more about your room and the teachers and how you can be part of the team. It's a fun and informative night and we hope to see you all there.

We also have parent-teacher workshops throughout the year that will be posted on our web page and mentioned in the newsletters. These lunch meetings are held in the office, where you will see parent and teacher resources available to check out. Come on in and check them out!

Susan Wood – CCC Director



## Science Lab

Summer is coming to a close soon, but that doesn't mean we stop gardening. Here is an excerpt from *Planting Before Winter* by Peggy Ashbrook in the National Science Teachers Association's Journal of Science and Children.

*Planting flower bulbs is a wonderful activity for many reasons: learning about the life cycle of a plant bulb teaches children about seasonal changes and the environmental needs of plants, and children can observe and measure plant growth over*

*time and see the results of their work in the spring. Conversation about where to plant can build awareness of how the outdoor space is used by other people and animals, where the Sun shines on the ground, where the rain falls, and draws attention to soil as a resource. It is also an inexpensive way to have a beautiful garden the children will be proud of ... Safety measures include training the children to keep their hands and plant parts out of their mouths and to dig toward themselves to keep from throwing dirt, and your careful choice of nontoxic bulbs.*

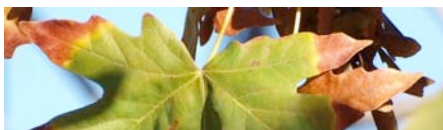


*Children need to be outside where the complex, ever-changing environment stimulates their brain. Playing and planting outside leads children to make discoveries and have experiences that indoor play with potting soil cannot replicate. Having the actual experiences and observing flower buds growing and changing color builds understanding.*

Visit the National Gardening Association website or this link -

<http://www.kidsgardening.com/grants/heinz.asp> for more information on the **Heinz Wholesome Memories Intergenerational Garden Grant**. Any adult who wishes to garden with preschool through high school-aged family members can apply for this grant. Applications are due January 10, 2010.

Kheng Ly-Hoang  
Science Curriculum Coordinator



## Bunny Hopping

Hi Everyone!

The summer has almost neared its end, transitions are almost over, and things have begun to settle down. The children have established relationships with their primary caregivers and we are all ready to gear up for a bright new school year! Please save the date for **October 2, 7pm: Back to School Night**.

This month we said "see you later" to our friend Gali, who is moving to the Dolphins. We also welcomed two new friends, Cailin and Chloe, to the Bunny Room. We also welcome a new teacher, Manisha, who will be substituting in the room. She comes to us from the preschool side, and she is already a familiar face to some of the children.

The Bunnies continue to explore the concept of Cause and Effect. This past month we touched upon music. The children have enjoyed using the tambourines, bells, and egg shakers along with the music. They particularly

liked "Up so High, Down so Low...", "Bell Horses," "Shake and Stop." Please ask the teachers if you would like a copy of the words to these songs. It would make a great home-to-school connection for the children. We are now venturing into the endless possibilities of ways to manipulate balls. This month please bring a ball to school with your child.



We know the flu season has lasted a little bit longer this year. We are taking extra precautions to ensure that the children as well as the teachers stay healthy. We have been encouraging frequent hand washing as this is the best thing we can do to stop the spread of illness. The information below can be found in the CCC Handbook.

### **Sick Child Policy**

**When in doubt about your child's health, keep him/her home. Please remember that the teachers and other children may catch the illness that an ill child may bring to school. Keep your child home if s/he:**

- is in the first three days of a cold
- has a sore throat

- has had a rectal temperature greater than 100, with or without other symptoms, in the past 24 hours
- has been vomiting in the past 24 hours
- has had diarrhea in the past 24 hours
- has impetigo (strep or staph infection on the skin)
- has an untreated conjunctivitis ("pink eye")
- has any unidentified rash
- or any other contagious disease or condition

Please notify your child's teacher if your child has not been feeling well; is acting "out of sorts"; or has been exposed to head lice, chicken pox, measles, meningitis or any other contagious disease. Additionally, a green nasal discharge may indicate an infection requiring treatment by a physician. Please notify your child's teacher or the office if your child has contracted any of the aforementioned conditions.

**If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be contacted to discuss the symptoms and you may be asked to take the child home within one hour. Your child may return to class after s/he is free of the above symptoms for 24 hours.**

Reminders:

- Apply sunscreen in the mornings.
- Fill out the entire top half of the daily sheet at drop off times.
- Check your parent mailboxes (located right outside the front door)

Jasmin Alvarez - Lead Teacher



# Dolphin Splash

Hello everyone,

The Dolphins would like to welcome our new friends and families: Mila Piatkov, Kylin Gahlmann, Francesco Guala and Gali Feigenbaum.

We said farewell to Caroline Holdsworth and Molly Asimow and their families, as they joined the Penguin room. We wish them the best.

We would also like to say thank you to our Dolphin parent volunteers:  
Vijaya Kumar (Shreya's mom) - Room Parent  
Younghee Park (Logan's mom) - Webmaster  
Jennifer Gahlmann (Kylin's mom) - Scholastic Book Order Coordinator



This month we are investigating the concept of *Form and Function* by focusing on Creativity. We have been painting with newsprint balls, spray painting, using water colors and body painting. The Dolphins really enjoy it! Within the coming weeks we're going to explore luffa sponges, rolling balls on paint and observing color mixing.

## Dolphin Reminders:

- Please bring extra clothes for your children and label them.
- Please bring a swimsuit for water play.
- Check your child's cubby for wet or dirty clothes at the end of each day.
- Sign in and out daily.
- If you would like to check out books, we have a sign up sheet.
- No children in the kitchen please!!!
- Make sure that you have enough parent hours by the end of September 2009.

Need ideas for parent hours?

- Rest sitters are always needed (check with us for dates).
- Book repair.
- Buy ink for our printer and earn 2 parent hours.
- Come and do an activity with the Dolphins (Cooking, art, music...).

Adi Botvin – Dolphin Teacher



## Penguin Parade

The Penguins continue to focus on the form and function of how things work with an emphasis on practical life, cooking tools and gardening tools. The Penguins have explored transferring colored water using eyedroppers, used a spatula, and practiced putting on gloves and oven mitts in the practical life bench. The Penguins also used the eyedroppers to do a spinning art project. They were asked what the eye dropper was used for before doing the project and Dean said "Eye dropper, squeeze it...for

paint...water." Basters were also included in our outside water table.

The Penguins have also been very busy painting. They did some painting with a coil whisk and have practiced using rolling pins and chop sticks. In addition, Gina (Thomas' mom) came over to the Penguin classroom and helped us plant an herb garden, which consists of onion chives, German thyme, lemon balm, common sage, cinnamon basil and Texas terragon. The children have done a great job watering our herbs.



The Penguins have also explored the use of sponges. They have used them for painting, squeezing and absorbing. The Penguins have even waited for the sponges to absorb the water and then threw them against our fence. That was fun.

Thank You to:

- Jeff for painting our cubbies, helping us during lunch time and helping us prepare snacks.

- Gina for planting our herb garden.
- The Adam and Holdsworth family for purchasing ink.

Ink is in high demand in the Penguin classroom so please feel free to buy some more. We can never have too much ink in our classroom. Parents please remember that all parent participation hours are due on September 30<sup>th</sup>. Please see Virginia if you still need to complete parent participation hours.

Dolores Gonzalez  
- Penguin Teacher



## Koala Korner

Please welcome Alex Xie, Sharani Bhattacharya, Houston Blaine, Kasra Ghaffari, Kaila Hoang and their families to the Koalas. And we say goodbye to Daria Hajimiri, Amy Zheng, Colum Manning, Adityan Swaminathan and Maggie Hill and their families.



Since we are still in the process of transitioning, we continue to introduce or reintroduce the proper ways of handling and using tools, toys, materials, and furniture. We have begun our focus on Forms and Function. We began introducing materials such as tools (screws, screwdrivers, tongs, pulleys, tweezers and saws).

Children were provided the opportunities to make observations and express their thoughts and opinions, think critically, share and take turns with peers and adults. By doing so, children are allowed to enhance their cognitive, social language, and fine motor skills.

One of the activities was the introduction of a screw. Children were asked what they know about screws. Neeku said, "The screws go up and down. Liong said, "You put the screws inside. Jesse said, "It screws things together. Peter said, "I do not know". Hadar said, "I screw stuff". Molly said, "I need to work with".

Another activity was the introduction of tweezers by observing, feeling, and testing out tweezers. Maayan said, "For squeezing, squeeze and hold it". Neeku said, "You pick buttons with it, you hold and press. Daria said, "It is a thing that are picking up thing with it and grab it. Seth said, "You hold them from the side and push them together.

### Koala Reminders:

- Please label all clothes and sunscreen.
- Please close and latch the gate and the door in restroom when you leave.

- Please bring a family picture to be framed for the classroom.
- Please complete the family bio and attach a family photo for the class album.
- Please sign in/out every day.
- Upon arrival, please remind your child to match his/her picture with his/her name on the pocket chart when they are present or absent.

Darryl Hampton – Koala Teacher



## Raccoon Roundup

Hello Everyone,

Summer is coming to an end. We are having some children leave to kindergarten while others are moving on to the Beaver classroom. It has been a summer of changes. It has also been an exciting summer getting to know the new children and families. Please save the date Friday, October 2nd from 6-7pm for Back to School Night. Remember, it is an adult event only.

In the month of August, we started the concept of Form and Function. The children compared and contrasted carpentry gloves and garden gloves. Along with that they also planted sunflowers. We have looked at how the form of the hand shovel is designed for the purpose of digging in the soil. Our friends have also discussed the similarities and differences between a fork and a spoon. In addition to these activities, the children experienced how different size bristles on a paintbrush can create different

thicknesses of lines.

After the line activity inspired by the book *A Bad Case Of Stripes*, the children really started to take a closer look at lines. At the light table, we traced with rulers to create vertical and horizontal lines. Later the children created their own lines with their friends' bodies by lying on the carpet. Then we went on a walk on campus and journaled radiating lines found on the spokes of a bike. The children started to become so aware of lines that we had a bring a striped T-shirt day. We took pictures and created a pictograph. It will be a continuing project for September.



Thank you, Junjun Liu and Lifeng Zheng (Amy Zheng's parents) for becoming our Raccoon Room Parents. You should be receiving an email from them around the middle of September.

Veronica Gama - Lead Teacher



## Beaver Tales

As the school year comes to an end, we would like to wish all the Beavers the best of luck in

Kindergarten! We would also like to extend a warm welcome to the new Beaver class!



As the summer heat remained, we took advantage of water play to cool us down. We added color, bubbles, and even inner tubes to jazz it up! Our garden continues to thrive as we documented the outcome of our carrots, eggplant, and sunflowers. We explored the different types of trees in the yard, which was accompanied by our very own CCC Tree Guide that we made. Our "How To" month is ongoing as we revisit the use of everyday utensils such as spoons and forks, a variety of gloves used throughout the center, and tools from our woodworking area. These were also supported by guides that allowed the children to identify their use. Please feel free to explore our curriculum by looking at the children's work on display.

Here are a few fun recipes to try with your child at home!

### Playdough

3 cups flour  
1 cup salt  
6 teaspoons cream of tartar  
3 cups water  
3 tablespoons vegetable oil  
Food coloring

Mix flour, salt, and cream of tartar in a large saucepan. Blend water and oil together in a bowl.

Add to the saucepan and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until it thickens. Add several drops of food coloring until you get the right color. Cook for about five minutes. Take the play dough out of the saucepan and put it on a cutting board or counter and knead for a few minutes. Add flour if it's too sticky.

### Homemade Silly Putty

2 cups white school glue  
1 cup liquid starch

Mix together and set aside until dry. Store in an airtight container.

### Goey Goop

1/2 cup water  
2 cups cornstarch  
Food coloring

In a large bowl, mix together water and cornstarch until smooth. Add food coloring and stir. Play with goop on a plastic covered surface or on newspaper.

Veronica Dayag- Lead Teacher



## "My Two Cents"

*Contributions from CCC parents and teachers - about OUR children.*

As children move from being toddlers to being preschoolers, a whole new set of issues arise. Sometimes their play can alarm parents. Your sweet toddler suddenly turns into a preschooler and says things like, "Mommy you're not my friend," or, "Daddy I'm going to shoot you dead!"

Let me share what I know about children this age and how we interact with them when these kinds of things come up. Around the age of 4, children become aware of death. I was reminded of this just a week ago by a 4 year-old girl, who said, "Susan, you will eventually die." Then she skipped merrily away to play.

The children also think in extreme ways about good and bad. This gets incorporated into their play. Children use play to work out feelings of fear and helplessness. They also want to feel powerful and often resort to media-driven pretend play. This results in superhero play. I'm sure that children hear some version of a good guy/bad guy play scenario out in the yard. We try to redirect the children to characters that save people, like fire fighters.

We have learned the hard way that forbidding such play results in children hiding from adults or lying about what they are doing. Just the other day, I asked a Raccoon what he was building and he told me it was a fire hose but it looked suspiciously like a gun.

Children in the United States are exposed to an average of 3 to 5 hours of television a day (NAEYC Media Violence and Children). From the news to children's shows, there is a surprising amount of violence on TV. The best solution is to limit TV watching for very young children. For any parent that wants more information, we have a lending library in the office and brochures on media violence.

– Susan Wood



## From the Editors

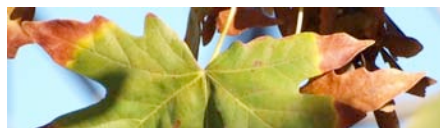
We are back from the east coast and back in the swing of things. Dante and Molly both started school last week, in their new Penguin and Beaver classes, and are so happy to find things mostly familiar.

As always, you can e-mail us at [colette@asimow.com](mailto:colette@asimow.com)

Sharing is nice, but ... there ARE limits.

Sometimes it's difficult to make the call in the midst of a hectic morning routine, but for the health of our fine community, please use the CCC parent handbook's guidelines to decide whether or not to keep your child home from school.

FYI: *Sick Child Policy* (from the CCC handbook) is included at the end of the Bunnies Hopping section for your reference. For information on the flu, you may access: <http://flu.gov/>



## Staff Roster

### Classroom Teachers

Jasmin Alvarez, Bunny Lead  
 Veronica Espinosa, Bunnies  
 Olivia Garcia, Bunnies  
 Sona Kechichian, Bunnies  
 Nora Sterling, Bunnies

Retha Jones, Dolphin Lead

Adi Botvin-Diskin, Dolphin  
 Tom Frederick, Dolphins  
 Angie Gonzalez, Dolphins  
 Ling Su, Dolphins

Virginia Covarrubias, Penguin  
 Lead

Sharon Amor, Penguins  
 Martha Cisneros, Penguins  
 Dolores Gonzalez, Penguins  
 Gretchen Kemmerer, Penguins  
 Starla Richardson, Penguins

Filmeena Amjad, Koala Lead  
 Sonia Alvarez, Koalas  
 Cynthia Escandon, Koalas  
 Darryl Hampton, Koalas

Veronica Gama, Raccoon Lead  
 Sara Kapadia, Raccoons  
 Hilda Llamas, Raccoons  
 Dacia Mendoza, Raccoons  
 Jannette Norwood, Raccoons

Veronica Dayag, Beaver Lead  
 Miranda Heller, Beavers  
 Shain-Yann Hsu, Beavers  
 Manisha Kodituwakku,  
 Beavers  
 Elise Parseghian, Beavers

### Other people in the classroom

- Dayita Datta, Music Specialist
- Silvia Luna, Housekeeper
- Kheng Ly Hoang, Science lab coordinator
- Elena Zapata, Housekeeper

