



News from Carrie's Desk....

It's hard to believe October is almost over, and the end of the semester is fast approaching, only 5 weeks until finals!! We are enjoying the last few warm days of fall, as we know the cooler weather will set in fast. In the next week or so, I will be asking you what your plans are for the spring semester and what your child care needs will be.

I want to thank all of our families who joined Barb, Lisa and I at the ISU Homecoming Parade. It was a very cold morning but we had a big turnout of around 30 people, and most importantly, we had a lot of fun. We saw many more of our families on the parade route. It was wonderful to see all of your smiling faces along the way!!!

I've heard great things from all of your parent/teacher conferences!! Barb, Pam and Lisa all enjoyed having the time away from the classroom to plan for conferences and talk with each of you one on one about your child. Please know if you ever have questions about the program or your child's development, you can request a conference at any time. You do not have to wait for the designated semester conferences. Just e-mail or talk with one of us at drop off/pick up and we will arrange a time to meet.

NAEYC Accreditation - In September, the ISU Child Care Center started a four step process of becoming accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We are now in step 2 of the process which is a self-assessment phase. In this step, we will be looking at our policies and practices to ensure we are meeting the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards. For the next several months, we will be documenting how we meet the 10 program standards and will be asking you to fill out a survey. The 4 steps are a lengthy process, but it allows us to look at the work we do and how we can improve our interactions with children and families, as well as each other, and the

community. Eventually, we will submit materials to become a candidate of accreditation and during the summer or fall of 2015 we will have a NAEYC Assessor come to the center to observe and evaluate the program. For more information on accreditation, you can follow this link: <http://www.naeyc.org/academy/>. There are specific links that will take you to the steps of accreditation as well as the 10 standards. NAEYC also has a family site that offers a vast array of resources and you can locate that website through this link: <http://families.naeyc.org/>.

Early Childhood Updates – The state of Illinois has created a statewide quality rating and improvement system called ExceleRate Illinois. You can access this link <http://www.excelebrateillinois.com/> to find out more information on ExceleRate Illinois and its importance. It is our goal to apply for and become a Gold Circle of Quality center. We have decided to obtain accreditation first, which will greatly assist us in achieving the gold circle. Between ExceleRate Illinois and NAEYC Accreditation, there are a few changes we need to make such as conducting developmental screenings annually. Barb e-mailed each of you a few weeks ago regarding having your child screened using the Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). Barb, Pam & Lisa have been working on screening each of your children. Once everyone has been screened, they will share the results with you. If there are any developmental concerns regarding your child, we will discuss them with you and let you know if we feel the concern is something that we can watch over the next few months or if it is something that we feel your child needs to be referred for a more in-depth evaluation. Much of the work to obtain accreditation and ExceleRate Illinois requirements will be done behind the scenes. We will keep you updated on the process and we hope you will be willing to help us along the way, as needed.

Good luck to you all on the rest of your semester!!



Dressing for the Weather



You never know what to expect with fall weather! Already we have had a couple of cooler mornings with warmer afternoons. Please send your child in layers or keep a warm jacket, a snug hat and a pair of light weight mittens in their cubbies. We go out daily year round; it's what

keeps kids and adults healthy! Be sure to restock extra clothes with both warm and cool weather clothing for a while.

Fool Proof Play Dough

2 $\frac{3}{4}$ c. flour

$\frac{1}{2}$ c. salt

1 Tbsp. alum

2 pkg. unsweetened Kool-Aid

3 Tbsp. cooking oil

2 c. boiling water

Mix dry ingredients. Add oil and water. Stir quickly.

Mix well. When cool, mix/knead with your hands. Store in air tight container.



Not harmful when swallowed.

WZND Radio Students Help the Child Care Kids



The ISU Child Care Center has been WZND's philanthropy since 1996. Each year, students from WZND bring pumpkins to the Center for the children to paint. They also hold a yearly fundraiser called "Turkey Bowl" and they come in the spring to hold an egg hunt. We appreciate all of the work that WZND does for the Center to raise money for various items. In a week or so, we will have some raffle tickets that you may purchase (\$1 for 1 or \$5 for 6) which are being sold for the "Turkey Bowl" event that will be held on November 15, 2014. In past years, WZND has been able to donate \$1000-\$2000 to the Center. This year, money that is donated will be used to purchase new outdoor tables for the Center. From 1996 to 2014, WZND has raised more than \$30,000 for the ISU Child Care Center!!!



The Project Approach for Preschoolers

Preschoolers like to investigate! They enjoy learning about the world around them. The Project Approach involves children in studies of things nearby that interest them and are worth knowing more about. Teachers can use the Project Approach to meet most of the Early Illinois Early Learning Benchmarks. Projects are like good stories. They have three parts: a beginning, middle, and end. Here's a summary of the three phases of project work.

Phase 1—Getting Started

- Children choose what to investigate, with some guidance from the teacher.
- The children discuss what they already know about the topic. The teacher helps children record their ideas.
- With help from the teacher, the children list questions that they want to answer during their study.
- Children talk about what answers they might find to their questions. The teacher lists their predictions.

Phase 2—Collecting Information about the Topic

- The teacher helps the children plan trips to places where they can do fieldwork and helps them find people to interview who can answer their questions.
- With adult help, the children use books and computers to find information.
- During class meetings, children report what they find in their fieldwork. The teacher encourages them to ask questions and make comments about each other's findings.
- The children might make drawings, take pictures, write words and labels, create graphs of things they measured and counted, and construct models. As they learn more, they can revise what they have made.

Phase 3—Concluding the Project

- Children discuss the evidence they have found that helps them answer their questions. The teacher helps them compare what they have learned with what they knew before the project began.
- Children decide how to show what they did and what they found out to parents and peers who were not there.
- Children create displays to share the story of the project with others. Displays might include their drawings, notes, stories, taped conversations, photographs, models, graphs, and videotapes. Children can also act out what they have learned.
- The children might invite parents and other guests to a presentation about their project. The teacher can help the young investigators decide how to tell the story of what they did and what they found out.

 For other Project Approach Tip Sheets and related Web resources, visit <http://illinoisearlylearning.org/tips.htm>.



29 Children's Research Center
51 Gerty Dr. Champaign, IL 61820-7469
Telephone: 217-333-1386 Fax: 217-244-7732
Toll-free: 877-275-3227 (Voice/TTY) Illinois State Board of Education
Email: iel@uiuc.edu
Internet: <http://illinoisearlylearning.org>

For more tip sheets on other topics, please go to <http://illinoisearlylearning.org> 11/04