

The Children's Journal

News from Campus Child Care for parents, advocates and all who work to provide quality early care and education for children and their families.

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OUR MISSION

The Office of Child Care and Family Resources promotes the academic and professional goals of the University of Wisconsin community through the administration of early education and family support programs.

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Message from Lynn



Over the past few years, our teachers have explored and expanded their understanding of the importance of early learning and nature, founded on the work of international expert Claire Warden of Scotland. In Claire's curriculum, 4-year-olds attend "nature kindergartens," spending 90% of their time outdoors. Warden, who will visit us in Wisconsin again this July, focuses her programming on experiences for children that promote active engagement in a natural setting, rather than being receivers of information through commercialized videotapes or flash cards that claim to increase early learning. Our approach aligns with Warden's—young children need to enjoy the experience of discovery so that they can apply knowledge, concepts, and skills and take calculated risks in a structured rather than a directed environment. In all activities, children need to play.

While we don't spend 90% of our time outdoors, our campus centers agree whole heartedly with Warden's curriculum that encourages noticing, wondering, and discovering. Over the past few years, we've worked to recreate our outdoor learning spaces from yellow plastic climbers to river beds, streams, puddles, rocks, plants, and gardens. The educational curve is rich and broad, with children able to attend and sustain their learning through play for longer periods of time and with greater care towards the environment and one another. This approach, we believe, is the best way to promote "school readiness." If you visit our centers or talk with the staff about the benefits of nature curriculum, you will see the commitment and feel the enthusiasm. And here's a tip—don't wear anything that can't stand up to the experimentation of a four-year old!

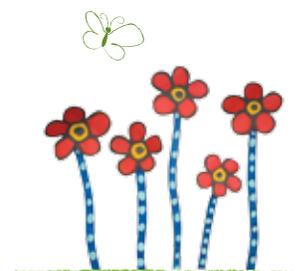
For more information on Claire Warden in Wisconsin, July 7–11, 2014, go to www.occfr.wisc.edu to download the event flier and registration form, or search for Center for Early Childhood Professional Development at www.uwm.edu.

Lynn Edlefson, Director

Children's Center Update

In February, our office launched a web-based application for parents to seek enrollment for their children at our campus centers. This online tool creates greater enrollment efficiency for parents as it provides the choice of one or many programs at one stop; the ability to pay the application fee online; and a personal account to manage family information and data. For our centers, non-duplicative data helps us keep track of campus needs. So far, families have given us great feedback. Check it out at www.occfr.wisc.edu and click on "bumblebee!"

(Preschool Lab), and Clark Thompson (MERIT-School of Education), the video features footage of children and teachers engaged in play-based learning that focuses on inquiry, creativity, and learning! You can find it on the home page of our website.



Have you seen our 4K video on the website?
Created by Joan Ershler (Waisman), Mary Pierick



Infant/Toddler Seminar with Pam Bennett: Community of Practice

We appreciate your generous support!

Classified Staff Child Care Grant

Mr. Gary D. Mitchell
Mr. William J. Richner
Ms. Joan S. Richner

New Campus Child Care Initiatives

Mr. David A. Borghesi
Ms. Nancy Taylor Borghesi
Ms. Marion F. Brown
Prof. Franklin D. Wilson
Ms. Carolyn Castree
Ms. Karen G. Crossley
Mr. Alan Crossley
Ms. Lynn Edlefson
Mr. William J. Richner
Ms. Joan S. Richner
Mr. Douglas N. Rose
Prof. Gary D. Sandefur
Ms. Kathy Sandefur
Mr. Thomas R. Smith
Mr. John P. Stott
Ms. Patricia R. Sanford

Student Child Care Scholarship Grants

Dr. Martha L. Casey
Dr. David J. Castro
Dr. Amanda M. Durik
Dr. Julie N. Christoph
Mr. Brady G. Christoph
Dr. Boyin Huang
Ms. Fengying Sun
Ms. Wendy L. Hughes
Mr. Kevin J. Orth
Ms. Heather H. Orth
Dr. Geoffrey R. Owens
Prof. Samina Raja
Dr. Shai A. Rubin

As a teacher of toddlers, I am always on the lookout for continuing education that I can apply to my classroom. Since many training seminars target only preschool teachers, we are often forced to adapt what we learn to our toddlers. Pam Bennett is a respected leader in early childhood education, and I knew the seminar would be a meaningful educational experience.

The course focused on current classroom issues and planning future sessions. Topic suggestions included: environment in the infant and toddler classrooms, mentoring teachers, mindfulness in the classroom, and international early childhood education. Our first topic was use of research-based evidence to articulate our message, which was very useful because one of the most frequent questions posed to us is: "What do you teach infants/toddlers?" We know that what we do is important, but making that clear to others can often be difficult. The concrete, evidence-based statements we generated will help support our work in the field.

Each of the sessions followed a similar pattern: topic selection, research, and brainstorming. As we dove into topics, we were also thinking about a final project to represent our work. We decided to create a pamphlet containing valuable information for parents and teachers of infants and toddlers. We devoted different sections in the pamphlet to the environment, selecting good caregivers, and what children learn while performing different activities. During our final session, we presented this information to colleagues in the early childhood education field, including some of our directors.

This seminar was more beneficial to me than any other class or in-service I've participated in previously because of the people involved. As I told my colleagues at our final seminar class, you cannot teach passion, but you can inspire it. And that is truly what this class has done for me.

Dana Schmock
Teacher, Preschool Lab-Linden



At Pam Bennett's seminar, our group consisted of campus and community educators and a visiting child psychiatrist from Korea.

Reflections on Campus Child Care

As longtime supporters of our office, we invited retiring colleagues, Paul Evans and Dan Bier, to share a few thoughts about the status of child care and early education at the University of Wisconsin. The common thread in their musing is the steadfast commitment and compassion of our campus teachers, and secondly, a concern for continued funding for staff and programming needs.

The Waisman Early Childhood Program falls under Dan's administrative watch. When asked about shifts or trends in campus child care during his tenure, Dan remarked that, "there is greater recognition of the need to create and rely upon a professionally trained workforce," "more emphasis on reviewing and rating the quality of programs," and "a greater commitment to inclusive programs that serve children of all abilities." We agree.

When posed the same question, Paul Evans, the director of University Housing, emphasized the incredible value of high-quality child care as a support service "to help students manage the

stress of family and graduate work." He also commended campus leadership for investing in campus child care, especially in facility expansion for infants over the past couple of years. Adequate compensation and retention of teachers along with the prohibitive cost of infant care will be ongoing issues, according to Paul. We couldn't agree more.

Ultimately, both call for a broader dialogue with campus and community partners and a funding model to ensure that the growth of our system and the quality of our centers remain at the highest level. As Dan put it, we know that "from looking into any young child's eyes...those early years are precious and if we do it right then, it will pay off for a lifetime, one child at a time." Again, we agree and the research on early learning supports it as well. Read about the Abecedarian Project, a research study conducted over 40 years, or look for work by James Heckman, PhD, for the economic argument.

Teri Stratton



We appreciate your generous support!*

Connie L. Wilson
Child Care Center

Mr. Joseph J. Corry

Mrs. Barbara Weston Corry

Ms. Lynn Edlefson

Mr. Dale R. Edlefson

*Donations received
September 2013–February 2014

Development Update



Save the date to join us on May 29, 2014, for our annual Jazzin' fundraiser! The event will take place at Gordon Dining and Event Center from 5–8 p.m., with entertainment by local jazz celebrity, Lynette Margulies. Jazzin' will also feature a silent auction, raffle, hors d'oeuvres, and a cash bar. It has been a tradition to pay tribute to early educators and campus leaders who make our child care system so successful. This year, Provost DeLuca, Dan Bier (Waisman Center), and Paul Evans (Housing) will be honored along with campus early education teachers. Come and thank them for all the ways they've helped to build our campus child care system! And as you know, 100% of the proceeds from this event help to fund expansion initiatives, create nature playscapes, and broaden curricular innovation and programming. If you wish to reserve a seat or volunteer your services as a Table Captain, contact Teri Stratton at tstratton@provost.wisc.edu or 608-890-



0436. The cost of a ticket is \$40. We'll see you there!

In other development news, we continue to direct our energy and funds to yet another infant and toddler care expansion for 22 new FTEs and four classrooms in spring of 2014. We are seeking private funds and grants to purchase cribs, rockers, changing tables, and more to make comfy classrooms for new babies. The equipment cost for each room is approximately \$10,000.

Never doubt how much your gifts make a profound difference in the lives of young children and families. At a time when parents are building their careers, they are also starting and nourishing families—and thanks to you, we've been able to be responsive. To support our new classrooms, please direct your contribution to the "New Campus Child Care Initiatives" Fund (12-902426). We always welcome ideas about our services or about others who may be interested in our activities, so please feel free to contact Teri.

Gifts can be made any time during the year through the UW Foundation's website, www.supportuw.org. Click on "Give Now," then "Search Giving Areas," type in "Campus Child Care/Early Education," click on that link, scroll down to view our four fund options, choose a fund designation, and follow the "Make a Gift" prompts. Thank you!

Teri Stratton

Thanks to...

Director Paula Evenson (PSL Mineral Point) and Rick Gibbs (UW Risk Management) whose efforts resulted in nearly \$9,000 in savings for campus 4K programs.

Business Services purchasing agent, Carl Hubbard, for his ongoing work to help us obtain access to needed services while ensuring compliance and quality.

Dean Julie Underwood, Cheryl Hanley Maxwell, and Beth Graue in the School of Education for their enthusiastic support of early childhood efforts in Madison and of system colleagues.

Paul Evans, Dan Bier, Dean Shim (SOHE), and Darrell Bazzell for their commitment to teacher wages.

The Student Services Finance Committee for their support of UW-Madison student parents and for the hours of effort they pour into working with all funding recipients.

Keri Robbins in SMPH for volunteering her personal time to help the Pam Bennett advanced infant care seminar educators publish their final project.

Jen Cheatham, MMSD Superintendent, for supporting 4K partnerships with campus and community centers.

And, we are so grateful to all campus teachers and directors who strive every day to meet the needs of all children and families; and to Provost De Luca, Paul Evans, and Dan Bier, our honorees at Jazzin', for their commitment to creating and sustaining high-quality early care and education services for our campus community. You all rock!

