For the past four weeks, the teachers and children at The Children's School have been fully engaged in learning about games. We typically begin by looking at the literature then building on that knowledge with activities that promote exploration and understanding. This theme was different in that our focus was simply on playing a variety of games and learning that there are rules and we have to take turns. Games like “Snails Pace Race”, “Orchard”, “Snug as a Bug in a Rug”, “Sneaky Snacky Squirrel” and our homemade “Caps for Sale” game provided the children with opportunities to understand and help others understand the rules, share materials, develop fine motor abilities, use simple math skills, form strategies, and recognize shapes/colors/numbers.

Of course, we did not totally abandon books! Stories like “The Tortoise and the Hare” by Janet Stevens, “I Spy With My Little Eye...” by Edward Gibbs, “The Shape of Things” by Dayle Ann Dodds, “The Great Fuzz Frenzy” by Janet Stevens and “Telephone” by Mac Barnett introduced the children to ideas like teamwork and showed them different games they can play on their own simply by observing the world around them.

Dramatic play is something that probably does not immediately come to mind when games are mentioned, but for children, this type of play is just that. The Blue and Red Room friends are at a point where they are entering into some serious, collaborative play, so we made a concerted effort to structure environments that would encourage it. The children created rules for play as they became a prairie dog family in Prairie Dog Town, took on the roles of ocean animals in the water table, and transformed into princesses and super heroes on the playground.
RULE #1... HAVE FUN!

Dominick practicing patterning with caps from the story, “Caps For Sale”.

Grace moving people through the obstacle course game the friends created.

Evelyn creating shapes and designs on the geoboards with rubber bands.

Marina and Izhak wearing the jerseys they made and racing like the tortoise and the hare.

Ksenia playing sand table “I Spy”.

Parker practicing his soccer skills.
RULE #2... MAY I PLAY WITH YOU?

Sean matching the colors on the unit blocks to the patterns on the cards.

Evelyn and friends discovering together how to make the electric toys work.

Betsy observing her friend finishing her turn and getting ready for hers.

Dominick and Parker engaging in pretend play with the house and toy people.

Marina thinking about what to add to her marble machine.

Ksenia carefully adding secondary colors to her work of art.
RULE #3... OH, THE LEARNING YOU’LL SEE!

We want to say “Thank you” and also look ahead...

Can you believe it is the middle of April already! We are at a time in the year where the teachers are able to take a step back and enjoy watching the children independently and cooperatively play. We want to say thank you to all of the families for the ways in which you support us and work with us to make this possible.

It was wonderful having Andrew’s mother visit to share a birthday story with the afternoon Blue Room friends. Thank you also to Evelyn’s parents who joined us to play and shared a story with the Red Room friends. And again, thank you to Lauren Hraber for the music classes that we enjoy each month!

OUR NEXT THEME IS WATER!

APRIL SHOWERS BRING... OUR WATER THEME! WE WILL DIVE INTO AN EXPLORATION OF WATER TO END OUR YEAR.