Happy New Year, Everyone!

We hope you had a refreshing winter break and that you are energized for the next phase of our learning journey together. Though we are just beginning our January studies of Animals in Winter in the Preschool and Oceans in the Kindergarten, it is time to look ahead to the 2010/11 school year.

2010 / 2011 School Year Information

Children who are Currently Enrolled:
Letters to reserve your child’s place in the Four Year Old and Kindergarten Programs will be mailed on January 22nd. At that time, you will be asked to submit a $500, non-refundable deposit to reserve a place for your child for the 2010/11 program. Deposits for currently enrolled children entering our Four Year Old and Kindergarten Programs are due February 18, 2010.

Extended Programs:
Spaces in our Extended Day Programs are limited to 24 children in the morning and 6 in the afternoon. Preference is given to children already in the program. Potentially, there are 13 returning Extended Morning friends and 2 returning Extended Evening friends. These spaces fill very quickly, so return your enrollment forms promptly if you are interested in Extended Program spaces!

Kindergarten: Our kindergarten class is limited to 24 children (we currently have 34 children in our four year old classes). After the first 24 deposits are received, the remaining deposits will be put on a waiting list.

If you have a sibling to be enrolled in September 2010, or in the future, please make sure you have an application on file in the office.

Open House Events: Monday, January 18 at 9:00 AM and Thursday, January 21 at 12:45 PM
There are two Open House sessions for our preschool program. They involve presentations by Dr. Carver and observations in the classrooms. Though they are primarily designed for families new to our school, anyone is invited to attend.

Kindergarten Orientations and Observations are scheduled on an individual basis. Please call Ms. Drash at (412) 268-2199 to reserve a space in the preschool observation or to observe our Kindergarten class.

January Dates
January 12th – 14th Speech & Hearing Screening
January 18th – Prospective Parent Open House (AM)
January 19th – 21st Vision Screening
January 21st – Prospective Parent Open House (PM)
January 22nd – Re-enrollment Letters Mailed to Current Families / Acceptances to New 3’s
Scholarship Advances

Leading the Way: The Abraham Broudy Scholarship

In 1884, at the age of 14, Abraham Broudy escaped a pogrom (large-scale, targeted, and repeated antisemitic rioting) in Russia and came by himself to America without speaking English. Initially peddling produce, Abraham worked hard to create a life for himself as a foundation for his family and for future generations. In gratitude for that legacy, Abraham’s great, great grandson, Dan Broudy, together with his wife Leah, has established the Abraham Broudy Scholarship at the Carnegie Mellon Children’s School. Dan and Leah’s son Jake is currently in the Afternoon Preschool 3’s Program. In addition to providing Jake with a high quality early childhood education here, Dan and Leah have committed to fund the early childhood education of one child each year whose family cannot afford our program. By providing these resources, Dan and Leah hope to create the kind of opportunity that Abraham Broudy had the courage and persistence to build for his heirs. In addition, just as Abraham Broudy led the way for his family in a new country, Dan and Leah hope that their initiative in establishing this ongoing scholarship will prompt others to honor those who provided opportunities for them with a similar sponsorship. Many thanks to the Broudy family for honoring Abraham Broudy’s legacy by advancing the Children’s School scholarship program to a new level.

If you or anyone you know is interested in establishing a scholarship or otherwise supporting the Children’s School financially, please contact Dr. Carver for an appointment. At this dawn of a new year, we look forward to exploring diverse ways that we can make our high quality program more widely available. Providing the educational resources that young children need to succeed has long-term benefits for both family and community. We are also working with local agencies to tap additional scholarship resources in the community and to recruit more diverse families into our applicant pool. Mrs. Rosenblum is working on our recruitment materials and would welcome family input in terms of community connections for distribution.

Kidstuff Coupon Books: This fundraiser netted $225 for scholarships. Thanks for your support!

Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) for 2010-11

The Children’s School participates in the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program. Through the EITC, eligible Pennsylvania businesses can earn tax credits while providing financial assistance for children to attend the Children’s School. Applications for the 2010-2011 school year must be received by July 1, 2010. If you would like more information or can help us to build a list of prospective businesses, please contact the Educational Administrator Team (Mrs. Rosenblum, Mrs. Smith, & Miss Hancock) at ed-admin@andrew.cmu.edu.

Web Artists

Kindergarten Friends: Grayson H., Neely N., Alok S., Aidan S.
4’s Friends: Abbie M., Charlotte B., Cooper O., Koda C., Chaewon P.
3’s Friends: Kabir C., Gray S., Ryan Z., Cora M., Elif C.
Family Committee News

• Thanks to Samar Saab for joining our Library Committee.
• Kudos to Scott Carslaw for cleaning our playground.
• We appreciate Cathy Baek's efforts to keeping our kitchen clean.

Parent Perspective: Medical Social Work

Bridgett McNally-Javid (mother of Jordana in the Kindergarten) has multiple jobs. In addition to teaching yoga to college students at Chatham University, she is also a medical social worker for the Office of Behavioral Health in Allegheny County.

I love my job and am very passionate about advocating for our most vulnerable population of children to address their vital needs. I monitor children in the child welfare system and help to ensure that all of their medical needs are met. I advocate for children who have special needs, such as chronic illnesses. I also assist our child welfare workers in obtaining Graco pack 'n plays through the Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Foundation for new mothers being discharged from the hospital with their infants to reduce roll over deaths and SIDS.

Some of the children I support have high-risk situations requiring placement in foster care, group homes, shelters, and juvenile probation centers. Since many of these children's cases may become court active, their family dynamics and placement needs are often reviewed by Juvenile Court Judges in Family Court, typically every three to six months. Sometimes, these Court proceedings and the wait time that is involved can last for hours. Thirty years ago, the National Council of Jewish Women started the Jane B. Lobel Room as a free children's room in the Courts to provide a safe, stress-free environment for children while their parents / caregivers are attending to court matters. This program is the only such service in the country run by a non-profit organization, which now sponsors three such rooms serving infants through teens in the Allegheny County Juvenile Court, the Criminal Court, and the Office of Jury Management. Each room contains toys, games, books, crafts, computers and video games. All children who visit the playrooms receive two snacks, a healthy lunch, and an age-appropriate book to keep. A director, trained staff, and volunteers, all with the required Pennsylvania clearances, operate the rooms. Allegheny County funds construction and provides ongoing financial support. Last year, the program served over five thousand children! Last year, thanks to generous donations made by our families at the Children's School, I delivered much-appreciated books to the Juvenile Court Play Room. The project is currently in need of baby board books. If you are interested in donating books, please bring them to the Children's School during the month of January. If you would like more information about this wonderful program, please call Juvenile Court directly at 412-350-0200, option # 2, and ask for the Jane Lobel Playroom.
Speech & Hearing and Vision Screenings

Speech and Hearing screenings will take place at the Children’s School on January 12, 13, and 14. These screenings cost $20 and are conducted by representatives from Easter Seals.

Vision screening will be held on January 19, 20, and 21 and is offered free of charge by the Blind and Vision Rehabilitation Services of Pittsburgh. Permission slips are enclosed with this newsletter. Trained agency staff will screen for potential vision problems by playing matching games.

Both of these programs are great services for our children. When detected early, issues involving speech, language, hearing, and vision can often be corrected before becoming a serious problem. We highly recommend that your child participate in both programs. If forms for these screenings are misplaced, please call the office and we will supply replacement forms.

Stay Safe in Your Winter Wonderland!

For children, winter is not the end of outdoor fun. From sledding to skiing, snowmobiling to ice skating, children find lots to do when the snow starts to fall. Unfortunately, winter activities can also lead to tragedy. When properly prepared, children can enjoy safe and fun outdoor activities. "The inviting snow draws children to ice-covered lakes and ski slopes each winter, regardless of the frigid temperatures and the risks," says Heather Paul, Ph.D., executive director of the National SAFE KIDS Campaign. "Parents should watch their children closely, limit their outdoor playtime and make sure that they are dressed appropriately for the weather." Here are few other winter tips to keep in mind:

- Parents and caregivers should inspect equipment and the environment for possible hazards before children engage in winter activities such as sledding, ice skating and skiing.
- Be aware that the increased use of hot tubs and whirlpools, as well as the danger of hidden bodies of water or weak ice, makes winter drowning a risk.
- If a child complains of numbness or pain in the fingers, toes, nose, cheeks or ears while playing in the snow, or if the skin is blistered, hard to the touch or glossy, be alerted to the possibility of frostbite. Tell the child to wiggle the affected body part(s) to increase blood supply to that area. Warm the frozen part(s) against the body. Immerse frozen part(s) in warm, not hot, water. Frozen tissue is fragile and can be damaged easily. Avoid warming with high heat from radiators, fireplaces or stoves, and avoid rubbing or breaking blisters.
- Slippery driveways and sidewalks can be particularly hazardous in the winter. Keep them well shoveled, and apply materials such as rock salt or sand to improve traction.
- Make sure children wear appropriate boots and brightly colored (not white) clothing while walking and playing in snowy conditions. Use reflective stickers on clothing for maximum protection, especially at dawn and dusk.

During the winter months, please send labeled hats and mittens to school every day. We take our children outside daily, except in the most extreme weather conditions. If your child is not well enough to participate in outdoor play, please keep him/her at home. On snowy days, please also send labeled snow pants and boots. Children who do not have appropriate snow clothes will be restricted to playing on the sidewalk when there is snow on the play surfaces. Feel free to provide a set of outdoor clothes to be kept in your child’s locker.
A Winter Reminder

On days when snow or ice may affect driving conditions, please listen to the radio or the television. If the Children's School should close due to the weather, we announce our school closing on both WTAE and KDKA. Again this school year, WTAE will also announce school closings on their web page: www.thepittsburghchannel.com/index.html.

Because Children's School staff and families live in diverse areas in and around the city, we cannot factor travel conditions from every location into our decision about whether to delay or close school. At 5:30 AM, we listen to the news, determine what other schools in the city are doing, and make our best judgment on whether to have a delay or close school that day. Depending on the road conditions, we may decide to choose one of three options:

1. **One Hour Delay**
   During a one-hour delay, we will greet the Kindergarten at 9:30 AM and the Morning Preschool Classes at 9:30 AM. Dismissal will be at the normal times and the Extended and Afternoon Programs will be on normal schedule.

2. **Two Hour Delay/No Morning Preschool**
   During a two-hour delay, we will greet the Kindergarten Class at 10:30 AM and dismiss at the normal time. The Morning Preschool and Extended Morning Programs will be canceled and the Afternoon Programs will be on normal schedules.

3. **School Closure**
   Option #1 enables us to conduct the morning preschool classes, while giving our staff and families time for the road conditions to improve. In all cases when school is in session, we encourage parents to use their best judgment about whether the roads in your area are safe to bring your child to school.

Indoor Adventures

Make the most of your “Snow Day” opportunities having ideas and supplies ready for indoor activities, such as those listed in the section on Bringing Theatre Home. Here are a few other suggestions:

- **Write Letters / Thank You Notes** – What a great time to encourage children to draw or write notes to family and friends!

- **Work Puzzles** - Keep puzzles on hand for snow day emergencies, both to pass time and to build spatial skills and persistence.

- **Play Games** - Children love to play games, whether board games, card games, or ones they've created. Games can be educational, and they promote social and communication skills.

- **Bake Cookies** - Doing activities in the kitchen also teaches social skills, as well as math skills, such as measuring.

- **Clean Out Toys** - Have the children go through their toys and make piles for ones to keep, ones to donate, and ones to trash. What a wonderful activity to do after the holidays when children have received many gifts and can benefit from learning about giving to others!
What’s New at the Theatre?

Cirque Dreams: Illuminations ~ January 5-10, 2010 at Heinz Hall
Presented by PNC Broadway Across America
Tickets range from $21-$61
For tickets call 412-456-6666 or visit www.PGHARTS.ORG

Audiences of all ages will marvel as city dwellers reinvent familiar objects, balance on wires, leap tall buildings and redefine the risks of flight in a story filled with astounding occurrences. One of a kind artists populate the streets of this magical metropolis and breathe energy into its landscape with urban acrobatics and never before seen phenomenal thrills of disbelief. CIRQUE DREAMS critically acclaimed dazzling costumes come alive to the sounds of jazz, ballroom, pop and more in this original score.

Step Afrika! ~ Sunday, January 17, 2010 ~ 7 p.m. Byham Theater
Presented by Trust Presents ~ Tickets range from $20.50-$32.50
For tickets call 412-456-6666 or visit www.PGHARTS.ORG

Step Afrika! is the first professional company devoted to stepping. Like a tap dance without shoes, or a band without instruments, stepping is percussive dance that uses kicks, stomps, claps and chants – all linked to African and modern dance traditions.

Pittsburgh International Children’s Theater presents Pigeon Party
~ Sunday January 24-30, 2010 (various show times and locations)

Cramming all of the excitement of the first three Pigeon books by Caldecott Honor author Mo Willems into one lively party, this performance is full of fun and laughter featuring our favorite feathered friend! Featuring original music and audience participation, YOU get to decide if Pigeon will drive the bus, share his hot dog, and most importantly, if he can stay up past his bed time! Don’t miss this opportunity to be a part of Pigeon’s adventures in this exciting production by Big Wooden Horse Theatre Company.

Other 2010 Performances
• Henry and Mudge ~ March 7-14
• Fred Garbo’s Inflatable Theater Co. ~ April 10 and 11
• Pittsburgh International Children’s Festival ~ May 12-16

Peanut Butter and Jam Sessions present Delicious Double Stops ~ Saturday, January 30, 2010 ~ 10:00am and 11:30am
McClintic Hall of the Calvary Episcopal Church, 315 Shady Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15206
For tickets call 412-394 3353 or visit our website at www.chathambaroque.org.
Tickets are $5 per child and $8 per adult.

Stayed tuned for more theater experiences!
Bringing Theatre Home

Dramatic play in the classroom is a great source of learning for children. We are happy to have our Whole School Theater Arts Unit planned for February so we can bring a little theater into each of our themes. We look forward to sharing our school theater activities with you during our Family Festival on February 25th, but we encourage families to incorporate theater into the home setting as well.

Enacting Books
Have your child choose his or her favorite short and simple book. Help her to list the characters in the book and props or outfits needed to enact the book choice. Making adult clothes and shoes available is a fun twist for the child. Help your child assign characters to mom, dad, siblings, aunts, uncles, or pets. Allow your child to arrange the play how she would like it, and she will become a director of her own play! This same concept can be used for enacting favorite songs.

Fairy Tale Play
In this theatre activity, your children will put a funny spin on a classic fairy tale. A fairy tale play is easy to perform because the audience recognizes the story. This indoor activity can be played for laughs or taken simply as a chance to enact a favorite tale.

Animal Doctor
The word veterinarian is a hard one for some preschoolers. But animal doctor works just fine. Make sure there are available bandages and other first aid items around the house. Grab a stuffed animal and suggest there is something wrong with it, “I think I just heard Brown Bear cry, I hope he's okay. Will you check?” Let your child play with the bandages, gauze and Bandaids to care for Brown Bear and other stuffed animals.

Paper Bag Puppets
Using paper lunch bags (an inexpensive necessity!), draw faces on the bottom of the bag of a dog, a cat, a bear, a lion, etc. and invite your child to do the same. You can glue items like yarn and feathers to make imaginative puppets. Then you and your child can create a puppet show for the rest of the family!

Playing Restaurant
Set up a playroom or family room as a restaurant or pizza parlor. Menus, a notebook, some pretend food and tables with chairs are great additions to a pretend restaurant. Have your children consider characters or roles that would be in a pizza parlor or restaurant and assign them to other members of the family. Take turns acting as a customer, waiter, cook or hostess.

Costume Fashion Shows
Find some old clothes around the house and make costumes out of them. You can then host a fashion show or help your children create a play of their own. Scarves and ties make fun costumes for children, and they are easy to use.

Gingerbread Man Book and Baking
Incorporating some baking with theater can be fun, too. Baking and then decorating gingerbread cookies is a good cold day activity. Children can decorate the gingerbread with different edible cookie decorations. Once the baking is done, take the time to read the story with your family and help them enact it. See if they can catch the gingerbread man!
Research for Undergraduate Courses

Carnegie Mellon’s Psychology Department offers a set of three courses to provide undergraduates with a variety of theory, research, and practice experiences.

**Non-Participant Observation:** Students from Dr. Carver’s Principles of Child Development class will do two observation projects during the spring semester, in order to have firsthand experience with the dramatic developmental progress that occurs during the early childhood period (i.e., rather than just reading about it in a textbook). For each assignment, they observe specific differences between preschoolers and kindergartners in motor skills, social interactions, etc., using a checklist to record observations and then discussing the similarities and differences in an essay.

**Research Methods Class Studies:** Students in Dr. Anna Fisher’s Research Methods course will start with a lab to explore young children’s categorization of objects to determine the conditions under which they group things by theme (police car with an officer) vs. taxonomy (police car with a truck). Then they will work in groups to conduct a study of their own design, which will be approved both by their teacher and by Dr. Carver. The course is designed to teach undergraduates both the theoretical and practical skills necessary to conduct effective early childhood research.

**Participant Observation:** Interns from Dr. Carver’s Practicum in Child Development course learn a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods for observing children’s development while they are serving as assistants in our classrooms. Our weekly seminars focus on integrating their anecdotal records with the theories and research in our readings. In the spring, Janice Lyu will be interning with the morning 3’s, Chuck McKain with the morning 4’s, and Lauren Gumbel and Michael Bittarelli with the kindergarten.

Research Spotlight

**Industrial Design Observations & Interviews:** Dr. Wayne Chung is a professor in the School of Design who has partnered with the Radio Flyer Company for a project in the Junior Level Industrial Design Course. The company is still run by the family of founder, Antonio Pasin, whose 1917 dream was to “bring joy to every boy and every girl.” The company “continues that tradition by building safe, quality toys that spark imagination and inspire active play.”

The design project theme is “fun mobility” with the more specific challenge being to design a 4-season, indoor/outdoor ride-on toy. During January, Dr. Chung’s students will interview Children’s School educators and observe our children during their gym and playground time. Interested families may participate by answering questions and using a disposable camera to photograph children’s play spaces and toys. As students progress in their projects, we may also get to test their prototype toys!
Undergraduate Spotlight: Getting to Know You

We appreciate the help that we have and will receive from the college students who are serving as classroom assistants during the break between CMU semesters. Anna Rosenblum, a CMU sophomore architecture student, Sara Wingen, a CMU senior psychology student also doing the teacher certification program through Chatham, and Darrah Bird, a junior English student at Chatham are all helping in the preschool. In addition, Lindsay Chromik, a former CMU psychology major and long-time Children’s School helper, has returned to the as a substitute teacher while she completes her Masters in Education at Chatham University.

Katie Held is a new Student Teacher this semester. Katie will join our Preschool 4’s Team in the Green Room. Katie spent last semester in the Green Room as a practicum student from Carlow University and was happy to be placed in the same classroom for her student teaching. Katie is majoring in Early Childhood Education and will be with us through the end of February!

Cze-Ja Tam is returning to the Children’s School for her third semester after her winter break at home in California. Cze-Ja will be assisting the AM 3’s two mornings a week and the PM 3’s one afternoon a week. Cze-Ja is on the Carnegie Mellon Tennis Team and can be seen practicing from our playground during warmer seasons! Cze-Ja went all the way to NCAA finals last semester with her teammates. She has long history of working with children in different settings and is looking forward to getting back into the classroom after spending last semester in the office.

Children’s School’s Famous Playdough

One skill all of our student helpers learn quickly is making our famous playdough. Here’s the recipe in case you’d like to try it at home. Note that we usually double the recipe.

1 cup White Flour
½ cup Salt
2 teaspoons Cream of Tartar
1 cup Water
1 tablespoon Oil
1 teaspoon Food coloring

1. Combine flour, salt, and cream of tartar in a saucepan. Mix water, oil, and food coloring in a separate bowl and stir them gradually into dry ingredients until the mixture is smooth.
2. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until a ball forms.
3. Remove from heat and when the mixture is just cool enough to handle, knead until smooth.

Also, you can add vanilla, instant coffee, etc. to add aroma, or add glitter to enhance the visual sensation. Be creative!
Director’s Corner: Why Theatre?

As you’ve probably noticed from our newsletters and our daily classroom notes, we’ve been experimenting more with theatre arts this year and encouraging families to do the same. All of this emphasis is leading up to our Whole School Theatre Arts Unit in February, which will culminate in our Family Theatre Arts Festival on Thursday, February 25th from 4:30-6:30pm. We have chosen this theme because people of all ages, cultures, and ability levels can enjoy participating in or watching creative dramatics.

During early childhood, theatre arts experiences can promote development in all six of our domains. Of course, the unit fits best with our emphasis on Artistic Expression and Appreciation. The children can experiment with different roles, create and enact stories, learn to use their movements, voice, and props to represent aspects of the setting and story, etc. In addition, theatre arts production can help children develop the following aspects of our other categories of objectives:

Self-Esteem & Independence: self-description & sharing personal stories, pride in accomplishments, expressing & reacting to emotions, self-care skills, etc.

Interaction & Cooperation: taking turns, following directions, understanding others’ perspectives, being a leader and a follower, negotiating conflicts, respecting differences, etc.

Communication: listening skills, speaking to a group, reading signs & symbols, using pictures and print to convey a message, using body language to help communication, etc.

Discovery & Exploration: visual perception, spatial skills, planning skills, measurement, scientific concepts and process involved in technology, problem solving, etc.

Physical Capabilities: fine motor skills involved in using technology tools, eye-hand coordination, gross motor movement, body awareness and coordination with others, etc.

The Children’s School’s individualized approach to helping all children progress with respect to goals in all categories will help us tailor the specific theatre arts projects to each one, including those with special needs and English as a second language.

As a NAEYC Accredited Early Childhood Program, we commit to providing young children with diverse topic area learning and vocabulary development opportunities (2.D.04). While a Theatre Arts exploration most naturally fits within NAEYC’s “Appreciation of the Arts” category (2.J.01) and includes “Arts Terminology” (2.J.04), the kindergartner’s recent Native American play clearly supported their learning in “Social Studies” and “History” (2.L.11), and the preschoolers’ exploration of alternate versions of fairy tales from different regions and cultures fits with both “Social Studies” and “Geography” (2.L.11). Dramas involving plants and animals will of course build “Life Science” concepts (2.G.02a), while scenery and sound effects design could enhance both “Earth Science” and “Physical Science” concepts (2.G.02b and c respectively), as well as “Scientific Terminology” (2.G.08). Preschoolers will be able to apply their understanding of gravity and knowledge of simple machines from the How Things Work unit when constructing the actual sets.

So, both in terms of general skill development across all domains and conceptual knowledge in a range of topic areas, Theatre Arts has it all. Besides, creative drama is FUN! What a wonderful way to enliven the cold winter months. We hope you’ll join the process so that we can all learn together in 2010.