

Carnegie Mellon University Children's School

October 2012 Family Newsletter

Welcome to the Children's School Family!

The 2012-2013 year has started smoothly at the Children's School, and we're enjoying getting to know our children and families. What a joy it is to discover ways that each unique child contributes to the group as everyone adjusts to the routines and explores new activities. It's been fun to listen as the children discover the wealth of exploration opportunities here, experiment with novel materials, and interact with new friends. Everyone is enjoying sharing photographs of their families and discussing ways we are different and ways we are alike. We are also talking about the school as a community where we are all helping each other to learn. Here are some ways you can stay informed and get involved in the Children's School learning community!

Communications

- Our main source of communication is our **family newsletter and monthly calendar**. General information for all families and the monthly snack menu are included with this newsletter.
- Each teaching team also prepares a daily update on classroom activities, either via **email or web distribution**, as well as writing a **monthly paper or web newsletter** including specific information about the curriculum themes, along with the related activities and projects.
- We will send general school **announcements via e-mail** in addition to the newsletters. So please check that we have your current email address!
- Our fourth source of communication is the Children's School **website**: www.psy.cmu.edu/cs. Be sure to check the Children's School Art Gallery on our website! Each month we will feature different children. This month's artists are: 3's Friends Felicity A., Ruby A., Ilan D. and Zane S.; 4's Friends Dany D., Shaylee G., Greta L., and Agatha S.; Kindergarten Friends Benjamin K., Anna M., and Yu M.



October Open House Events

- Wednesday, October 10th from 4:30 – 6:30pm Four Year Old Classes
- Wednesday, October 17th from 4:30 – 6:30pm Three Year Old Classes and Kindergarten

Scholarship **Benefit Dinner at Eleven** Thursday, October 11th at 6pm

Staff / Parent Discussion re: School Choice Friday, October 12th from 9:30 - 11:00am
(child care provided for infants, toddlers & three year olds)

No School on Friday, October 19th CONFERENCE PREPARATION DAY for STAFF

Family Committee News

It's never too late to join one of our school committees! Your time and effort to support the school mean a lot to us.

- Library Committee

The members of our library committee primarily reshelv our books, search our collection for specific books for our teachers, and do simple repairs and book labeling. This is a great committee to join if you have a few minutes at greeting or dismissal time to help maintain our library.

- Construction and Repair Committee

The members of this committee help with repair and simple construction work in the school. Generally these occasional jobs can be done over the weekend.

- Gardening

If you have a green thumb, join this committee. We are planning a special project for the spring.

- FSO

Beth Lott, the Family Social Organization committee chair, is always looking for new ideas and help!

- Book Fair

The Children's School will be hosting a book fair at the Barnes and Noble Bookstore at the Waterfront on December 1st. We need help planning activities and staffing the afternoon of the 1st.

- Teachers Luncheon and Celebration Picnic

Parents "cater" a luncheon for the teachers at the end of Teachers Appreciation Week in April and we all celebrate the end of the school year with a Whole School Celebration Picnic in May. Volunteers are needed to help organize and donate items for these two events.

Please contact Maggie Rosenblum if you are interested in joining any of these committees:
rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu.

So Many School Choices

How do families make the best choice of elementary school for each of their children and decide when to make the transition? Please join us for a review of school choice principles and discussion of strategies for exploring school options.

**Friday, October 12, 2012 from 9:30 – 11:00 AM in the West Wing Lounge
(the dorm between the stadium and the Margaret Morrison Building)**

Preschool 4's and Kindergarten children will be in school.

Child Care will be provided for children 3 and under in the Red Room.

NOTE: The Pittsburgh Public School birthday cutoff for the 2013-2014 year is September 30th 2013. In other words, a child who turns 5 by September 30th will be eligible for kindergarten (or 6 by September 30th for 1st grade).



Register for Extended Day Programs

There are limited spaces still available in our extended preschool programs. Extended morning runs from 11:30 am until 1 pm. The tuition for October through May is \$2,900. The programs include a circle time and activity time that extends the theme focus of the month through literature-based activities. The morning session finishes with a sing-a-long and then the children enjoy eating together the lunches that they have brought from home. In the afternoon, the children cook and eat their own after school snack. The afternoon tuition for October through May is \$3,800. Please contact Maggie Rosenblum at rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu if you are interested in enrolling your preschooler.

Support the Children's School on October 3rd via Pittsburgh Gives!

Now in its fourth year, PittsburghGives.org **Day of Giving** provides an opportunity for you to maximize your charitable contribution to the Children's School!

Wednesday, October 3rd is the 24-hour period when The Pittsburgh Foundation matches donations during their PittsburghGives.org **Day of Giving**. All donations made

at PittsburghGives.org on this day will receive a pro-rated match donation from a pool of more than \$750,000 - a 50% increase from last year's available funds!



- To ensure that your donation reaches the Children's School, log on to www.pittsburghgives.org.
- Select Carnegie Mellon University from the List of Eligible Organizations and make your donation.
- Please notify Miss Hancock at lh37@andrew.cmu.edu that you have made a contribution via the Day of Giving. She will send a list of the Children's School donors to the Carnegie Mellon Development Office so they can allocate the donation and matching funds to The Children's School. [Only donations made with Visa and MasterCard credit cards that are received during the 24 hours of October 3rd through www.pittsburghgives.org will be matched. No donations made with cash, checks, debit cards or any other type of credit cards will be matched by the Foundation.]
- Each gift is 100% tax deductible. The credit card charge will display as a donation to "The Pittsburgh Foundation" on the donor's credit card statement. The minimum gift per organization is \$25. The maximum gift that an individual can give per organization that will be matched is \$10,000.

School Spirit Sale

Remember that we have a variety of clothing and items with the Children's School logo for sale! Please see Miss Drash, Mrs. Rosenblum or Miss Hancock if you wish to purchase any items. We take cash or checks.

Toddler Tees:	\$10.00	Hoodies, Adult & Child:	\$20.00
Mugs:	\$3.00	Water Bottles:	\$ 5.00
Onesies:	\$12.00	Sweatshirts:	\$14.00

Positive Discipline Pointer: Clear and Consistent Behavior Expectations

At times of transition, children adjust best when adults provide clear expectations and stable routines for safe and smooth interactions. Consistency is key for facilitating productive adaptations to new situations. That's why the Children's School staff spends so much time during September teaching children the expectations and routines of our school days. Taking the time to establish these practices so that they become comfortable and automatic will free both children and adults to responsibly focus on deeper learning and more challenging activities as the year progresses. We take special care with cooking, woodworking, and campus trips because of the extra safety concerns involved. One way that you can help the children at both school and home is by modeling the same behavior expectations with the same words that the children hear at school. We'll all benefit from working across contexts to:

Be a kind friend.
Follow the routine.
Use your words.
Use walking feet.
Put everything in its place.

Listen the first time.
Stay in your own space.
Use inside voices.
Use things appropriately.



Thanks for working collaboratively with us to make school a safe and positive experience for everyone!

Holidays at the Children's School

At the Children's School, holidays are viewed as educational opportunities that give us the chance to learn about our diverse school community. As part of our emphasis on family identity and respect for diversity, we encourage children to talk about their family traditions, and we share stories related to the meaning of holidays. We plan age-appropriate activities to involve the children in preparing for simple school celebrations and to help them contribute to family events (e.g., basic cooking, making gifts, and so forth). We limit our school celebrations to very brief spans of time (typically one day), attempt to maintain our regular school routine, and, as always, are ready to provide extra attention and comfort as needed. Because the children may prepare their own special snack related to holidays and because many children have dietary restrictions (especially related to nuts, candy and other sweets), **please do not send any food as gifts for children**. In all of these ways, we can create meaningful celebrations with the young children in our educational context.

At the Children's School, the children do not "dress up" for Halloween because children can be scared by costumes and costumes often cause toileting difficulties. Seasonal activities will involve fall fruits and vegetable, colorful leaves & acorns, etc.



Who Can Help?

Administrative Structure & Roles

The Children's School has a team of four professionals to jointly meet the administrative needs of our active laboratory school. We all strive to know all of the children and to interact with them frequently. We are all available to serve the educators, students, families, and researchers. At the same time, we each focus distinctive talents in different areas, so here are some helpful hints about who to approach for which issues.

Left to Right: Miss Hancock, Mrs. Rosenblum, Dr. Carver, and Ms. Drash



Dr. Carver, the *Director*, takes primary leadership for **school programs and staff development**. She recruits educators, coordinates all professional development and outreach efforts, and manages the school web site, as well as leading the school's **NAEYC accreditation process**. She observes the classroom frequently and provides support for new curriculum development, alternate teaching strategies, ways to meet individual student needs, etc. She also prepares the **whole school newsletter** and serves as a **resource for parents** with questions about child development, education, special needs, and family issues. Dr. Carver coordinates all uses of the Children's School as a **psychology laboratory**, including undergraduate courses, graduate student research, and faculty research. As a **teaching professor in the Psychology Department**, Dr. Carver also teaches a Child Development course, supervises the Child Development Interns, teaches the graduate course on Educational Design, serves as an academic advisor, and participates in other department events.

Miss Hancock, an *Educational Administrator*, handles **program administration issues**, including managing the school calendar, ordering materials, conducting safety drills, monitoring the school's primary email account (ed-admin@andrew.cmu.edu), handling student allergies and medications, and working with our health and safety consultants. She also coordinates requests for **Carnegie Mellon services**, particularly those regarding facilities and security. She takes a lead role with teacher mentoring and consultation for the kindergarten staff and families.

Mrs. Rosenblum, also an *Educational Administrator*, concentrates her administrative efforts on **family support**, beginning with recruiting and initial admission, but also including tuition payments, scholarship assistance, re-enrollment, family involvement, general family resources, committees and special events. She also coordinates **undergraduate support staff**, mentors high school interns, and arranges classroom coverage when teachers are absent. She takes a lead role with preschool teacher mentoring and consultation for the preschool staff and families.

Along with Dr. Carver, both Educational Administrators will collaborate to maintain strong relationships with local schools, to broaden our public relations, to manage the school budget, to secure funding for special projects and scholarships, to maintain the school's NAEYC accreditation, to represent the school in the local, national, and international education community, and to continually seek ways to improve all of the services we offer.

Administrative Structure & Roles continued ...

As the *Administrative Coordinator*, Ms. Drash manages the office operations and equipment, answers the primary **school phone** number, keeps student records, takes messages for teachers, and monitors all **observation and research activities**. She handles visitor entry and exit via the **security system** and is the person to whom **ALL forms** are returned. She maintains all of the school's **databases**. She also keeps our reception areas stocked with family resources, particularly for school choices and community services.

Most importantly, we're all here to help provide an excellent early childhood program for your children. If you have a question or concern and are not sure which administrator to approach, feel free to ask your child's teacher or to call the school office. We'll be happy to direct your call. You may also contact us through email for quick questions or comments you may have.

Dr. Carver (sc0e@andrew.cmu.edu) 412-268-1499

Miss Hancock (lh37@andrew.cmu.edu) 412-268-2198

Mrs. Rosenblum (rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu) 412-268-3476

Ms. Drash (adrash@andrew.cmu.edu) 412-268-2199

FAX 412-268-5627



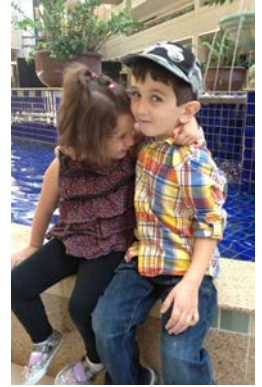
New Screening Strategy: Ages & Stages

Based on recommendations from many campus children's center colleagues around the country, we are piloting the Ages & Stages screening tools this year in order to meet the NAEYC accreditation criterion that requires developmental screening within 3 months of a child's school entry. The ASQ web site describes the screening's benefits by saying, "Professionals rely on ASQ for the best developmental and social-emotional screening for children from one month to 5 ½ years. Highly reliable and valid, ASQ looks at strengths and trouble spots, educates parents about developmental milestones, and incorporates parents' expert knowledge about their children."

We distributed the social-emotional screening forms at the September Parent Orientation and already have more than 80% of them back. Mrs. McGillen, our Floater Teacher, is reviewing all of the screening forms and consulting with teachers to share family input. Teachers will schedule meetings with parents who have raised concerns about their children to begin partnering on strategies as soon as possible. The second part of our Ages & Stages Screening (ASQ-3) is included in this packet. Notice that some of the items require you to ask your child a specific question (e.g., "Name three things that are animals.") or to demonstrate a specific skill (e.g., jump with both feet leaving the floor at the same time). Please complete each page as thoroughly and frankly as you can and return it by **October 26th** so that your input can be used in preparation for parent/teacher conferences. If you have any questions contact Mrs. McGillen at 412-268-2199. Thank you for your participation.

Family Spotlight: Our Family

I am Rabab Tarhini, the mother of Ali 4 (Kindergarten), Sally 3 (AM Blue Room 3's), and Aya who is 3 months old. We are originally from Lebanon. I came here 7 years ago to join my husband, Ahmad, who is a physician and faculty at the University of Pittsburgh. I quickly fell in love with Pittsburgh for the wonderful city that it is and what it has to offer our family. We go back home to Lebanon once a year to spend time with our families and for our children to experience our eastern culture and the richness of combining the best of the two worlds. Ali is bilingual. He speaks Arabic and English. He can read children's books and write a significant number of words, mostly triggered by his love of searching and exploring topics on the Internet. He loves to play outdoors when the weather allows and is mostly into cars these days. Sally is bilingual too. She is mostly into handbags and little baby dolls. She also loves to listen to stories.



Our relationship with the Children's School means a lot to us. We have great admiration for and are fond of all the teachers, the staff and all the friends we have come to make. For the past 2 years, the teachers have helped Ali grow up to be a fine young boy who loves to learn and explore. The school has significantly broadened his interests and taught him a lot of great habits. As for Sally, she has been impatiently waiting for Ali's school to be "her school" too. It has been a long wait for her as she has been accompanying me for 2 years to drop Ali off and pick him up from school. She has a great time walking to her class to meet her teacher and friends in the Blue Room. She simply loves to go to school. Finally, I can't wait for Aya to be a part of the Children's School too. Thank you Children's School for being the BEST!

Family Social Organization (FSO)

The Family Social Organization prepared for the school year over the summer with a few chances for the children to meet their new classmates and reconnect with their friends. The FSO got wonderful support from the Children's School staff when we hosted Playground Playdates in the Children's School playground this July. Thank you! The Playground Playdates were very successful and lots of fun! Friends also enjoyed a lovely night and nice music at the "First Friday at the Frick" picnic! Finally, right before the school year started, the whole school was invited to splash around and dive into the Whole School Water Unit with an outing to the Troy Hill Spray Park! The FSO hopes to build on the enthusiastic response to these events and provide the school community lots of chances to build lasting friendships this year. If you would like to be part of the planning team or if you have any ideas, comments or suggestions, contact Beth Lott (FSO Chair and mom to Isaac, AM 4s) at 412-243-2626 or elisabeth.lott@gmail.com.



Evening at Eleven on 10/11/12

- Are you longing for a night of adult only conversation?
- Are your taste buds craving something other than mac and cheese?
- Are you dying for a date night? (Remember these?)

If you answered **YES** to any of the above, then please join us for a very special evening to celebrate and support the CMU Children's School at Eleven in the Strip District. Recently ranked as one of best 25 restaurants in Pittsburgh by Pittsburgh Magazine, Eleven and the Children's School have combined efforts to host a **fabulous five course dinner with wine pairing**. The evening begins at 6 pm and seating is limited to 38 guests so if interested please RSVP to Allison Drash. Cost/person: \$150 (check or cash only, payable to the CMU Children's School) with all proceeds benefiting the Children's School Scholarship Fund.



- Please contact Allison Drash to reserve your ticket!
- If you are unable to attend and would like to make a contribution, please contact Linda Hancock.

Water, Water, Everywhere

After experiencing floods during the summers of both 2009 and 2011, the Children's School staff was most likely primed to choose WATER as the topic of our Whole School Unit for the 2012-13 year. Though the thematic study is not scheduled to occur until February 2013, our educators will incorporate concepts related to water as a thread throughout the whole year. You may have already noticed some water imagery in the classrooms, as well as in this newsletter. Our choice of the WATER topic provides the opportunity for us to study **physical science** (e.g., states of matter, flotation, absorption, energy, purification, etc.), **life science** (e.g., the necessity of fresh water for life, adaptation to wet or dry habitats, etc.), **earth science** (e.g., the water cycle, effects of water on land, conservation and recycling, etc.), and all the related **technologies**. With respect to **the arts**, we plan to investigate ways to represent water visually, via music and poetry, and in dance or drama, as well as the ways that water can be used as a medium in all of the arts. We can also incorporate the social sciences as we explore the **geography** of fresh and salt water and the **history** of humans using and misusing water. We are currently researching the **social justice** issues related to water and are considering ways to involve our whole learning community in helping to provide clean water for some of the millions of global citizens who currently have limited access to safe water. If you have suggestions for ways to enhance our unit, contact Dr. Carver or Mrs. Rosenblum to share them.



Meanwhile, if you are interested in beginning to explore issues related to water usage yourself, consider checking the following interesting web site from Tauranga, New Zealand, for simple steps to sustainable living, including both tips for reducing your water usage and taking better care of the wastewater and storm water systems where you live.

<http://www.tauranga.govt.nz/sustainable-living/water.aspx>

Easy ideas, such as fixing leaky faucets, switching to a dual flush toilet, and turning off the water while brushing your teeth can have large cumulative effects over a year's time!

Undergraduate Spotlight: Getting to Know You



As a campus laboratory school, the Children's School offers research and observation opportunities to many undergraduate and graduate students from different departments across campus. In addition to these opportunities, we offer undergraduates a chance to work in the classrooms on a regular basis, either as student employees, interns, or volunteers. In the **Undergraduate Spotlight**, we will be featuring each of our undergraduate assistants so that parents can learn about the students who work in the classrooms with their children. Photos are posted on the Family Communication bulletin board.

Child Development Interns

- Alicia Low (AM 3's) is a senior studying linguistics and psychology. She enjoys writing, reading, baking, painting, doing crafts, and traveling.
- Matt Masticova (AM 4's) is a DJ at the CMU campus radio station and writes for the New Yinzer, a Pittsburgh literary magazine. He is a junior psychology and creative writing major.
- Sara Mouhktar (PM 3's) works as an RA and in the infant language learning lab. She is a senior majoring in psychology and English.
- Marisa Wiltsie (Kindergarten) enjoys sewing and cospla (costume play). She is a junior majoring in psychology and plans to become a counselor for children.

Student Employee of the Month

Caroline Landau is a senior art major from Reading, PA. She loves teaching and spending time with the children, especially in artistic activities that reveal their amazing imagination. She says working at the Children's School is one of her favorite parts of college because of the incredible learning environment, the teachers, and - of course - the children! No two days are alike, and for that reason it is always exciting. Caroline plans to attend graduate school in education to pursue a career as a high school art teacher. Numerous teachers have made an impact on her life, and she believes that by entering the same field she can have a similar positive impression on her students. At CMU, she enjoys the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority because of the leadership roles, philanthropic activities, and opportunities to meet people on campus and in the larger community.



Senior Student Teachers from Pitt's CASE Program

• Kristi Frisch, Katie Bouvy, and Carolyn Kroll are seniors in the University of Pittsburgh's Combined Accelerated Studies in Education (CASE) Program, a five-year undergraduate and masters program that includes a BS in Applied Developmental Psychology and a Masters of Education in early childhood and special education.



For their practicum experience this fall, they are teaching with mentors Charline Tomer, Krissy Opferman, and Donna Perovich respectively.

Keeping Parents Informed about Research

The **Research Spotlight** section of the monthly newsletter is one way Children's School parents can learn about research in progress. Also, each time your child participates in a study that involves playing a "game" with a researcher (i.e., as opposed to merely being observed), he or she will get a **participation sticker** suggesting that you, "Ask me about the ... game" and a **study description** detailing the task. We also have **recent articles** resulting from Children's School research posted on the school web site (www.psy.cmu.edu/childrenschool) and a notebook of articles in the office.

Observations for Psychology Assignments: Students from Dr. David Rakison's Child Development class have already begun their periodic observations this fall. For each assignment, they observe specific differences between preschoolers and kindergartners in motor skills, social interactions, language, etc.

Research Methods Class Studies: Students in Yevdokiya Yermolayeva's Developmental Research Methods class will start with a lab entitled the **Find the Houses Game** to explore the evolutionary basis for adults' tendency to have superior memory for information relevant to survival. Specifically, they will test whether 4 year olds' incidental memory will be better for natural objects that are food or water vs. flowers or other non-edible items, as well as whether the effect is stronger for objects shown in context vs. in isolation. Students in Bryan Matlen's Developmental Research Methods class will start with a lab entitled **The Day / Night Game** to explore 3 and 5 year olds' developing "executive function" but asking them to give a response that is counter to their perception and knowledge (e.g., saying "night" when shown a picture of the sun) or just counter to their perception (e.g., saying "night" when shown a checkerboard). Students from both classes will then work in groups to conduct a study of their own design, which will be approved both by their teacher and by Dr. Carver.

Feel free to contact Dr. Carver to discuss any questions you have about research.

Research Spotlight

The Similarity Game

Dr. Anna Fisher's research team is investigating how young children learn synonyms. They are particularly interested in examining how factors such as co-occurrence in child directed speech (e.g. *bunny-rabbit*) influence how children learn synonyms. In addition, they are



Crab



Basketball



Turtle

exploring whether children are able to use their knowledge of synonyms in order to solve reasoning problems. In this study, the researchers will present children with reasoning tasks in which children must rely on their knowledge of synonyms in order to solve the problem. In the Similarity Game, children are shown identical pictures of doors or trees similar to the ones presented below. The children are told about objects that are hidden behind the doors/trees. For example, researchers might tell children that there is a turtle, a basketball, and a crab behind each door. The children learn that one of the objects has a particular property, and then the children must decide whether this property can be generalized to the other two objects.

Research Spotlight continued ...

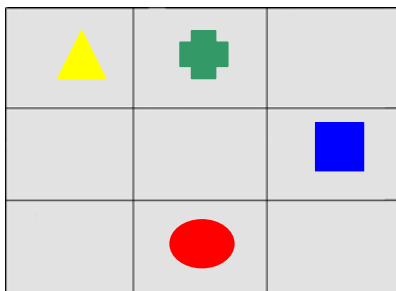
The Listening Game

Research Assistant Amy Barrett, who works with Dr. Anna Fisher, is investigating how young children learn synonyms. The researchers are particularly interested in examining how factors such as co-occurrence in child directed speech (e.g., bunny-rabbit) influence how children learn synonyms. In addition, they are exploring whether children are able to use their knowledge of synonyms in order to solve reasoning problems. In this study, children listen to audio recordings of word pairs (co-occurring synonyms, like rock-stone, or non co-occurring synonyms, like rock-cup) while engaging in a task such as coloring a picture or building a puzzle. In another session, children will complete a variety of reasoning tasks, such as the Help Zibbo Game or the Similarity Game, requiring them to rely on their knowledge of synonyms in order to solve the problem. The researchers are interested in the degree to which children utilize their knowledge of synonyms in various reasoning tasks. Parents will receive separate descriptions for each of the reasoning tasks used.



The Moving Eyes Game

The world around us is complex and maintaining focused attention can sometimes be challenging even for adults. The goal of this project in Dr. Anna Fisher lab is to investigate the developmental course of deliberate selective attention and to examine factors that play a role in attentional selectivity at different points in development. In this project, researchers ask children to play a game in which they see several objects moving on a Tobii T60 eye tracker (which looks like a typical computer screen) landing on one of the nine screen locations, each a different color. Children are instructed to watch a particular object while ignoring the rest of the objects. When the objects stop moving and disappear from the screen, children are asked to name the color of the grid in which the object disappeared. Children play the Moving Eyes Game several times, tracking either many objects or just a few objects at a time. Additionally, if there are technical issues with the eye-tracking hardware, a session may be begun on one day and finished on a later day. Children's performance in the Moving Eyes Game will help researchers to map the developmental course of deliberate selective attention and improve scientists' understanding of this basic cognitive ability required for successful performance in many everyday tasks.



Your Baby Could Be A Scientist!

The Carnegie Mellon University Infant Cognition Lab and Language & Learning Lab are looking for infants between **3 and 26 months** to participate in our **safe, quick, and fun** studies.



What we do: We are interested in how babies learn about the world around them. Our studies last no more than 45 minutes, and take place in the infant labs located next to the Children's School. We will have your child watch a computer display and play with some small toys while we observe his/her behavior.

To learn more or schedule participation, please contact us!

(412) 268-6122, cmu.icl@gmail.com

Research Spotlight continued ...

The Apple Game

Researchers from the ENGAGE project are designing an educational computer game to teach basic physics concepts to 5- to 9-year-old children (grades K through 4). The game is designed to help children understand the distribution of weight and distance for balancing structures. Socio-emotional learning goals are being incorporated into the game as well as scientific inquiry. In order to better understand the socio-emotional aspects of learning, Mitra Fathollahpour is conducting a study in which participants complete a **one-time short, multiple-choice illustrated questionnaire** on computers. The researchers are particularly interested in whether the responses children suggest for challenging situations reflect **Positive Interdependence, Collaboration, and Discussion**. A **voice-over feature** (recorded by Mrs. Flynn, who taught at the Children's School for the past three years) is available for children who are not yet reading. The sample problem below is designed to see whether children will suggest asking for help rather than quitting or trying to manage less effectively alone.



Cindy is picking apples for a pie-baking event in school.

The basket becomes too heavy for her to carry back to the bus.

If you were **Cindy**, how would you solve the problem?

<p>Ask classmates to help you carry the basket.</p>	<p>Tell your classmates that it is too hard to carry by yourself.</p>	<p>Take some of the apples and go back for the rest, later.</p>	<p>Leave the basket.</p>
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The Help Zibbo Game

In this reasoning study being conducted by Dr. Anna Fisher's research group, children will assist Zibbo as he organizes and counts objects. In this task, children will be told where Zibbo will put a particular object. Then children will be asked to predict where they think Zibbo will put other objects. For example, children may be told that "Zibbo will put his cup here. Where do you think Zibbo will put this cup/basketball?"). Subsequently, children will be shown pictures of various objects and asked to help Zibbo make "more-or-less" judgments about the pictures. For example, children may be shown 7 pictures of flowers (5 red roses and 2 white daisies). Then children may be asked to help Zibbo find out if they have more roses or if they have more flowers.



Perhaps you wondered ...

why we closed school last Friday, especially so early in the year. The short answer is that on Friday and Saturday, our staff attended the bi-annual conference of the Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children (PAEYC), which was co-sponsored by the Allegheny County Family Support Centers and held at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center downtown.

The more complete answer begins with the fact that **professional development is a high priority** at the Children's School because it supports our continuous quality improvement. For our high quality staff, much of our professional growth comes from preparing professional development experiences for other educators, as well as from mentoring practicing and pre-service educators on their career paths in early childhood. In terms of the PAEYC organization and its conference, our staff goes well beyond belonging and attending, which serves a strong model for our mentees.

Beyond the 20+ **memberships** the Children's School purchases (approximately \$2,000 annually), the PAEYC organization benefits from Maggie Rosenblum serving on the **governing board** and from our recruitment of Lindsay McGregor, the first student board member.

For September's conference, the school paid the **registration fees** for a total of 25 attendees (approximately \$3,500) so that all of our staff, substitutes, and students could participate together. In addition, Mrs. Rosenblum worked long days staffing registration and helping with the new attendance scanning system, and six of our teachers presented workshops on the importance of PLAY that were both well attended and positively reviewed by participants. While attending, we encountered Children's School parents Rachel Perovich (Lexi, PM 4's) and Shannon Wanless (Charlie, PM 3's) sharing their gifts with the attendees as well.



- Calming Play for Healthy Minds (Jean Bird and Brynn Flynn)
- Creative and Constructive Play with Light (Krissy Opferman and Charline Tomer)
- Using Games to Enrich PreSc & K Programs (Donna Perovich and Jillian Mangan)



Much of our remaining professional development time this fall will be dedicated to three **book-study groups** investigating individual differences in dual language learning, sensory integration, and gender. The specific books the groups are reading are listed below.

- *Basics of Supporting Dual Language Learners* (by Karen N. Nemeth, NAEYC 2012)
- *The Out-of-Sync Child: Recognizing and Coping with Sensory Processing Disorder* (by Carol Stock Kranowitz, Perigee 2005)
- *Cinderella Ate My Daughter* (by Peggy Orenstein, Harper 2011)

Director's Corner: Leadership & Management



The **National Association for the Education of Young Children** (NAEYC) has identified 10 accreditation standards that represent the quality of early childhood programs. The sets of measurable criteria for each standard were created by a blue-ribbon panel of early childhood experts and are based on the latest early childhood research. In this year's Director's Corner columns, I plan to share the Children's School's unique approach to meeting each standard to help everyone in our learning community more clearly understand the intentional design of our laboratory school as we progress through the **NAEYC Accreditation Renewal** process this year. I also hope that this series of articles demonstrates the value of our school's integration into Carnegie Mellon University, an entire community that strives collaboratively for excellence and innovation.

NAEYC's standard for **Leadership and Management** requires schools to implement strong personnel, fiscal, and program management policies so that all children, families, and staff have high-quality experiences. CMU encourages the same practices and provides many resources for us.

- We begin with a **mission statement** that is distinctive to our laboratory school objectives, together with a diverse **leadership team** that facilitates our progress in a climate of mutual trust, collaboration, and inclusion.
- Our own administrative team handles the required **strategic planning, staffing, and program design** for our unique open classroom model, but we receive significant support for the required **technology systems, governance, insurance, human resources**, and contracts with **expert consults** from the broader university community through central campus services.
- The University's finance management professionals guide us in the use of their systems to ensure that we meet all of the criteria for **sound fiscal accountability and long range financial planning**, with **sufficient resources** for excellence in all aspects of our mission, even those that are unique at CMU, such as support for our participation in the PA Educational Improvement Tax Credit program.
- Assistance from CMU's Environmental Health and Safety team, Security professionals, Emergency Medical Technicians, and Nutritionist provide many of the resources necessary for developing the necessary policies and procedures related to **health, nutrition, and safety**. March's article will focus on these issues, as well as those related to our school facilities.
- Similarly, the majority of our **personnel policies**, including those related to hiring, orientation, and benefits, are managed via the campus Human Resources Department, with excellent consultation available for the personnel work that I do as the director. My design of our annual **professional review** process and **professional development** program also benefits from diverse campus colleagues, such as those in the central Learning and Development department, the Counseling and Psychological Services team, etc.
- Finally, Carnegie Mellon's leaders model an inclusive continuous quality improvement process that inspires our **annual school evaluation**, which is then reported to the Psychology department chair, staff, and families to encourage broad involvement and accountability in the **enhancement process**.

As we take the final steps in our Accreditation Renewal Process this year, we are ever more aware of the many ways that the university supports our work, and we are inspired to continue providing excellent and innovative services for all of our constituents.

