Undergraduate Spotlight: Chris Conte

This is my first semester working at the Children's School, and I am very grateful to work with so many kind people and great children. On my second day, I was standing on the playground when Mrs. Rosenblum suggested, "Go play with the children". That statement summarizes the work I do. At first, I was a little too shy to approach the friends, but, little by little, I have really enjoyed getting to know them. Despite what one might think, the friends all have very developed and distinct personalities.

One of my favorite moments at the Children's School was when one child left her spot at circle time to walk up to and kiss another. At the expense of some macho-ness, I will admit that it was one of the cutest things I've ever seen. Playing with the friends is just as enjoyable for me as it is for them. I like showing them new things like how to draw letters and build more complex structures. Sometimes, difficult situations arise where friends get angry or upset. There are no clear answers in these situations, and so it is important to be alert and use my judgment to handle them effectively.

On the playground with the kindergarten, I saw Mrs. Perovich take full advantage of a difficult situation by turning it into a learning opportunity for the friends. One friend was crying because she wasn't picked to be a puppy in their game. Mrs. Perovich responded by asking, "Why can't everyone who wants to be a puppy, be a puppy?" One friend became noticeably thoughtful about the question, and I expect that she will search for similar everybody-wins solutions the next time difficult situations arise in the future. This incident is one of many where we are lucky enough to make a positive impact by taking the time to teach the friends good habits.

High School Interns

• Hello, my name is Kenya Brown, and I am a senior at City Charter High School. I am interning at the Children’s School as part of my graduation requirements. After high school, I plan to attend college for elementary education or biology, but I don’t yet have a particular school in mind. I really love interning here at the Children’s School and interacting with all of the children. The thing I like to do the most here is watch the children play and interact with each other because I get to observe their social skills and their communication skills. My favorite part of the day is when I come in and all of the children are playing and all of the kids say hi to me. Really, just hearing the children laugh, giggle, and play really brightens my day.

• My name is Makenzie Romonovich. I am an 18-year-old senior at Brashear High School in the Pittsburgh Public School's Start On Success program. My internship here at Carnegie Mellon Children’s School has been fantastic so far. I work with 11 preschool 4’s friends, and they are truly the reason why I want to continue my dream career of becoming an elementary school teacher. The children are always willing to learn new things. They see me come into the Green Room, greet me with “hello”, and some even give me hugs. They are precious young children who have a great future ahead of them.
Undergraduate Research

Yevdokiya (Dussy) Yermolyeva’s and Bryan Matlen’s Developmental Research Methods students are preparing their final projects for the semester. Though the research procedures are still being finalized, the topics are listed below. Families whose children participate will receive fuller parent descriptions via the child’s backpack. Everyone can read the study descriptions on the Research Bulletin Board outside the Children’s School Office. Notice the interesting range of important topics in early childhood development!

Children’s memory for 2-dimensional vs. 3-dimensional representations of home and school rooms (The Room Arranging Game, K only)

The impact of supportive vs. unsupportive visual cues on story memory (The “Going to Grandma’s” Game, 3’s and 4’s)

The effects color scheme and music tempo on the speed of simple shape identification and motor tasks (The Stars and Beads Game, K only)

Children’s short-term memory for color sequences presented and recalled verbally vs. visually (The Color Game, 4’s only)

Children’s ability to recreate toy actions they see a videotaped adult perform, after a preliminary play session with the identical toy or a similar toy (The Copy Cat Game, 3’s and K)

The role of demonstration vs. physical participation in children’s ability to remember color sorting patterns immediately vs. after a few minute delay (The Sort the Beads Game, Afternoon Children)

The effects of neutral acknowledgement vs. effort reinforcement on sorting accuracy (The Sorting Game, 3’s and K)

The speed and accuracy of gender identification for faces of children, adults, and elderly adults (The Faces Game, 4’s and K)

Children’s accuracy of tracing familiar upper & lower case letters compared to unfamiliar figures with the same component lines (The Tracing Game, 4’s and K)

The impact of verbal fluency and visual vs. auditory cues on children’s emotion labeling (The Emotions Game, 3’s and K)

Scholarship Fundraising Efforts

As you know, 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. Thus far in 2012-13, we have received $33,000 from Duquesne Light and subsidiaries of ThermoFisher Scientific. If you would like more info or can help us to build a list of prospective businesses, please contact the Main Office.

Benefit Dinner at Eleven: Our Benefit Dinner at Eleven was well attended by current Children’s School families, as well as a few alumni. The event added $3,288 for our Scholarship Fund!

Pittsburgh’s Day Of Giving: For the first time, The Children’s School participated in the Pittsburgh Gives Day of Giving. Children’s School families and alumni donated just over $4,000 and we are waiting to learn what our match from The Pittsburgh Foundation will be.