

WMU Children's Place Learning Center



July 2010 *Newsletter*

Summer is here!

Summer is here and we have started our summer program themes. Each week the classrooms focus on a theme to plan activities and field trips.

We continue to work on academic skills to keep children growing, but the summer is more relaxed than the regular school year.



Some of our upcoming themes include:

June 28 - July 2	Doctor Doolittle (focus on pets and animals)
July 6 - 9	Camping in the Great Outdoors
July 12 - 15	Junk Creations
July 19 - 23	The Wonderful World of Sports
July 26 - 30	It's Not Rocket Science
August 2 - 6	Welcome to the Outback
August 9 - 13	Picasso in Training (focus on the Arts)
August 16 - 20	Out of This World (space)
August 23 - 27	The World of Construction
August 30 - September 2	Beach Blanket Bingo (end of summer celebration)

We are planning fun field trips and visitors as well. This summer we will see Buster Bronco, meet the WMU

Hockey team and possibly some other athletes, and are working on a visit from the Sunseeker, WMU's solar car.



Family vacations



Vacations are an opportunity to build a sense of family togetherness without the pressures of everyday life. Where the family goes and how long the stay are not important, but the best vacations are planned around the interests and the developmental levels of children.

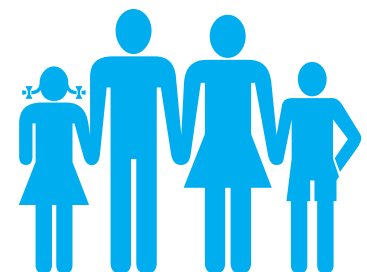
When planning a trip with young children, remember that they need and like routine. A family should keep nap time, mealtimes, and bedtimes as close to the normal routine as possible. It also helps when the itinerary is discussed so that kids know what to expect.

The family that travels with preschoolers should consider this age group's self-centeredness, short attention span, and need for movement. Children at age 3 or 4 make good travelers, though. They enjoy physical activity, quiet playtime, arts and crafts, and most of what parents suggest. They also enjoy exploring and talking about their observations and experiences.

Traveling with this age group does present some challenges. A survival

kit helps minimize irritability and crankiness during long hours of driving. Pack healthy snacks, storybooks, crayons, markers, paper, games, and a tape player and tapes. By preplanning your vacation, ensuring some routine—yet allowing for flexibility—everyone in your family can enjoy the adventure.

Taken from Diffily, D., & Morrison, K. (Eds.). (1996). *Family-Friendly Communication for Early Childhood Programs*. Washington DC, DC: NAEYC.



Survey says (and what we are doing with your feedback)

Each semester we conduct a parent survey. Some of the questions come from NAEYC Accreditation and others are added to help us gather information about programming and services offered at the Children's Place. For Accreditation, we need to have at least half of the parents complete the survey.

We realize everyone's schedule is full, since it is always a challenge to get the participation needed. Nonetheless, we value every answer and suggestion we receive.

Here are some of the things we learned from the spring semester survey:

In this last year, we have been working to improve information getting to parents. One of our improvements was a more consolidated parent information area above the sign-in computer. The survey showed that you are utilizing the parent information board for lesson plans, events and field trips, payment schedule and more. Suggestions for additional items included lunch schedule and pictures of things happening in the classroom. Our menu is always posted on the parent board and on our website. We will soon add the daily schedule in each classroom and begin updating with pictures of the activities in the classrooms.

Parents have commented about wanting more information on the curriculum in the classrooms. We have started biweekly classroom newsletters that will provide information about what is happening in the classroom and the curriculum plan for the classrooms. Future newsletter articles will also focus on the teaching philosophy and curriculum in the classrooms. Using a child-centered approach often looks a little different from a traditional

preschool program. We cover the same concepts and skills as the traditional programs; they are delivered in a more child-centered approach. This approach allows for increased individualized attention.

We are always interested in your comments or concerns. There are several avenues available to you to share your ideas with us. Please feel free to utilize whichever one(s) work best for you.

You can:

- Talk directly with the classroom teacher or Kathy (Director)
- E-mail Kathy (kathy.gilbert@wmich.edu)
- Utilize our website to leave a comment at www.wmich.edu/childrensplace/contact
- Through our parent surveys
- Call Kathy (387-2198)



Summer II billing dates		
Period covered	Payment due (Tuesdays)	Late as of (Fridays)
June 28 – July 4 (one week)	June 22	July 2
July 5 – July 18	July 6	July 16
July 19 – August 1	July 20	July 30
August 2 – August 15	August 3	August 13
August 16 – August 29	August 17	August 27

Announcements

Important dates

- June 29** Family Fun Night
- June 30** Summer I ends
- July 1** Summer II starts
- July 5** Independence Day (observed)
– center closed
- August 20** Summer II ends
- August 23-September 2** Break Weeks – center open
(must be pre-registered to attend)
- September 3** Staff Training Day – center closed
- September 6** Labor Day – center closed

Program Director

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