

# WMU Children's Place Learning Center



March 2011 *Newsletter*

## Are they just playing?

When you walk into the classroom, it looks a lot like the children are just playing. But what really is going on in that play is learning that will prepare the children for school and beyond.

Each activity that is planned in the classroom is based on an objective or skill from our curriculum. As the children move around the room “playing” in the centers, they explore the materials and the teachers guide the learning.

Children are learning about rhyming, initial sounds of words, and syllables through finger plays, songs and stories. During our reading time, the children are introduced to the elements of books (author, illustrator, cover, etc.). They learn to recognize letters, especially the letters in their name, through group games at circle time and small group or individual games at centers.

During circle time and centers, children are learning about counting, one-to-one correspondence, patterns, sorting by various characteristics such as color, shape or size, combining sets to create new sets (addition) and the beginning understandings of time.

They learn about scientific concepts through color mixing, life cycles, pets, floating and sinking, nutrition and light and shadow (something we learned about with Groundhog Day). Children learn about other people in their world when we study celebrations from other cultures in our classroom, community helpers and families.

The classroom is a busy place. The children are learning new skills and concepts. Our program is designed to give children individualized attention during center

time. Children are also learning important social skills during these center activities. So, we may look like we are playing, but really we are learning!



## Center closure

### Inclement weather

If Western Michigan University closes due to weather conditions, the center will also be closed. This will be announced early in the morning on television and radio or you may call the WMU Closure and Emergency Hotline at (269) 387-1001. You will not be called directly from the center. There will be a message on the answering machine.

If the weather becomes severe while your child is at the center, and the center decides to close for the safety of all involved, we will notify you or an authorized person to come and pick up your child. The center will remain fully staffed and functioning until all children are in the care of their families.

# Time to think of summer



Even though the snow is still on the ground, it's time to start planning for summer. Summer I and II enrollment is

underway. Priority enrollment ended February 25 for currently enrolled families. If you haven't submitted your summer schedule yet, enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis and we will begin enrolling from our waiting list soon.

We have a fun summer in the planning. Each week will focus on a new theme. Activities and field trips will enhance each week and the other skills we are learning.

Here is a listing of our weekly themes. More detailed information on these themes will be coming soon.

- June 6-10** Rocks, Rocks and More Rocks
- June 13-17** Dinosaurs
- June 20-24** The Sound of Music
- June 27 - July 1** Around the World in 5 Days
- July 5-8** Mystery Magic
- July 11-15** In the Olden Days
- July 18-22** Mythology
- July 25-29** Camping and the Outdoors
- Aug. 1-5** Art Masterpieces
- Aug. 8-12** Let's Get Wet
- August 15-19** Show Your Bronco Spirit
- August 22-26** Who's Pulling Your Strings?
- Aug. 29 - Sept. 2** All the World's a Circus

## Time for taxes?

Tax information is available at the bottom of your child's billing statements. Our tax ID is also on your statement. If you need additional copies or other information, Kathy should be able to help you.

## Spring semester billing dates

Period covered	Payment due – Tuesdays	Late as of – Fridays
*February 28 – March 13	March 1	March 11
March 14 – March 27	March 15	March 25
March 28 – April 10	March 29	April 8
April 11 – April 24	April 12	April 22
**April 25 – May 1	April 26	May 6

\* Spring break: February 28 – March 6. CENTER OPEN.  
 \*\* One week billing – end of semester.

Payments must be made to your University account. Please make checks payable to "WMU" and write your WMU identification number and "Childcare" on all checks. The University reserves the right to deny access to childcare to a family whose account is delinquent.

## Important dates

- February 28 - March 4** . . . . . Spring break begins
- March 4** . . . . . Staff training day – center closed
- March 7** . . . . . Classes resume after spring break
- March 7-25** . . . . . Fall priority enrollment
- March 22** . . . . . Picture day: 9 to 11 a.m.
- April 4-8** . . . . . Parent – Teacher conferences
- April 29** . . . . . Last day of spring semester
- June 6** . . . . . Summer programming begins
- June 28** . . . . . Family fun night
- May 30** . . . . . Memorial Day – center closed

### Program Director

Kathy Gilbert

### Assistant Director and Head Preschool Teacher

Kristin Harte

### Head Toddler Teacher

Jenny Fusciardi

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### Off-site Administrator

Janice Quakenbush (269) 387-2163

