



Discovery Zone Gazette

Infants Get Crabby!

The month of August our main theme was the ocean. We started off using our cognitive skills by creating a group project where all the children took turns finger painting the color blue on a big sheet of paper. We also got to enjoy water play outside on the deck! To help with the infants physical develop-



ment we encouraged the infants to move their arms back and forth in a swimming motion where we helped to guide them and explain what they were doing.

Next we taught the children about fish. We read The Rainbow Fish to help practice their listening skills and counted fish to learn the concept of math. Next, the children got to enjoy finger painting different types and size fish of all different colors. For the children's physical play we encouraged them to

swim like a fish; which we helped guide and encouraged them to use their large and small motor skills.

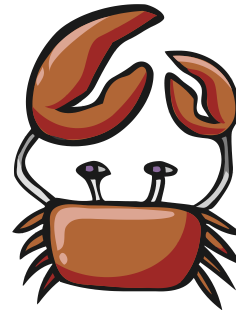
Then we learned about boats. The infants really enjoyed singing and finger playing "Row, Row, Row your Boat". Next, we did a group project where we all took turns finger painting a boat.

Finally we learned about crabs. We read the book Crab Looks For a Home and sang the song "Down By the Shore". Next we made crab hand prints by painting both hands red and stamping them next to each other with both palms touching and fingers pointing away from each other. Lastly, we practiced reaching, crawling (or walking) to the toy "stuffed" crab.

The month of September we will start out with our back to school theme. We will learn about ABC's, 123's, and body parts.

We would like to congratulate A.J. on moving to the toddler room, and would like to welcome our first set of infant room twins Emerson and Carson! We look forward to you

both joining our infant room! Happy 1st birthday to Marion who will be celebrating the 16th of September and Riley who will be celebrating the 27th of September. Welcome to Miss Jillian the infants new assistant teacher. Congratulations to you all!



Discovery Zone Learning Center

August 2011

Important Dates:

- 9/5-CLOSED
- 9/6-scheduled 1st Day of Marlborough Elementary School
- 9/9- Preschool Special @11
- 9/21- Pajama Day!

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Some In-sect-resting Things Happened in Preschool A

Preschool A kicked off the month of August learning about recycling. The children helped to make recycling bins on Monday so they could use them all week. They loved this and it was a great way for the kids to visually understand what we were learning about. Though this was their favorite project, they also really enjoyed making the bird

feeder bottles. The center choices for the week were revolved around recycled materials which were reused to make learning tools, which were geared towards letters, sensory and critical thinking exercises. For example, the children saved their fruit cups the week before which were then re-purposed to make a touch and feel center. The cups were flipped upside down and different textured fabrics were glued to them. As simple as this sounds the children thought it was a great idea and spent a lot of time at the center!

For the next two weeks the class learned about insects. The children are fascinated with insects and are constantly finding new and interesting bugs on the playground. The class learned that insects have six or more legs and antennae. With these two characteristics in mind, the class continued to learn about many other insects including praying mantis, ants, moths, worms, bees and several others. In the first week the children greatly enjoyed making Kooky Clingers. You may have seen the end results hanging in our classroom windows! This project was glue and paint mixed together, painted on plastic paper, then set to dry. When it was done

they created homemade window clings! The children's favorite center choice was the Ants in the Pants game. This center choice was given to practice their fine motor skills and spatial awareness.

In the second week of insects, the children loved learning about moths. Moths have been a very big hit on our playground this summer, they seem to find new and interesting ones everyday! During circle time the children were able to watch a small clip on the computer which talked about moths and showed many different kinds. The class compared these to the ones they had seen on the playground. The clip was played again as a supplement to that days center choice so the children could get a second look. During this week the class had a very hands on center choice when they learned about worms. The sensory table was filled with live worms and dirt so the children could see how worms move and react to them. They loved this center and even took the worms outside to release them later. Another great center choice they enjoyed was a game called Caterpillar Patterns. In this game the children had to first match the AB pattern by letters, then match the caterpillar to that pattern by color.



All in all, insect weeks were fun weeks! To wrap up the month of August Preschool A learned about sign language. It was first described to the students what being deaf meant and then how people who are deaf use their hands to communicate. This was a strange concept to them so to make them

understand what it was not like to hear the class covered their ears tightly so it was completely silent. During this week the children were shown multiple pictures of people signing, different signs, and were physically shown what each sign looked like. Practicing sign language tapped into their fine and gross motor skills. For one of the projects the children made name signs using pictures of the signed alphabet. This required critical thinking skills, as well as spatial awareness skills. It was interesting to see how quickly the children could pick up on the signs. This unit was also fun because a child in the classroom has grandparents who are deaf and he was very happy to help his friends to understand what that meant, and to also help them with learning some signs.



Preschool A would like to say Happy Birthday to Aidan McDonald, as well as goodbye. Thank you to Aidan and his family for the wonderful birthday party. We will miss you! The class would also like to say goodbye and wish luck to all of the preschoolers moving on to kindergarten. It has been fun playing with them and being their friends and the class will miss them as well! The month of September will welcome new friends Maeve and Mason to the classroom. The classroom said their goodbye and good lucks to Miss Sarah and will be welcoming another Miss Sarah in September. The class hopes to start off a brand new school year with a Welcome Back and All About Me week.

Toddlers were Bee-sy this Month!

We would like to congratulate Jenna on her move into Ms. Holly's preschool room. Good luck and we will miss you.

For the month of August the toddlers learned about many new themes and applied many skills to complete their project. Their first theme was about insects.



They worked on taking turns when they created a bug as a group, and waited to push the

button on a flashlight pretending to be a firefly. Toddlers followed two step directions when they did a dragonfly handprint craft, and used math skills when they counted flies on their fly swatter and matched big and little ants. To work on gross motor they marched like ants and jumped like a grasshopper. They made butterflies and fingerprint bugs for sensory projects too.

The second theme was camping. They had a lot of hands on fun with this theme. The children got to play with sleeping bags and flashlights, while this was lots of fun, the toddlers were really practicing their self- help skills and fine motor skills when they zipped and unzipped the sleeping bags and pushed the button on the flashlight to turn it on and off. They worked on more fine motor skills when they

ripped paper to put on logs, used crayons to color a tent, and threaded fish. They worked on language skills when they repeated simple phrases at circle time with some new finger plays and songs. They also repeated some simple actions when they put together trail mix, and had it for snack.

The next theme that the toddlers enjoyed was Barbeque. The toddlers took turns gluing pictures of things to Barbeque onto a piece of paper, they painted a grill together and they passed around different toy foods at circle time for a food exploration. The toddlers also worked on math skills as they counted pieces of meat, red peppers, and green peppers on a shish kabob, they sorted macaroni salad, and they finger painted hot dogs to glue onto tissue paper buns. For gross motor the children found burgers hidden in the classroom and they jumped over a paper hot dog. At the end of our Barbeque week they toddlers got to have a taste test of Barbeque foods, they tasted chicken nuggets with Barbeque sauce, macaroni salad, cucumbers with dip and watermelon. The toddlers really enjoyed the different foods, and we enjoyed some of the faces that were made while trying them.

The toddlers then had a theme on sports where they got to use their creativity to decorate jerseys. They worked on fine motor skills by rolling balls out of play dough, ripping and gluing tissue paper, painting a baseball,

and lacing a football. They also had a ball find where different paper balls were hidden and they had to find them around the class, and they also did a sport match. Our toddlers learned some new song like "Basketball song" and "Football song" to the tune of Frere Jacques, and of course they sang "Take me out to the ball game".



To close out our last week in August and begin September we did a theme on back to school. During this week we worked on fine motor for ripping and gluing, lacing school items, taking turns dressing paper dolls to get them dressed for school, creativity and sensory when we finger painted new shoes for school, worked on math skills by counting crayons in and on the crayon box.

We would like to welcome Ms. Paula back from her summer vacation, and Miss Kelly back into the class from camp this summer. For the month of September you will see themes of friends and I, sensory projects, leaves, and fall.

Interesting Information

Make the Most of Playtime

Playtime is special. Not only is it fun, but it is critical to children's development. Play is their "work" and their way of learning about the world around them. Through play, babies and toddlers try out new skills, explore their imagination and creativity, and learn about relationships with other people.

Any activity can be playful to young children, whether it's rolling trucks back and forth or sorting socks. And any type of play can offer multiple opportunities to learn and practice new skills:

As a parent, you are your child's very first and favorite playmate. From the very beginning of your child's life, he is playing with you, whether he is watching your face as you feed him or listening to your voice as you sing to him during his diaper change. He is at work, learning and exploring.

So what can you do to make the most of your child's playtime? Check out the tips below.

Follow your child's lead

Provide an object, toy, or activity for your baby or toddler and then see what he does with it. It's okay if it's not the "right" way...let him show you a "new way."

Go slowly

It's great to show your child how a toy works, but try to hold off on "doing it for him" every time. You can begin something, such as stacking one block on another, and then encourage him to give it a try. Providing just enough help to keep frustration at bay motivates your child to learn new skills.

Read your child's signals

Your little one may not be able to tell you using words when he's had enough or when he's frustrated. But he has other ways—like using his sounds, facial expressions, and gestures. Reading the signals that precede a tantrum help you know when to jump in or change to a new activity. Reading his signals can also tell you what activities your child prefers.

Look at your play space

Is the area child-friendly and child-safe? Is there too much noise or other distractions? Is the area safe to explore? Is this a good place for the activity you've chosen, such as running, throwing balls, or painting? Checking out your space beforehand can prevent a tantrum, an accident, or a broken lamp.

Play it again, Sam

While this desire to do things over and over again is not necessarily thrilling for moms and dads, it is for their young children. They are practicing in order to master a challenge. And when they can do it "All by myself!" they are rewarded with a powerful sense of their own competency—a confidence that they can be smart and successful beings. The more they practice and master new skills, the more likely they are to take on new challenges and the learning continues. So when you're tempted to hide that toy that you don't think you can stand playing with yet one more time, remember the essential role repetition plays in your child's development.



Look for ways to adapt play activities to meet your child's needs

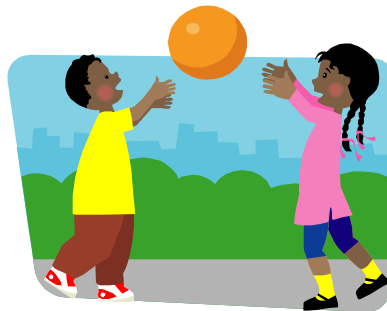
You may be a parent, relative, or caregiver of a child that has special needs. A physical, mental, or social disability can pose the occasional challenge to play time. Still, all children learn through play and any play activity can be adapted to meet a child's unique needs. The guidelines below can help you think about how to make playtime enjoyable and appropriate to your child's skills, preferences, and abilities:

Think about the environment. How do variables like sound or light affect your child? What is the background noise like in your play area? Is there a television or radio on? Are there many other kids around? If your child seems distressed during playtime, and you've tried everything else, move to a quieter, less stimulating area to play.

How does your child respond to new things? Some infants and toddlers, particularly if they have a special need, are easily over-stimulated, while others enjoy a lot of activity. Try starting playtime slowly, with one toy or object, and gradually add others. See what kind of reactions you get. Are there smiles when a stuffed bear is touched and hugged? Does your child seem startled by the loud noises coming from the toy fire engine?

How does your child react to different textures, smells, and tastes? For example, some objects may be particularly enjoyable for your little one to touch and hold. Others may "feel funny" to them. Read your child's signals and modify the play experience accordingly.

Involve peers. It is important for a child with special needs, just as it is for a child who is typically developing, to establish relationships with peers. Arrange play dates or look for opportunities for your child to play with other children, such as at the park or during a library story hour. Having fun with peers is an important way that children learn social skills like sharing, conflict resolution, and empathy—and also help prepare children for the school setting later on.



Center News

- If your child is going to be out or late for the day, please call/email the center to update us.
- Please change your children's extra clothes to match the season.
- Reminder: If your child has a temperature of 101 or higher/vomiting/diarrhea they need to stay home and rest for 24 hours.
- DZLC is continuing the major maintenance plans. Our cabinets are being built and should be installed in November!
- Please help us to welcome all new staff to DZLC!
- Join Discovery Zone on Facebook!
- DZLC is in the process of some exciting changes. Please keep your eyes peeled for emails/notices!!
- Original Art Work will be sent home soon. Keep your eyes peeled for dates of returning!

Preschool B Studied Authors

Preschool B kicked off their learning with an author study unit. Each day of the week was devoted to a book, that was written by a different author and the activities are based on that book for the whole day! The children enjoyed reading books such as A House For Hermit Crab, A Color Of His Own, Caps For Sale, Strega Nona, and Jam Berry! The children enjoyed making a “berry” special snack for Jam Berry, using strawberries and blueberries, granola, and yogurt! The preschoolers also practiced positional word by placing a blueberry on, in, above, under, etc. a hat! After A Color Of His Own, the children learned about how colors can camouflage, by painting a chameleon and having it blend into a piece of paper. A House



For Hermit Crab led the way for creative expression as they used Pasta boxes to make their very own shell!

With Strega Nona, it was all about the letters! The preschoolers used cooked and uncooked pasta to form letters, learning how to identify curves/non curves in letters. And, lastly for Caps For Sale, they talked about what a monkey might do with a hat and then used fine motor and imagination skills to create their own cap!

The smell of pizza was in the air, with the exciting topic of pizza! The children explored books such as Pizza Counting, A Job For Wittilda, and Curious George and The Pizza! At circle time, they practiced their oral language skills, as well as making a list when talking about what kind of toppings we can get on our pizzas. The preschoolers also tried to recall and spell names of toppings on our pizzas. Project time consisted of pepperoni pizza counting, to work on counting skills; a “class”y

pizza, to practice their fine motor skills as well as working together; as well as making personal pizzas to practice their sensory, fine motor, and culinary skills! It made a yummy snack as well! The children also got to role play being the chef in a pizza shop, cutting and cooking our play pizzas. Each child got the chance to make their own pizza using recipe cards, and felt to put together the pizzas.

The third week of August was out of this world, as Preschool B geared up for a trip to outer space. During circle time, the children reviewed the solar system and the planets that can be found. They sang the nine little planets song, as well as used critical thinking and oral language skills to talk about astronauts and the moon. At project, children worked on their fine motor skills while they cut out their bumpy moons and painted with oatmeal, when cutting out stars and gluing on aluminum foil pieces to make them shine, and while cutting and coloring out rocket ships. Each child got to pretend to be an astronaut in dramatic play, as well as fly around space with a space shuttle in block center. To practice number ordering skills, they counted star sticks and placed them in order from one to seven!

All The children were getting excited as they talk about going back to school! They read stories together at circle about going to preschool and kindergarten, as well as Froggy Goes To School. Everyone joined in to talk about being excited or scared to be moving on to kindergarten, or making new friends in preschool. For project, they exercised fine motor skills to cut out and decorate a school, as well as use their culinary skills to make an edible bus using graham crackers, cream cheese, chex cereal, bananas, and mini chocolate chips. They also got to decorate crayons, using glitter! The preschoolers used center time, to practice all of their skills of colors, shapes, numbers, and fine motor such



as matching a color with its name, making patterns using certain shapes, and writing with pencils on lined and

unlined paper, as well as counting out and sorting objects.

The last week, the children got to learn all about themselves and their friends. Circle time was focused on talking about things that are the same and different about our friends. They each got to graph eye colors of the class, as well as count the letters in their names to see who had the shortest and the longest. The preschoolers also shared baby photos with each other to play a guessing game. To practice fine motor skills, they cut out stars and used oral language to tell what their favorite color was, favorite animal, and why they were special. The preschoolers worked with self concept as they created a self portrait of themselves. They worked with each other at center time to use string to measure how tall they were, used magnifying glasses to explore their fingerprints, and used creative dramatics to role play different people and jobs!

We would like say goodbye to our friend Alejandro & family, wishing them the best of luck, as well as saying goodbye to Alex Connolly, Aidan, Emily, Khanur, and Erin as they venture off to the big kid school - KINDERGARTEN! We would also like to welcome to our classroom Jenna, Isaiah, and Jackson! Happy Birthday to Isaiah (8/6)!