There are so many exciting things happening here at the Child Development Center this year we just couldn’t fit them in on the regular newsletter format. I want to take a few minutes to tell you about what has been happening over the last few months, where we would like to take the center over the next year and beyond, and make sure you know how you can help us with all of that.

What’s New these Days:
Aside from the curriculum and the assessment tools we have adopted we would like to introduce Erica Johnson as the new Head Teacher in our Rocket room. Erica has been a big part of the Rocket room as the assistant teacher to Ms. Casandra. We are excited to have Erica take on this new role in the classroom. Please stop by and see her especially if your child will be transitioning to the Rocket room this coming transition.

You may have noticed that Ms. Jo has been missing from the Bear room. Ms. Jo has been out on extended medical leave and is shooting to return in March. At this time Ms. Debie Warner will be taking over the duties of Head Teacher. Thank you for your patience during this transition, Ms. Debie will do a fine job with the support of the other teachers until Ms. Jo returns.

Curriculum:
Each of the classrooms has implemented the new curriculum system call “Creative Curriculum”. Creative Curriculum is a comprehensive curriculum aligned to essential early learning standards. This program features a rich collection of knowledge-building and daily practice resources; the curriculum offers detailed day-to-day guidance, individualized learning experiences, 38 research-based objectives, and exploration and discovery as a way of learning.

The infant/toddler classes use the Creative Curriculum guides to develop activities for the infants and toddlers that foster developmental success. The process for the infants/toddlers is designed to create an environment rich in opportunities to build motor development, cognitive development, language and social development all the while building relationships and routines with their caregivers.

The preschool curriculum is aligned to the Pre-k standards. Follow this link for the family guides for: Language and literacy, Mathematics, Social Studies/Social Emotional, Music and Movement and Creative Arts
Assessment:

We have begun data entry for the new assessment tool “Teaching Strategies Gold” in all the classrooms as well. TSG is a comprehensive assessment tool based on the latest research, and is fully aligned with the Common Core State Standards, state early learning guidelines, and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. This program is designed with teachers in mind offering a clear and effective way to take the guesswork out of the assessment process. The program is online and will help teachers focus their efforts on what is most important for each child’s learning and development. This is an ongoing observational assessment tool that allows teachers to document what is happening during regular, everyday activities and can be implemented on a continuous basis throughout the year. As previously mentioned we have begun data entry this month to correspond with the upcoming transitions. The objective of assessment is to help teachers meet children where they are while also helping children meet challenging and achievable learning goals. All of these things then provide a broader and more meaningful picture of each child’s development. Parent/Teacher conferences will be scheduled in the near future so you and your Head Teacher can discuss the assessment outcomes.

The TSG assessment also offers curriculum support for the teacher, once individual data is input the program will develop suggested activities for individual or small groups of children.

Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS):

We have begun the process! We had our initial assessment before the break and will begin working with our “coach” this month. “Great”, you say. “What does that mean for my family”, you say. Let me tell you a little bit about it.

- QRIS initiatives help define “quality child care” using research based criteria.
- Child care programs are assessed and given a number of “stars” to indicate what level the program has reached (similar to hotels and restaurants).
- QRIS initiatives lead to greater parent and community awareness of quality programs.
- Increased resources offered through QRIS help child care programs improve and sustain higher quality.

http://doe.nv.gov/Standards_Pre-Kinder.html. Also, please make sure you check your classroom as the daily plans should be posted for you to review.
• There are currently 18 states operating QRIS for Early Care and Education programs.

Vision:
Every early childhood program in Nevada facilitates healthy growth and development which prepares and promotes children’s success in school as measured by the state rating system.

So what does this mean for your family? We will be working for the next 18 months to improve the quality of our program on the following measures:
• Space and Furnishing
• Personal Care Routines
• Language-Reasoning
• Activities
• Interactions
• Program structure

The QRIS system uses the ITERS-R (infant/toddler environment rating scale) and the ECERS-R (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale) to evaluate the environment and experience of children. Based on these ratings we will, after our 18 month coaching period, receive our official Star Rating.

During this process you may see our coach Yvette Ruiz doing observations and talking with staff and/or Parents. Yvette and I, along with the staff will be working on setting goals for improvement and creating action plans to implement change where it is needed.

We will receive $7000.00 to help during this process. This grant money will be used to improve the materials, equipment, physical environment and provide funds for staff and parent training.

There is so much...how do you fit in?
We want to hear from you. You are always welcome to talk with your head teacher or support staff. You are always welcome to talk with Linda or Andrea. Beyond individual conversation we are always looking for parents to participate in our Parent Action Board. This group meets on the second Friday of each month during lunch.

I will be making every effort to increase the communication over the next several months to keep you all posted as to our goals and plans for improvement. We welcome your input as well in whatever form you want to provide it, this center belongs to you, and our families are very important to us.
There are just a few more things….

Attached to this newsletter are a few flyers regarding the Scrip program. We have had a few orders since we launched this fundraising effort and I would really like to encourage parents to check it out. Using scrip costs you nothing extra, you only purchase what you need. We all have to grocery shop; we all have to buy gas. Scrip provides a safe way to do all of this while also sending a percentage of those proceeds back to the center. Please take some time to look over the flyers provided.

Family Survey Results will be posted next week along with the action plans please look for those postings in the lobby.

One of the items from the Family Survey was regarding access to the Parent Handbook. Please visit our website www.wnc.edu/cdc/ for access to the Parent Handbook. We are looking to create a web page that is easier to access in the next month. For now you can go through the WNC website >>Offices and Services>>Child Care, or go directly to the website provided above.

I will be collating and posting the full results for the Family Survey this week.

If you have not provided an email to the office, or have any changes to any of your contact information please take a moment to stop by and update that for us. I would like to start sending the newsletters and any other correspondence out both in the cubbies as usually and through email.

Thank you all for allowing us the opportunity to be a part of your child’s growth. We hope the changes will provide you with continued quality and improvement.

Regards,

Mrs. Andrea