



Child Development Center



## Message from the Director



Spring semester is almost over. We want to congratulate our UTSA student parents who are graduating and wish everyone the very brightest future as you leave our program this Friday.

Many families will continue on after the end of the semester on May 11, 2012. You may hear your children talking about their friends leaving this week. You will also hear about new friends joining their groups next week. We have enjoyed working with all of you this semester. We hope your summer will be filled with joy and success regardless of your next step.

If you will be staying through the summer, plan on many new and exciting early learning opportunities for all the children as the teaching staff work with you on your goals for your child's early care and education.

Also, if you will be staying through the summer, we are looking for new members to add to our Parent Advisory Committee. Please let me know if you are interested in this as a possible project. The next meeting will be in June. I will send out more details later. Parental input into the program improvement process is very important to the UTSA CDC. We want to have the Parent Advisory Committee look at the results of the Family Survey and give input into areas that we will be concentrating on for ongoing, continuous improvement.

Please feel free to stop by the office any time. I look forward to the opportunities to meet with the members of our learning community and am available to help you with resources if you have questions or concerns.

Earlene Gonzales  
Director

### IS YOUR LAST DAY OF ENROLLMENT APPROACHING?

Remember to turn in your key card(s) by **May 11th** or the last day of enrollment! Failure to return key cards will result in a charge of \$20 per card and a hold will be placed on your account. A hold on your account prohibits you from obtaining copies of your transcripts or registering for classes at UTSA until the card or payment is received.

### Policy Reminders:

- Parents, families and staff, please utilize your key card upon entering the front door of the building. This records activity to the police department and ensures the safety of our children. We must be informed if you have misplaced or damaged your card.
- Cell phones and other digital and electronic devices are to be out of sight and not in use upon entering the UTSA CDC.
- Please do not allow children (or parents!) to run in the hallways of the center for the safety of all our families.
- Outside food and drinks are prohibited from the UTSA CDC building.
- Remember that children are to be checked in and out at the front desk, as well as, signed in and out in the classroom.



### Child Development Center

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#### Special points of interest:

- ☺ Letter from Director
- ☺ End of a Semester
- ☺ Change in Weather
- ☺ Family Survey
- ☺ Special Events

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# Snapshot!



## TIN Recycling Museum

The children in TIN, with Ms. Michelle and Ms. Keli, were happy to share their learning with the rest of the CDC. In March, they turned the Gross Motor Room into a museum using recycled items.

The staff, children, and families were invited to visit and explore the culminating event. Children could compare heavy



and light, learn about different recyclables, properties of different materials, and ways to use recycled items for tools, projects, and crafts. The robot display was a big hit and a great opportunity for parents to be involved with the classroom project.

## Spotlight

Congratulations to **Imrana Zahid**. She was recognized for 5 years of valuable service to the Child Development Center and UTSA.



Other members of the CDC staff to have achieved 5 years of service and continue with their dedication to our program are: Cindy Lira (2008), Victoria Mirales (2009), Sheryl Wedige (2008), Silvia Mendoza (2009), Naomi Miller (2011), Norma Castillo (2009), Nanette Velasquez (2009), Janet Hughes (2009), Virginia Fugon (2009), Sondra Gervasi (2011), and Anne Folmar (2011).

## "Project Child Development Center"

The Office of the Registrar at the 1604 campus has started a fantastic project to display the diverse and creative art of the children enrolled at the CDC. Every month or so, anyone walking by the large glass windows of this office will experience the wonderful artwork resulting from children's learning, creativity, and development in our program. Check it out!

Currently displayed: TIIN & YTS

Upcoming: TIN & PS



The Week of the Young Child is an annual celebration sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The purpose of this event is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs.



Our program celebrated with a variety of activities all week long. We kicked it off with inviting families to have breakfast with their child. Throughout the week, we had spirit day, hat day, and a special visit from a local librarian. We had a special day to appreciate our teachers and a fabulous festival to celebrate the diversity of all our families. The potluck event was a huge success with many different types of foods from all over the world. Looking forward to the Cookbook!

Thank you to the WOYC committee for putting the celebration together and to all the family and staff members who participated in making the week a success.



# Let's Play!



## Family Surveys

Family perspective and input are critical to improving and maintaining quality of an accredited early childhood program. The NAEYC accreditation process demands high quality programs, such as ours, to provide opportunities for families to participate in our assessment process.

On April 30th, the UTSA CDC handed out 80 family surveys. Due to the low return, we extended the opportunity for a few more days to allow a higher percentage of families to participate. Low numbers of return usually result in an inaccurate picture of where progress and improvement are needed.

A result summary of this assessment will be provided for families and staff to review. We invite you to attend the upcoming Parent Advisory Committee meeting to discuss the results and input for continuous improvement.

Family involvement in these surveys is crucial. Please look forward to another opportunity for participation some time in November.

## **The Importance of Play in Early Childhood Development**

by Jona K. Anderson-McNamee, MSU Extension Family and Consumer Science Agent, Cascade County, and Sandra J. Bailey, Family and Human Development Specialist, MSU

**PLAY IS A CHILD'S WORK. PLAY IS IMPORTANT** for children's development and for children to bond. It offers a chance to connect with your child. You are your child's first teacher and much of that teaching happens through play. Play helps your child learn the rules of your family and what is expected of him or her. As children grow, play helps them learn how to act in society.

Parents need to make time to play with their children. You start to play when your child is an infant. When your baby starts to smile and you smile back, you are engaging in play. Play is directed by the child and the rewards come from within the child. Play is enjoyable and spontaneous. Play helps your child learn social and motor skills and cognitive thinking.

Children also learn by playing with others. You provide the setting for your child to play with others. As your children grow, you provide toys, materials, and sports equipment so that they can play with others. It is important that children learn that play is important throughout life.

Play is needed for healthy development for your child. Research shows that 75 percent of brain development occurs after birth. Play helps with that development by stimulating the brain through the formation of connections between nerve cells. This process helps with the development of fine and gross motor skills. Fine motor skills are actions such as being able to hold a crayon or pencil. Gross motor skills are actions such as jumping or running. Play also helps your child to develop language and socialization skills. Play allows children to learn to communicate emotions, to think, be creative and solve problems.

### **Playing With Your Child**

In today's world of balancing work and home schedules, parents find it hard to have quality time with their children. It is essential for parents to make the best use of time they have with their children. Your child needs time with you to relax and play.

Playing with children builds lasting bonds. Playing allows parents to appreciate the uniqueness of each child. Playing with children can also be a stress reducer for overworked parents. Laughing and relaxing are important to your own well-being.

Try to spend individual time with each of your children. When a parent or sibling plays a board game with a child, shares a bike ride, plays baseball, or reads a story, the child learns

self-importance. Your child's self-esteem gets a boost. You are sending positive messages to your child when you spend quality playtime with him. From these early interactions, children develop a vision of the world and gain a sense of their place in it.

Family activities are important for the whole family. They help develop strong family bonds, which can last a lifetime. Families who play together are more cooperative, supportive and have better communication. Have movie nights and game nights, or go for walks together. A game night allows parents to teach children to take turns, how to win, how to lose and methods of sequencing events. Listening to music together by singing along, or playing rhythm instruments will help children to listen for and recognize patterns in music, which will assist with math skills in school. If you are a single parent or have only one child, invite family and friends over to play.

Today, children of all ages are exposed to technology such as computers and videos. Children who spend most of their time using technology often are not physically active or using their imagination. You can help your child by reducing screen time. Limit screen time to no more than two hours per day. Make sure your child gets a minimum of one hour of physical exercise everyday.

You have important roles in play. You can encourage play by providing interesting materials that promote exploration and learning. Playing with your child helps him learn how to manipulate toys and other play materials by modeling your actions.

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Our Vision is to provide a safe and nurturing environment where children can develop through play and real-life experiences.

Our Mission is to provide a child-centered program for children of UTSA students, faculty and staff in which parents, teachers, and administrators work together to benefit the whole child through developmentally appropriate programs dedicated to helping children reach their fullest potential and develop necessary life skills.



**Children love being outside in the summer, but caregivers and teachers need to take precautions so that children are protected from the sun's rays:**

- Keep infants younger than six months out of direct sunlight. Find shade under a tree, umbrella, or stroller canopy;
- Wear a hat or cap with a brim that faces forward to shield the face;
- Limit sun exposure between 10 AM and 2 PM, when UV rays are strongest;
- Wear child-safe, shatter-resistant sunglasses with at least 99% UV protection;
- Apply sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15.

For additional tips and details, please see the NRC's standards on [Sun Safety Including Sunscreen](#) and [Playing Outdoors](#), which can also be found in *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs*, 3rd Ed. (CFOC3).

**Stay safe this coming summer!**



## Calendar of Events

June 15, 2012—Closed for Staff Training

July 4, 2012—Closed for Fourth of July Holiday