



## UPCOMING EVENTS...

### Oct. 23... Fire Up Your Life

See the attached flyer to learn more about an event (by parents of former preschoolers) to help you accomplish what you want in life!

### Oct. 28-29... Wear your Halloween costumes to school!

### Oct. 30-31... No School

### Reminders...

☛ Be aware of the weather when dressing your child for the day. We spend as much time outside as possible and want everyone to be comfortable.

☛ A new calendar for the school year is attached. Throw away the old one and note that there is no school on Monday, Feb. 16th.

☛ POGO Cards are available in the office (exp. 12/2010). If you are searching for that perfect gift the POGO Card offers money-saving options for anyone.

☛ ACH automatic withdrawal to pay tuition is still available.

☛ A great opportunity to discuss parenting and family issues, listen to speakers and more, is happening the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 9:15-11:15 in Courtyard Lounge. Call the office at 476-8304 for more information.

### Thanks to Macaroni Grill...

...for surprising us with lunch!

### Pancake Breakfast thanks to...

...Shadowbrook Farms for donating the produce for our Farmer's Market  
...Ideal Grocery for syrup  
...Burger King for sausage & juice  
...and our parents and staff for providing items for the garage sale!

### Donations requested...

☛ Play-doh  
☛ Watercolors  
☛ Glue sticks  
☛ Masking tape  
☛ Birdseed (safflower, sunflower, etc.)

### Bookshelf

600 Black Spots, David A. Carter  
A Handful of Sunshine, Melanie Eclare

Castles, A First Discovery Book  
The Dot, Peter A. Reynolds  
I Spy Colors in Art, Lucy Micklethwait

In the Tall, Tall Grass, Denise Fleming  
Ish, Peter A. Reynolds

Leaf Man, Lois Ehlert  
Not A Stick, Antoinette Portis  
One Red Dot, David A. Carter

Pumpkin Eye, Denise Fleming  
Shelter, Susan Canizares, Daniel Moreton

Two Eyes, A Nose, A Mouth, Roberta Grobel Intrater  
Warthog Paint, Pamela Duncan Edwards

Where's the Warthog Paint?, Pamela Duncan Edwards

Whose Nose and Toes?, John Butler  
Why Do Leaves Change Color?, Betsy Maestro

## Toddler B child shares knowledge of caterpillars

By Kristine Luebke, teacher

A morning observation. After looking at a caterpillar, Nathaniel V. looked up at the teacher. "I have to tell you something about caterpillars. Caterpillars come out of an egg on a leaf. Then it eats the leaves and makes a chrysalis. Then the chrysalis turns into a butterfly. But it has to let its wings dry before

it can fly."

"Wow, you sure know a lot about caterpillars! Can you put your story into pictures?" the teacher asked.

After selecting some crayons, Nathaniel began to draw. "This is the egg," he said as he drew a small circle shape. "Can you help me draw a caterpillar?" Nathaniel asked.

"Well, let's look at a picture." The teacher pointed to a picture of a caterpillar.

"Oh! A caterpillar looks like a line!" he said as he drew a line for the caterpillar. "Then it makes a chrysalis,"

Nathaniel explained as he pointed to the shape. "The chrysalis turns into a butterfly. How do you draw a butterfly?"

We looked at a picture of a butterfly and Nathaniel drew what looked like the shapes of wings.

"Butterflies have to wait for their wings to dry before they can fly," Nathaniel said and then drew a green swirl on the page.

"What is that part of the picture telling us?" the teacher asked.

"The butterfly is flying," answered Nathaniel.



Nathaniel drew his story about caterpillars with crayons on paper. His teacher recorded his story in words.

## Small Group encourages sense of self

By Denise Topil, Krista Kuenning, Joleen Podtburg, teachers

Children in the infant room have spent the last several weeks focusing on the overall theme of "Getting to Know You." When children are under 18 months of age, their time in the Infant Room is spent becoming familiar and comfortable with new teachers, friends, and environments.

Forming attachments to care givers and distinguishing themselves from others are two specific developmental activities children at this age are working on.

Two of the books we are reading are aiding the children in this "getting to know you" process.

Using *Whose Nose and Toes?*, the children are learning to point to their own nose and toes. *Two Eyes A Nose A Mouth* has pictures of real faces that they love looking at. They also have enjoyed the special treat of sharing family pictures with each other.

Parents brought in special pictures of mommies, daddies, siblings, grandparents;

even pets for everyone to enjoy looking at! It's fun to see the recognition in the eyes of our young friends

when they are looking at their own family book.

These activities have been expanded on with the addition of mirror toys to our room. As children become familiar with their own faces, we add hats and costume headbands to give them a different look. Responding to and identifying pictures, along with the pretend play of the hats, are activities that encourage creative representation. This serves as a base for future reading skills.

These activities usually take place during a scheduled small group time in our room. Each activity builds upon the previous one to create a continuity of learning for our youngest friends.



photo by Joleen Podtburg  
Gavin G. may be wondering who he is seeing in the mirror.



photo by Joleen Podtburg  
Infants view infant faces in book.

## Toddler A news

By Kathy Marshall, Joy Ritchie, Kathy Perry

We have been exploring "Dots and Lines" and learning the sign language signs as we go on new adventures. We have also been adding brown and orange to our color words and signs.

Our new songs during "Music and Movement" include "Leaves are Falling" (we toss autumn colored fabric leaves into the air as we sing), "Hop Old Squirrel" and "Owl in the Old Oak Tree." Whenever possible, signs and words for squirrel, owl, cat, tree, and bird are used.



photo by Joleen Podtburg  
Elizabeth P. explores dirt in the digging area.

Toddler A children have been doing "real work" in the Nature Explore Classroom by using rakes, shovels, and hoes in the

messy materials area. They are noticing the difference in the shape, color, texture, and taste of our bean vines; the vines have been changing from flowers to small purple pods to larger pods and again to smaller, dryer pods. The color and shape of the beans is changing from small and yellow to white, and into large, hard purple beans. When Mia tasted the bean she said, "I don't like it."

More nature adventures are occurring on our texture table with milk weed pods. The children have loved letting the fluffy seeds fly away during our breezy fall days.

# Prairie inspires close observations

story and photos by  
Chris Kiewra, Family Programs Coordinator

On a beautiful fall morning last Saturday over 50 people attended the Nature Explore Families' Club at Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center. The sights, smells and sounds of the prairie inspired children and parents alike to make close observations. Families set out on the vast trails and discovered diverse plant life and wildlife including a multitude of birds,



insects, frogs and even a large bull snake!

To help children

remember their prairie experience, they were invited to sketch about it. Some children sketched their entire path, some chose landmarks, while still others worked on detailed drawings of insects. Some children recalled visiting the prairie on field trips last school year and were able to make comparisons between the trips. One boy was able to entice a Painted Lady Moth to rest on his finger while he drew her!

Noticing details helps children begin to recognize patterns, colors and shapes, which helps them make sense of the world around them. Map making exercises like this also helps

children develop their visual spatial skills by requiring them to choose a perspective, decide on important features, and retrieve visual images they have stored in their mind's eye. Families placed these "maps" in newly



created nature journals.

We are hoping to add photos, sketches and artifacts from nature club activities and individual experiences to our nature journals throughout the year. It will be fun to share the journals with each other each time we meet and create a keepsake to treasure long into the future.

If you are interested in attending the next Nature Explore Families' club event it will be November 8th at the East Campus Arboretum. Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy time playing outside and start a nature journal for your own family!

To learn more, email Chris Kiewra at [chris@dimensionsfoundation.org](mailto:chris@dimensionsfoundation.org)

## Information from the Early Education Office...

### Core Group Lists

A copy of your child's core group list is attached which includes names, phone numbers and addresses of the children in your child's group. Please use this list only for contacting friends for parties, playdates, etc. We also suggest that you send your party invitations to friends' houses instead of putting them in cubbies at school. This will help eliminate any sad feelings if everyone is not invited.

### New Office

Dimensions has outgrown its office at 2045 E Street and some of our staff will be moving to a new office at 6000 Cornhusker. The 2045 E St. office will continue to house the Early Education Programs and the Research Office. The Cornhusker building will be for the Nature Explore, Workshops and Design Consultation divisions of Dimensions. Hours in both offices will be 8AM-4PM; (after 4PM you can leave a message) if it is an emergency you can speak to someone up until 5:30. The phone number for the Early Education and Research office will remain the same (476-8304).

# "Castle" is real life lesson in shapes

story and photos by Beth Pauley, Editor

A few blocks away from Dimensions First-Plymouth Early Education Programs is a "castle." Most of the children in the program will have numerous opportunities to study the castle during their time with us.



The "castle" house in the neighborhood provides real life opportunities for learning to recognize a variety of shapes.

Ms. Logan and Ms. Ragland took advantage of a beautiful fall afternoon to take their children to the castle recently.

To prepare the children for the trip the teachers helped them practice keen observation skills. Ms. Logan showed the children a picture of a building for five seconds. Then she asked them to close their eyes. After a few more seconds she had them open their eyes and share what they remembered about the picture.

As the children walked to the castle, Ms. Logan pointed out interesting shapes in the neighborhood. Daniel B. found a circle on the church and Ms. Logan pointed out a window balcony on the church; it had five engravings of an ear of corn decorating it. Some of the children found squares and some found circles on the way to the castle.



The children study the castle before drawing their observations on their sketch clipboards.

When the children arrived at the castle, the teachers asked them to sketch the shapes they saw on the building with help from their "secret clues" (a sheet was attached to the bottom of their sketch boards showing a variety of shapes).



Logan W. and Daniel B. record the shapes they observed on the castle onto their clipboards.

On the way back to school, children looked for red and yellow leaves to bring back to class.



A window in the castle has an interesting shape.

## Share your Halloween costumes with us

Your child is invited to wear a Halloween costume on Tuesday, October 28, and/or Wednesday, October 29 (since we're closed October 30 and 31, we'll start Halloween early). Please let your child be your guide.

Some children love wearing Halloween costumes; some don't. Some children just like to bring a costume to show...and that is fine. There is a fine line between fantasy and reality for young children. We try to keep things fun...but not scary for children.

Some of our groups will be doing Halloween self-portraits. Watch for them to come home (or they might also be saved in children's portfolios).

## Sunflowers encourage learning opportunities

story and photo by Tami Britton, teacher

In one of our Small Groups, after reading the book A Handful of Sunshine (a book about a girl who plants sunflower seeds), children proceeded to act out the story. Next, they looked at real sunflowers. They sketched them and then used water colors to paint their sunflowers. We have been fortunate to have sunflowers growing in our outdoor classroom so we went on a hunt to find the sunflowers. After finding the flowers, some children drew maps of the path that they took to find the sunflowers.

We are also working with strips and



photo by Kris Sieckmeyer-Hajny

### Toddler B

"A big ball... bounce, bounce." -Miley (as she tossed the play-doh ball on to the tray 3-4 times).



Children in Mrs. Britton's class sketch sunflowers. We hope you saw some of the sculptures that went home with your children recently. We will be continuing with tape for awhile; it is a challenge for 3 and 4 year olds to learn to use tape dispensers.