

Carnegie Mellon University Children's School October 2021 Family Newsletter

Welcome to the Children's School Family!

The 2021-2022 year at the Children's School has begun very well, with everyone adjusting to the continually evolving pandemic reality, and the weather cooperating so that we can spend large portions of our time outdoors. The educators and children are enjoying getting to know their classmates as they engage in developmentally appropriate activities with attention to risk mitigation. The children are enjoying sharing about themselves and their families, as well as discussing ways we are different and ways we are alike. We are also talking about the school as a community where we are helping each other to stay healthy while we learn together.

Learning Community Connections

Here are some ways you can stay informed about what's happening at the Children's School.

- Our main source of communication is our **family newsletter and monthly calendar**. General information for all families is included with this newsletter, which is sent via email as well as posted on our website.
- Each teaching team also hosts a **class web site** with a daily blog of classroom activities, photo albums, and other details about their programs. They are also preparing weekly or monthly descriptions of their curriculum themes, activities and projects.
 - Preschool 3's** <https://cmugreenroom.weebly.com/green-room-photos.html>
 - Preschool 4's** <https://cmugreenroom.weebly.com/green-room-photos.html>
 - Kindergarten** <https://cmukindergarten.weebly.com>
- We will also send general school **announcements and reminders via our school e-mail** (cmuchs@andrew.cmu.edu), so please check that we have your current email address!
- Our fourth source of communication is the Children's School **website**: www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs. Be sure to explore it thoroughly and check it frequently so you can stay current, especially with the website calendar!

Key Fall 2021 Dates

1st Quarter: Tuesday, September 7th through Friday, October 29th

October Virtual "Open House" Videos

- Mid-October (Watch the Daily Classroom Blog for details.)

2nd Quarter: Monday, November 1st through Friday, December 17th

On-line Book Fair: November 1st through 8th

Parent / Teacher Conferences (Chose In-Person or Zoom)

- Afternoon of November 19th or All Day December 3rd



Tartans, all in. Everywhere.

“This [shared responsibility](#) continues to be important to our success in mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. University leadership, faculty, staff, and student leaders have worked in partnership since March 2020 to implement measures that are carefully designed to protect community health and well-being while safeguarding our ability to deliver an in-person educational experience. Each of us can and must take an active role in preventing spread of the virus, even as society continues its progress toward recovery. As such, every member of the Carnegie Mellon University community has a shared responsibility to uphold a culture of safety that balances health considerations with our desire to fulfill the university's core mission.”

That mission includes the Children's School, so we encourage our educators, researchers, undergraduates, and families to adhere to all the elements of the Tartan's Responsibility, including:

- Minimizing the introduction of COVID-19
- Preventing the spread of COVID-19
- Contributing to the identification of COVID-19
- Supporting the containment of COVID-19

We are fortunate that 95% of the CMU faculty, staff, and students are fully vaccinated, and the rate is 100% for the adults working at the Children's School. We also have easy access to regular Tartan Testing, with Children's School adults testing at least weekly.



Though the children are not yet eligible for vaccination, they are also contributing to preventing the spread by learning to wear facial coverings appropriately, wash their hands thoroughly, and follow other risk mitigation protocols while eating, etc.

We appreciate our families' commitment to completing the Daily Health Screening as part of their Tartan Responsibility. It is important to **complete the screening every day** that your child is scheduled to attend school. We review this information in real time each morning and, if you have not completed the form, you will receive a call reminding you to complete the screening.

If you answer "YES" to any of the Daily Health Screening questions, your child is not permitted to attend school that day due to their COVID-19 exposure risk. Children may return to school when they are symptom free without medication, have been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, and can fully participate in the program. Note that if you have a pre-planned absence, then please call the main office (412-268-2199) so that we know not to expect your daily health screening. If your child is going to miss school because of illness or answering "YES" to one of the survey questions, please call the school for further guidance.

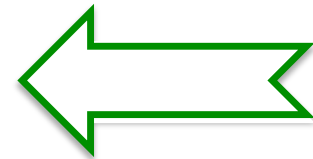
Regarding travel, we ask everyone to make decisions about travel mode, destinations, activities, and risk mitigation behaviors with the whole community in mind. Wearing facial coverings and avoiding large events or crowded spaces are strategies strongly recommended for all travelers, regardless of vaccination status. Please feel free to contact Dr. Carver to discuss your particular circumstances so that we can partner in assessing the risks and recommending whether quarantine is advisable after travel.

Positive Discipline Pointer: Clear and Consistent Behavior Expectations

At times of transition, children adjust best when adults provide clear expectations and stable routines for safe and smooth interactions. Consistency is key for facilitating productive adaptations to new situations. That's why the Children's School staff spends so much time during September teaching children the expectations and routines of our school days. Taking the time to establish these practices so that they become comfortable and automatic will free both children and adults to responsibly focus on deeper learning and more challenging activities as the year progresses. Once again, we are taking special care this year with the COVID-19 risk mitigation strategies because of the extra health concerns involved. One way that you can help the children both at school and home is by modeling the same behavior expectations with the same words that the children hear at school. We'll all benefit from working across contexts to:

**Be a kind friend.
Follow the routine.
Use your words.
Use walking feet.
Put everything in its place.**

**Listen the first time.
Stay in your own space.
Use inside voices.
Use things appropriately.**



Thanks for working collaboratively with us to make school a safe and positive experience for everyone!

Holidays at the Children's School

At the Children's School, holidays are viewed as educational opportunities that give us the chance to learn about our diverse school community. As part of our emphasis on family identity and respect for diversity, we encourage children to talk about their family traditions, and we share stories related to the meaning of holidays. We plan age-appropriate activities to involve the children in preparing for simple school celebrations and to help them contribute to family events (e.g., making cards, decorations, gifts, and so forth). We limit our school celebrations to very brief spans of time (typically one day), attempt to maintain our regular school routine, and, as always, are ready to provide extra attention and comfort as needed. In all of these ways, we can create meaningful celebrations with the young children in our educational context.

At the Children's School, the children do not "dress up" for Halloween because children can be scared by costumes, and costumes often cause toileting difficulties. Seasonal activities may involve natural fall items, such as colorful leaves, acorns, gourds, etc. This year, because of restrictions related to the pandemic, please do not send any type of card, food or other Halloween items for your child to share with school friends.



Who Can Help? Administrative Structure & Roles

The Children's School has a team of five professionals to jointly meet the administrative needs of our active laboratory school (left to right: Miss Hancock, Dr. Carver, Miss Drash, Mrs. Rosenblum, Mrs. Yetter). We all strive to know each child and to interact with them frequently. We are all available to serve the educators, students, families, and researchers. At the same time, we each focus distinctive talents in different areas, so here are some helpful hints about who to approach for which issues.

Miss Hancock (lh37@andrew.cmu.edu)

Dr. Carver (sc0e@andrew.cmu.edu)

Miss Drash (adrash@andrew.cmu.edu) 412-268-2199

Mrs. Rosenblum (rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu)

Mrs. Yetter (kyetter@andrew.cmu.edu)



Dr. Carver, the *Director*, takes primary leadership for **school programs and staff development**, as well as coordinating the pandemic risk mitigation on the CMU side. She recruits educators, coordinates professional development and outreach efforts, and manages the school web site, as well as leading the school's **NAEYC accreditation process**. She observes the classroom frequently and provides support for new curriculum development, alternate teaching strategies, ways to meet individual student needs, etc. She prepares the **whole school newsletter** and serves as a **resource for parents** with questions about child development, education, special needs, and family issues. Dr. Carver coordinates all uses of the Children's School as a **psychology laboratory**, including undergraduate courses, graduate student research, and faculty research. As a **teaching professor in the Psychology Department**, Dr. Carver also teaches undergraduate courses, serves as an academic advisor, and participates in other department and college events. As the **Associate Dean for Educational Affairs in the Dietrich College**, Dr. Carver leads the college-wide curriculum and assessment efforts, organizes networking and professional development for graduate students, and serves on university-level committees to coordinate across colleges.

As the *Administrative Coordinator*, Miss Drash manages the office operations and equipment, answers the primary **school phone** number, takes messages for teachers, and monitors all **observation and research activities**. She developed and maintains the remote observation system during the pandemic, and she handles entry and exit via the **security system**. Miss Drash also develops most of the Administrative Team's creative communication through cards and videos.

Miss Hancock, an *Educational Administrator*, handles **program administration issues**, including managing the school calendar, ordering materials, conducting safety drills, monitoring the school's primary email account (cmuchs@andrew.cmu.edu), handling student allergies and medications, and working with our health and safety consultants. She also coordinates requests for **Carnegie Mellon services**, particularly those regarding facilities and security. She takes a lead role with teacher mentoring and consultation for the kindergarten educators and families, as well as in recruiting businesses to contribute scholarship funds through the Pennsylvania EITC and OSTC programs. This year, she has negotiated our transition to the digital FACTS Student Information System and is coordinating support for educators and families using the FACTS portal.

Administrative Structure & Roles, continued ...

Mrs. Rosenblum, a part-time *Educational Administrator*, concentrates her administrative efforts on **family support**, beginning with recruiting, tours, and initial admission, but also including tuition payments, scholarship assistance, and re-enrollment. She coordinates family involvement, resources, and special events. She leads our participation in the Pittsburgh Alliance of University Schools (PAUS) and takes a role with preschool teacher mentoring.

Mrs. Yetter, our newest part-time *Educational Administrator*, concentrates her administrative efforts on **undergraduate support**, coordinating our school library, and leading the school's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. She takes a role with preschool teacher mentoring, organizes our Ages & Stages screening, and conducts practice research to orient our new children to the labs.

Along with Dr. Carver, the Educational Administrators collaborate to maintain strong relationships with local schools, to broaden our public relations, to manage the school budget, to secure funding for special projects and scholarships, to maintain the school's NAEYC accreditation and PA private academic school licensing, to represent the school in the local, national, and international education community, and to continually seek ways to improve all of the services we offer.

Most importantly, we're all here to help provide an excellent early childhood program for your children. If you have a question or concern and are not sure which administrator to approach, feel free to ask your child's teacher or to call the school office. We'll be happy to direct your call. You may also contact us through email for quick questions or comments you may have.

Educational Support & Substitutes

In addition to the administrative team, two other part-time professionals support Children's School programming. Mrs. Donna Perovich is taking the lead on our whole school theme planning and coordinating other whole-school efforts. Mrs. Cheri Mack serves as a substitute teacher every Thursday, and Mrs. Perovich also serves as a substitute for classroom educators when absences are planned in advance. We are also seeking additional substitute teachers, so please contact Dr. Carver if you know of high-quality candidates.

“Open House” Alternative

Since we cannot host large events at the Children's School this fall, the educators in each class are preparing an “Open House” video to release privately on the Open House dates listed on the school calendar. Watch the daily blog for information on your group's video release details so you can plan a special family time to view it together.

Parent-Teacher Conference Choices

Watch for an email later this month inviting you to schedule your parent-teacher conference for November 19th or December 3rd, as well as to choose whether to meet via Zoom or in person. For in-person conferences, masks and physical distancing are required, and each conference space will have an air purifier running. Whatever the venue, the educators look forward to meeting with parents to review the child's progress and plan strategies for further partnership in their education.

Health & Safety at the Children's School

Health and Safety considerations are high priorities for Children's School educators. All staff participate annually in Health and Safety related trainings, including Pediatric CPR and First Aid, Bloodborne Pathogens, Medication Administration, Fire Safety, and Emergency Preparedness.

We collaborate with the University Environmental Health and Safety Department as well as the University Police to create a safety plan for emergency situations. One week each month is designated as **Safety Week**. During this week, children and staff practice safety procedures such as evacuations or lock down drills. A different drill is practiced each month at varied times of day. During our drills, each staff members carries a cell phone as well as an emergency bag that contains first aid supplies, class lists, and emergency phone numbers. The University has provided us with a Fire and Emergency Action Plan. This includes a map with our recommended evacuation routes. Also, during Safety Week, an in-depth Safety Check of our facility is conducted.

Our first evacuation drill was completed on Friday, September 24th by the 4's and Kindergarten classes. After discussing the procedure during circle time, the children listened for the fire alarm and walked outside to the Reflection Garden which is our main egress in case of emergency. The 3's classes practiced their first evacuation drill during circle time on September 28th. This drill will be done without the fire alarm to teach the children the procedure. In October, we will have all of the children participate in the drill together.

Your child may come home and discuss this experience with you. We have found that reading the book Fire Drill by Paul DuBois Jacobs is very helpful in explaining the concept of emergency situations to young children. If you have any questions about our Health & Safety Guidelines, please refer to your Family Handbook or contact the Main Office.



Register for CMU-ALERT



CMU-Alert is Carnegie Mellon's emergency notification system used to communicate important information during an emergency. The system uses multiple methods of communication to ensure the campus and community is notified during an emergency situation.

By following the instructions below, Children's School families may enroll in an annual subscription to receive CMU-Alert messages:

Text keyword: VISITORS to 67283.

You will receive the following message: "Welcome to CMU-Alert, Carnegie Mellon University's emergency notification system." Visitors will have the option to renew once their subscription has expired after one year.

To opt-out: Text STOP VISITORS to 67283.

Please note that CMU Alert is the University's emergency notification system and sends messages for the whole campus community. The Children's School Parent Alert System is specific to the Children's School Community.

Bi-Weekly Music & Movement Class

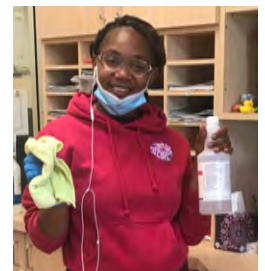
In-person music class with Lauren Hraber is back! Mrs. Hraber conducts bi-weekly Music and Movement classes with all the children at the Children's School. This year, CMU student Susanna Hur will intern with Mrs. Hraber. Music class will be held outdoors in the Reflection Garden, weather permitting, or in each classroom when the weather is inclement. Our first classes were held on September 23rd and will continue every other week for the remainder of the school year. To familiarize yourself with Mrs. Hraber's approach, see videos from last year on the Children's School YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtb1JaytfLYRwKllqgZHorQ/playlists>).

Lauren Hraber is an experienced preschool and elementary music teacher with a MEd in Special Education from the University of Pittsburgh and a BFA in Piano Performance from Carnegie Mellon University. She spent 10 years teaching General Elementary Music in Baldwin-Whitehall, Woodland Hills, and Canton City Schools. Lauren founded Piano Tots for preschoolers and has spent the last 13 years teaching Piano Tots classes. Presently, Lauren serves as the music teacher at several preschools in the Pittsburgh area. Lauren's family includes husband Zach and 2 children - Maddy & Jax, a Children's School alum.



Custodial Workers Recognition Day

Saturday, October 2nd is National Custodial Workers Recognition Day - an annual celebration to pay tribute to and thank those who clean and maintain buildings. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of these workers everywhere in our community. Our school is cleaned and sanitized by Jameia LaMore during the day and Olympia Saunders at night. Both work for Aramark, the custodial services company contracted by CMU. Olympia was raised on the North Side and loves to do crossword puzzles. Jameia is an Alderdice alum who lives in Millvale and loves to dance, sing, paint, and make jewelry. Thanks to both of these front-line workers who are helping us stay healthy this year.



Family Spotlight: Snapshot of Our Community

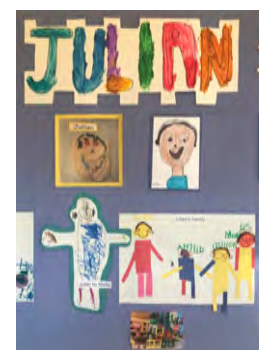
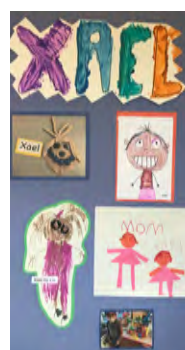
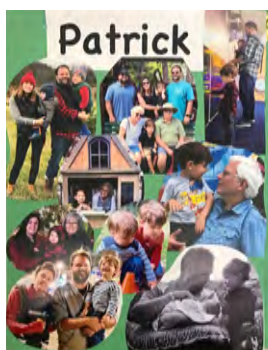
During September, the friends in all of our classes got to know each other by sharing information about themselves and their families, which prompted us to discuss similarities and differences so that we can better appreciate the diversity among us. The "All About Me" projects in the preschool and kindergarten give children and families an opportunity to get to know each other better. They will be highlighted on the classroom web sites for family viewing!



This year, we have 64 families with 69 children in Children's School programs, including 21 only children. 27 of these families are new to the school. Among our families, we have five in which the parent is a Children's School alum, and one of our kindergartners is the great-grandson of our founding director, Dr. Ann Baldwin Taylor.

Seven of our families have a parent who is a current graduate student, staff member, or faculty member at Carnegie Mellon. Four of our mothers and one father identified themselves as stay-at-home parents. The other parents listed a wide variety of professions, including Architect, Artist, Artistic Director, Assistant Professor, Assistant Store Manager, Attorney, Baker, Car Dealer, Carpenter, Civil & Environmental Engineer, Consultant, Dentist, Director of Clinical Education, Editor, Educator, Equipment Operator, Executive Director, Financial Advisor, Graphic Designer, High School Teacher, Mail Carrier, Manager, Mechanic, Medical Researcher, Musician, Neurosurgeon, Nurse, Nurse Anesthetist, Occupational Therapist, Physician, Plastic Surgeon, Podiatrist, Producer, Product Manager, Professor, Psychologist, Public Health Educator, Public Relations, Radiologist, Real Estate, Social Worker, Software Engineer, System Analyst, Tasker, Teacher, Tech Support Specialist, Theater Director, Therapist, Transportation Manager, Urban Planner, Veterinarian, Vice President, and Writer.

About 25% of our children are dual language learners (16). This year, we have families speaking at least 13 languages besides English: Chinese, Farsi, German, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Persian, Spanish, Tamil, Telegu, Turkish, Urdu



As one way of helping families get to know each other across classes, we will introduce one or more each month in our newsletter's Family Spotlight column. Please contact Mrs. Rosenblum if you would like to be a featured family. You can see prior family profiles on the Children's School web site under "For Families". The Grossmann, Johnson, Lama, O'Leary, Stevens, and Swarnapuri-Kamaraj families have introduced themselves in the last two years.

FACTS Student Information System

We introduced our new school management system, FACTS Student Information System (SIS) this summer. This private and secure online platform streamlines admissions, manages enrollment and billing, and provides a **Family Portal** where enrolled families can access the school calendar, the school's Family Directory, the Daily Health Screening, and update important information such as address, phone number and emergency contacts. As the year progresses, more information will be accessible via this powerful new tool.

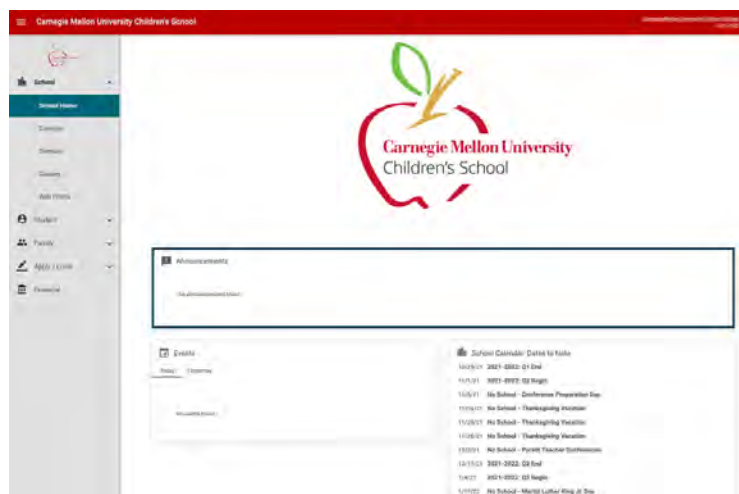
To access the **Family Portal**:

- Please go to <https://cmu-pa.client.renweb.com/pwr/>.
- Type your username and password. If you have forgotten your username or password, please click on the link provided.

Alternately, you can access the **Family Portal** from the Children's School Website:

<https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs/index.html>

When you log in to the **Family Portal**, you arrive at the **School Home Screen**:



Here in the center of the **Home Screen**, you see the Children's School logo which you can click to be directed to the Children's School website. In the top right corner of the **Home Screen**, there is a circle with your initials. Here, you can change your password. Below the logo, there is a space for announcements, events for today and tomorrow, and a quick look at the calendar. On the left side of the **Home Screen** is a menu of options.

In the **School** section:

- Clicking **Calendar** directs you to the School Calendar. There is also a "My Classroom" Calendar that is under development where class specific events will be listed.
- Clicking **Directory** provides you with the Family Directory searchable by Student or Family. *Please note that our mixed age Kindergarten is separated into PreK and Kindergarten in the Family Directory.*
- Clicking **Classes** will take you to your child's class information. These pages are still under development. *Please note that at this time only 1 of your child's teachers populates to Class page and that is based on teacher's last names alphabetically.*
- Clicking **Web Forms** directs you to the **Daily Health Screening** and **Family Demographic Form**. Here you can update Demographic Information, Medical Information, Emergency Contacts or individuals that are permitted to pick up your child from school.



FACTS SIS, continued ...

In the **Student** section:

- This section is still under development. Watch for details coming soon.

In the **Family** section:

- You will find the **Family Home** where you can see Family details and Billing information.

In the **Apply/Enroll** section:

- This section is where families will complete re-enrollment in the Spring or submit an application for a new sibling.

In the **Financial** section:

- This area provides access to billing information.

Future Developments

The **FACTS Family App** is being reviewed by Carnegie Mellon University Computing Services - Business Innovation Office. Watch for more details later this year.

Snack Time Ideas

Wondering what to send for snack? Here are some popular ideas:

- Applesauce
- Bread – Flat bread, mini bagels, pita bread, & raisin bread
Add some apple butter, sun butter, or jelly.
- Cereal
- Cheese sticks, cubes, or slices
- Cottage Cheese
- Crackers – Animal crackers, club crackers, Goldfish, graham crackers, Ritz, rice cakes
- Pretzels
- Tortilla chips with salsa or guacamole
- Veggies & dip (broccoli, carrots, cucumbers, peppers with dressing, hummus, guacamole...)
- Whole fruit (e.g., apple, banana, clementine, pear, pineapple, orange)
- Yogurt cup (or squeeze style or shake)
Add granola or dried fruit.



Friendly Reminder: We are a **NUT FREE** facility. Please do not bring or send any food containing peanuts or tree nuts to the school.

Please Label Your Child's Clothing

Please help us keep your child's personal items together with them. We suggest that you use **permanent marker** on clothing labels, as well as lunch bags, food containers and water bottles. It is not unusual for personal items to get shuffled during the day as we support children's independence. Clear labeling by first name (or initials & last name) means our staff can reconnect misplaced items with their owners.



Hispanic Heritage Month

Every year since 1968, National Hispanic Heritage month is celebrated from September 15 – October 15. This is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the rich history, culture, and contributions of Hispanic and Latinx Americans.



Here are some fun ways to celebrate Hispanic Heritage month with your family!

Read Books by Hispanic and Latinx Authors

Reading together is one of the best ways to learn about different cultures. [ReadBrightly.com](https://www.readbrightly.com), a literary website for children birth-teen, has put together a fantastic list of children's books by Latinx and Hispanic authors. You can access this great list [here](#).

PBS has also joined in the Hispanic Heritage month celebration with their own list of picture books that celebrate Hispanic and Latinx cultures. Check it out [here](#) and get reading!

Celebrate Locally

The Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at the University of Pittsburgh has organized a month of virtual and in person [events](#) for celebrating Latinx and Hispanic Heritage month. From virtual Latin American cooking classes to in person festivals, there are so many ways to explore Hispanic and Latinx culture!

Celebrate Virtually

- Check out this [link](#) from The Library of Congress for lots of great ways to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month! Here you can find something for every member of the family. However, especially notable for families of young children are the virtual Young Portrait Explorers Workshops offered by the National Portrait Gallery at the Smithsonian Institute. These workshops are free to attend but do require preregistration and are geared to children ages 3-6.
- PBS offers a wealth of activities to help young children learn about Hispanic and Latinx history and culture. Monica Olivera, a Latina homeschooling blogger, has compiled all these resources in this useful [post](#). Here you can find child friendly videos, music, books, recipes and more all focused on Hispanic heritage!

Support Local Latin American Restaurants

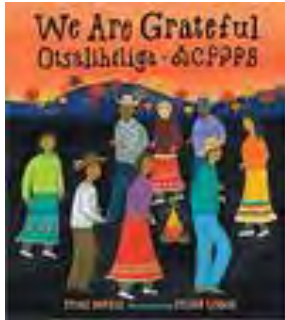
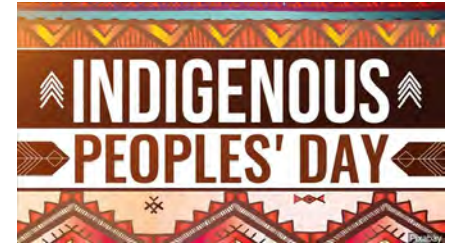
A fun way to experience Latin American culture is through food! Follow this [link](#) to find a delicious Latin American restaurant near you. Whether you dine in person or order take out, supporting these local restaurants is a great way to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month!

Get Cooking!

Children love to help in the kitchen and cooking a dish from Hispanic and Latino cultures is a fun activity the whole family can enjoy! [Here](#) you can find 25 recipes from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Spain, and more!

Indigenous Peoples' Day

Monday, October 11th is Indigenous Peoples' Day, a local and state holiday in some parts of the country that celebrates the cultures of Native Americans.



On that day, Mrs. Yetter plans to talk with the children in all the classes about what the word Indigenous means. They will learn about the tribes that are indigenous to Carnegie Mellon land - Osage and Shawnee and read the book "We Are Grateful – Otsaliheliga", which is written by Traci Sorell, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. Otsaliheliga is a Cherokee word that is used to express gratitude. The book talks about reasons for being grateful throughout each season of the year and includes many Cherokee words.

Perhaps you wondered ...

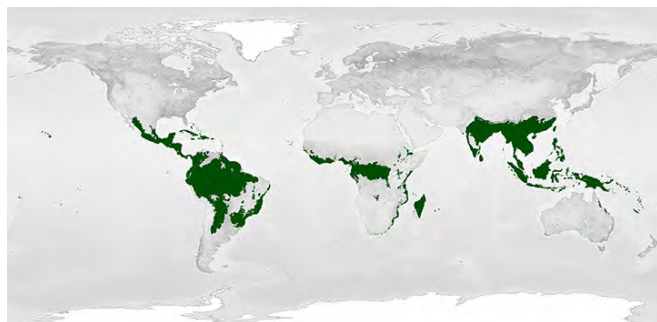
why we organize our curriculum into thematic units.

Studying topics in depth builds children's knowledge base, starting with what they already know and creating a network of concepts that are richly connected in ways that help children apply their knowledge to new contexts. We combine verbal and visual representations and provide a variety of activities to help them acquire, strengthen, and refine concepts via experimentation, stories, dramatic play, art, games, technology activities, etc. Children converse and reason in more sophisticated ways about content they understand, so themes provide a foundation for other cognitive challenges.

Across the school year, we include a variety of topics that span literature, social studies, science (life, physical, and earth & space), and the arts. In every unit, we include activities that strengthen children's skills in all of our developmental domains: Self-esteem & Independence, Interaction & Cooperation, Communication, Discovery & Exploration, Physical Capabilities / Health & Safety, and Artistic Expression & Appreciation.

Whole School Theme: Rainforests

This year, we chose **Rainforests** for our Whole School Unit to intentionally focus our learning community on the important role rainforests play on our planet and how we can help protect them, even when we do not live near them. Rainforests are home to half the planet's wildlife and two-



thirds of its plant species, they help maintain the world's water cycle, and they absorb CO₂ to stabilize the earth's climate. Many indigenous people have lived in harmony with the rainforest for generations, discovering the medicinal properties of the tropical plants. If you are interested in helping to design the unit or have ideas to share, please contact Dr. Carver (sc0e@andrew.cmu.edu) or your child's teaching team.

Week for Campus Children



The National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers (N4C) is helping its member centers **Celebrate Campus Children** during the week of October 4th to 8th to raise awareness of the quality early childhood programs operating on college campuses across the country. This year, our Preschool 3's group is painting a banner, "Spread Kindness, Not Germs" for CMU's Tartan Testing area. The Preschool 4's children are making flags to hang around campus and planning to play on a central grassy area. The Kindergarten children are preparing "Kindness Rocks" to spread around campus as an encouragement to those who find them. The QRcode on these items will link to our school's website.



Engage • Network • Advocate

Professional Development

As a campus laboratory school, professional development is a high priority at the Children's School because it supports our continuous quality improvement and makes us better models of excellence in early childhood education. We dedicate 1.5 to 2 weeks at the beginning of the school year, every Friday afternoon, and 1.5 to 2 weeks at the end of the year as paid professional development time.



The Children's School is a member of two professional organizations, each of which provides on-line resources and publications that help us keep abreast of developments in the fields of education and early childhood and to plan professional development opportunities for the staff.

- IALS: International Association of Laboratory Schools
- N4C: National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers

We pay for all staff members to join the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) as individuals, both for general professional growth and for specific updates related to the early childhood program accreditation standards. Finally, in 2016, we initiated a collaborative professional development effort among Pittsburgh's university-based early childhood and elementary schools. The Pittsburgh Alliance of University Schools (PAUS) includes the Children's School and CMU's Cyert Center, Pitt's University Child Development Center and Falk School, and Carlow's Early Learning Center and Campus Laboratory School.

In early July, Dr. Carver, Mrs. Bird, and Mrs. Sweet participated in the IALS virtual conference, and Dr. Carver chaired a three-day series of research workshops. Mrs. Rosenblum, Mrs. Sweet, and Mrs. Yetter will be doing a workshop at the virtual N4C conference in March 2022, and we hope to send several educators to the in-person IALS conference at the University of Northern Alabama in April 2022.

Undergraduate Spotlight

As a campus laboratory school, the Children's School typically offers research and observation opportunities to many undergraduate and graduate students from different departments across campus. In addition to these opportunities, we offer undergraduates a chance to work in the classrooms on a regular basis, either as student employees, interns, or volunteers. Though many of these opportunities are limited this year because of the continuing pandemic, in the **Undergraduate Spotlight**, we will be featuring our diverse undergraduate assistants so that parents can learn about the students who work in the classrooms with their children in different capacities. In addition to our student employees, the undergraduate interns taking Dr. Carver's Practicum in Child Development course (see below) support our children and teachers in the classroom six hours per week, while also engaging in a seminar with Dr. Carver every Friday morning. All adults working in the Children's School this year are fully vaccinated against Covid-19 and participate in weekly Tartan Testing.



• Intern Summer Abraham (Preschool 3's, M / W mornings)

Summer Abraham is a junior at Carnegie Mellon studying Psychology and Decision Science, with a minor in Design for Learning. She was born and raised in Chicago, where she worked with children through babysitting, after-school care, summer camp counseling, and teaching swim lessons. Summer is taking the practicum course because she is passionate about education and working with children, and she hopes to explore various aspects of the field throughout her career at CMU and beyond. One of the biggest reasons Summer came to CMU is because of the Children's School, and the opportunities to interact with all the friends. She is so grateful to be back in the classroom with the children this semester!



• Intern Madison Williamson (Preschool 4's, M / W midday)

Madison Williamson is a senior studying Psychology and Social & Political History. She is from Williamsport, PA. Prior to CMU, she worked with children in theatre settings as a counselor and stage manager for numerous children's productions. She was interested in taking the practicum because most of her previous experience was working with children ranging from 8- to 15-years-old, and so having experience in the Children's School would allow her to learn more about early childhood development and what it is like working with a younger group of children. Outside of school, Madison enjoys event planning with the Activities Board and is the president of her sorority, Alpha Chi Omega. She also enjoys theatre, music, and cooking. Read about [Madison's senior honors project](#).



• Intern Julie Lee (Kindergarten, M / W afternoons)

Julie Lee is a senior studying Art at Carnegie Mellon. She is from Alabama and enjoys taking walks in nature, as well as having a pressed flower collection. As someone who wants to become an art educator, Julie really enjoys working with children. Before CMU, she volunteered at her local art museum and tutored children in English and art making. At CMU, she continued tutoring and worked at the Cyert Center for Early Education. These experiences involved diverse groups of students who shared interest in creating art. Getting involved in early childhood education has been amazing and rewarding for Julie, and she is excited to see what the future holds.



Keeping Parents Informed about Research

The **Research Spotlight** section of the monthly newsletter is one way Children's School families can learn about research in progress. Also, each time your child participates in a study that involves playing a "game" with a researcher, he or she will get a **participation sticker** suggesting that you, "Ask me about the ... game" and a **study description** detailing the task. We also have **recent articles** resulting from Children's School research posted on the Children's School web site (www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs). Feel free to contact Dr. Carver to discuss any questions you have about research.

Observations for Psychology Assignments:



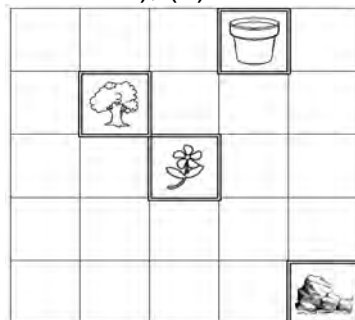
Students from Dr. David Rakison's Child Development class typically conduct observations throughout the fall. For each assignment, they observe specific differences between preschoolers and kindergartners in motor skills, social interactions, language, etc. The introductory child development course will do their first observation project remotely, using the iPad / iPod technology provided by the college last year, and then we will consider an in-person observation

opportunity for them during the late fall. This photo shows the way that our Kindergarten room looks during an activity time observation of fine and gross motor skill.

Research Spotlight

The Board Game

Dr. Catarina Vales, a post-doctoral researcher working with Dr. Anna Fisher, is working with her research team to examine how specific aspects of language help children learn relations among concepts -- such as "cat" and "dog" both being animals, and "cat" and "leash" sharing a functional relation. Using a text corpus of English child-directed speech, the team selected items that are likely to be mentioned in language (1) close in time (for example, in the same sentence), (2) in similar contexts (for example, in similar sentences), or (3) both close in time and in



similar contexts. In session 1 of this study, children are asked to organize cards depicting those items by placing close together items that they think go together. Researchers use the spatial distance between the cards to infer which types of items children think are more strongly related. In session 2 of this study, children are asked to organize those same items on a computer. The results of this study will help researchers better understand what properties of language contribute to learning relations among concepts, and whether a computerized version of the board game can be used in future studies.



Research Spotlight

The Pay Attention Games

Emily Keebler, a sixth-year graduate student working with Dr. Anna Fisher, is studying how children learn to manage waiting patiently and to control impulses. Young children grow rapidly in these important self-regulation skills, facilitating their increased cooperation and collaboration in many group settings. In some situations, it is important to delay or stop an impulsive response. In other situations, one must not only stop a response but also produce a less expected one. All of this requires paying attention to situational cues. In Emily's series of **Pay Attention Games**, children participate with their words and bodies in matching, movement, and naming activities. By comparing different age children's sustained attention and inhibition, the researchers will learn how these skills develop.



While conducting research, Emily and her research associates will be following all of the Children's School risk mitigation strategies. As always, children's time in the lab each day is less than 20 minutes, and the child and researcher will be separated by distance as much as possible.

DAY ONE

Shape Game: Children match geometric shapes using a sanitized computer keyboard. Trials vary in how much attentional control they require due to varying color/shape combinations.

Animal Matching Game: In this game, children search for animal pairs on their screen. There's a twist in the second half of the game to keep the children on their toes.

Puppet Game: The researcher introduces two animal puppets in this game. Then both characters give children commands such as touch your nose, clap your hands.

DAY TWO

Head and Toes Game: Children get up and moving as they follow the researcher's directions in this whole-body listening game. Children often find this one to be quite silly!

Wolf and Pig Game (Session 1): Children help to keep fictional pigs safe from wolves in this digital game! Their participation helps us to learn about how attention is deployed over time.

DAY THREE

Statue Game: In this game, children get to "freeze like a statue." We'll ask that they stand still and close their eyes while we play this whole-body game.

Wolf and Pig Game (Session 2): Children will play another round of the Wolf and Pig Game. Changes to the task characteristics, relative to Session 1, will help us to learn even more about children's sustained attention.

DAY FOUR

Sorting Game: Children sort by color to create apple baskets, flower bouquets, and more in this digital task. The children stay alert to task directions, such as what to do when a worm appears!

Colorful Foods Game: Children play with unexpected images in this naming game. Care for an orange kiwi, anyone?

Picture Matching Game: In this digital activity of close looking, children identify line drawings that match target images.

Director's Corner: Patience & Priorities

Nearly two years into the Coronavirus Pandemic, we have cautiously returned to full-capacity, in-person children's programming at the Children's School, while continually monitoring changing community conditions and negotiating ways to improve our risk mitigation strategies. Both adults and children returning to school this fall have had diverse pandemic experiences, ranging from minimal to traumatic impact, so our approaches to participating in the learning community differ widely. In response, we aim to practice patience with ourselves and others as we settle into the school routine at different paces. We also focus first on our highest priorities as we carefully weigh risks and benefits when planning each aspect of our program.



Both patience and priorities resonate well with the Children's School philosophy and practice. As a laboratory school founded on the principles of developmental psychology, we aim to support children's growth while their development naturally unfolds, knowing that each child's trajectory will be unique. We get to know each individual child by patiently tracking and purposefully scaffolding their growth, as well as celebrating their progress and sharing it with families.

Our accrediting agency, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), has recently updated their definition of Developmentally Appropriate Practice based on current research in child development. You can download the full position statement in English or Spanish [here](#). Reviewing it will help everyone in our learning community more clearly understand the intentional design of our laboratory school as we progress through the NAEYC Accreditation Renewal process this year. The brief quotation presented here highlights the gentle acceptance of varied paths of "optimal development and learning", which is especially needed in the midst of a pandemic.

"NAEYC defines 'developmentally appropriate practice' as methods that promote each child's optimal development and learning through a strengths-based, play-based approach to joyful, engaged learning. Educators implement developmentally appropriate practice by recognizing the multiple assets all young children bring to the early learning program as unique individuals and as members of families and communities... Developmentally appropriate practice recognizes and supports each individual as a valued member of the learning community. As a result, to be developmentally appropriate, practices must also be culturally, linguistically, and ability appropriate for each child."

According to NAEYC, "educators design and implement learning environments to help all children achieve their full potential across all domains of development." At the Children's School, we focus on the following 6 domains, listed in order of priority:

- Self-Esteem & Independence
- Interaction & Cooperation
- Communication
- Discovery & Exploration
- Physical Capabilities / Health & Safety
- Artistic Expression and Appreciation



In most years, the majority of our incoming Preschool 3's are experiencing school for the first time, and all of our classes prioritize the first two domains in September. This year, however, only half of our Preschool 4's and Kindergartners had in-person school experiences last year, so we have needed to slow our pace to patiently integrate everyone effectively into the school community. This patient focus on our highest priorities will yield a firm foundation for everyone's progress in the other developmental domains. As these family drawings by Preschool 3's clearly demonstrate, the developmental spectrum is broad. We are excited by the opportunities for growth ahead!

October

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
					1	2 National Custodial Appreciation Day
3 3's Theme: Building 4's Theme: Elements of Art K Theme: Elements of Art	4 N4C Week for Campus Children	5	6 Kindergarten Virtual Open House	7 Music w/ Mrs. Hraber	8	9
10	11 Indigenous Peoples' Day	12	13 4's Virtual Open House	14	15	16
17	18 October Safety Week	19	20 3's Virtual Open House	21 Music w/ Mrs. Hraber	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29 End of First Quarter	30
31						



Children's School

CMUChSch@andrew.cmu.edu

www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs

412-268-2199

2021