

# Carnegie Mellon University Children's School

## March 2023 Family Newsletter

### Family Performing Arts Adventure March 2<sup>nd</sup>

For the past month, everyone at the Children's School has been exploring ways to express ourselves through music, dance, and drama, and we've practiced being audiences for each other as well. The kindergartners practiced performing "The Animal Boogie" song, complete with the animal marionettes they made. Mrs. Hraber helped the Preschool 4's use different instruments to represent characters in "The Little Red Hen" story / song. On the classroom blogs, you can read about explorations for all the classes, and the class photo albums include photos from each week.



We hope your whole family will join us to celebrate our learning on Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> from 4:30 to 6:30pm for our in-person **Family Performing Arts Adventure**. There are enough activities planned to fill the whole two hours, so please plan to attend for as much of the time as you can. We will have two opportunities for a family sing-along with Mrs. Bird and multiple performances by "Weird Eric", the magician. Children can make ribbon dancers in the Blue Room and then join a dance party in the Red Room. The Green Room will have multiple stages for re-enacting stories, and the Kindergarten will be a studio to make puppets and stage spontaneous puppet shows. Families can have their photos taken after walking the red carpet, and we'll have light snacks available for everyone. We'll also share recordings of some performances for families to enjoy together. Be ready to photograph your family fun as you celebrate performing arts together.

#### March 2023 Dates

Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4:30 to 6:30pm IN-PERSON

#### Family Performing Arts Adventure

Friday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>

SPRING BREAK

Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup>

Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup>

March 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>

Thursday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>

Friday, March 24<sup>th</sup>

Wednesday, March 29<sup>th</sup>

Educator Professional Development (NO SCHOOL)

Monday, March 6<sup>th</sup> to Friday, March 10<sup>th</sup> (NO SCHOOL)

Daylight Saving Time so SPRING FORWARD 1 Hour

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Begins

Dr. Carver & Mrs. Sweet will be presenting at the National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers (N4C) Conference in New Orleans

9:30am Children's School Discussion Group

Spring Conference Preparation Day (NO SCHOOL)

School Photo Day



All these dates are posted on our web calendar @ <https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs/>

## School Photo Days

This year, Van Dyke Photos will be on-site on Wednesday, March 29<sup>th</sup> to photograph the students individually and with their class. A make-up day for individual photos is scheduled for Monday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ordering will be online, and instructions will be provided for our families through email. Feel free to send your children in their "picture clothes" that day and send "school clothes" separately. The teachers will help the children change after their photo shoot. Kim Yetter would be happy to answer any questions and can be reached at [kyetter@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:kyetter@andrew.cmu.edu).

## Friday Mornings Preschool 3's Programming

We are still accepting registrations for our optional Friday morning Preschool 3's class. If you would like to register your child for March, April, or May, please use this link:

<https://forms.gle/yy9Re5feQwTpu9wj8>.

## Summer Camp Enrollment: BUGS

The Children's School Summer Camp is an in-person, mixed-age, four-week program that will run weekdays from June 5<sup>th</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 1 pm with as much outdoor time on our playground as weather permits. Greeting will be at 8:45 am and dismissal at 1:00 pm. The children will need to bring their snack, lunch, and water bottle, just like they did throughout the school year.

This year, Mr. Allen, Ms. Aylwin, Mrs. Bird, Mrs. Clemens, Mrs. Mack, Ms. Potter, and Ms. Rau will engage the children in a study of "BUGS". As usual, we will read fiction and non-fiction books and offer science, arts, sensory, and other hands-on activities to enhance the thematic study.

June camp registration is now live via your Facts Family Portal!

**Week 1 (\$325)** – June 5<sup>th</sup> – June 9<sup>th</sup>

**Week 2 (\$325)** – June 12<sup>th</sup> – June 16<sup>th</sup>

**Week 3 (\$260)** – June 20<sup>th</sup> – June 23<sup>rd</sup> \*No camp for Juneteenth Holiday (Monday, June 19<sup>th</sup>)\*

**Week 4 (\$325)** – June 26<sup>th</sup> – June 30<sup>th</sup>

*\*Register for all 4 weeks for a total cost of \$1,100, a discount of \$135\**

**To register, login to your Family Portal. In the left hand menu, under School, click WEB FORMS. Here you will see a link for June camp. Click this link to register.** Registration is due by Friday, April 14<sup>th</sup>. You will receive an invoice, and full payment will be due by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

## 2023-24 School Year Enrollment Update

Enrollment for next year is continuing to move along nicely! Our Preschool 4's class for next year is fully enrolled. Any new applicants will be added to the current waitlist for that class. We currently have a small number of openings available in both our 3's program and our PreK/K program for next year. If you know of anyone looking for 3-year-old Preschool, PreK, or Kindergarten, please encourage them to apply. If you have any additional questions about enrollment for next year, please reach out to Kim Yetter at [kyetter@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:kyetter@andrew.cmu.edu).

# Children's Theatre Festival

Age Recommendations: Best ages 3 and up

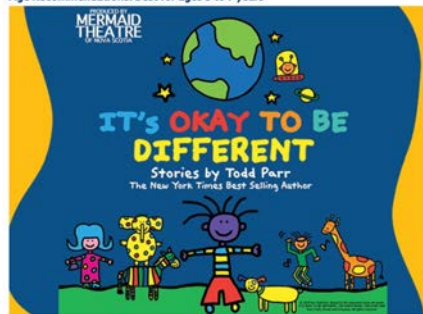


This year's EQT Children's Theatre Festival in Pittsburgh (<https://pghkids.trustarts.org>) will be May 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, which is the weekend after the last week of school. Because our Kindergarten Graduation is on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup>, the Preschool 3's and 4's classes will have their last day on the 18<sup>th</sup>, and thus be free to enjoy the festival. Tickets sell fast to these events, so plan ahead if you are interested.

Age Recommendations: Best for ages 3 and up



Age Recommendations: Best for ages 3 to 7 years



Age Recommendations: Best for ages 3 and up



## Teaching Artists in the Community

Monique Mead, director of Music Entrepreneurship in CMU's School of Music, is teaching a course called "Teaching Artists in the Community" so her students can develop working relationships with expert teaching artists to inspire people of all ages to engage with music in meaningful ways. She arranged for several of her music students to come with various instruments to perform for the children. She has also invited our students to visit her class to see and hear a dress rehearsal! The pieces her students are practicing will be played in collaboration with Mo Willems' "Opposites Abstract" exhibit event at the Children's Museum on April 2<sup>nd</sup> (<https://pittsburghkids.org/exhibit/oppositesabstract/>).



## Community Service Updates

Huge thanks to everyone who participated in the Personal Items Drive to benefit the JFCS Food Pantry in the month of February! All your donations will have an immediate impact helping those in need! Pictured here are just a few of the many donations that were brought to school. Many thanks to Natalie Marshall, mom to Max in the 4's, for organizing this effort!



### Race for Grace

This year, The Children's School is planning to participate in the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual "Race for Grace" Fundraiser that will take place on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at Norwin High School, and we hope you all will join us. The event activities begin at 7am, and the race starts at 9am. There will be three separate races: a 5K Run, a 5K Walk, and a 1 Mile Walk. The event is suitable for the entire family, and there will be activities, raffles/auctions, and food provided before and after the race.



"Race For Grace" and its beneficiary foundation are named after Grace Elizabeth Ekis who in 2008 lost her battle with a rare cancerous brain tumor. Grace's cancer was a diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma (DIPG), a tumor of the brainstem for which there is no known cure, and there have been no advances in treatment options in more than 40 years.

More information and the online registration form can be found here:

<https://www.reflectionsofgrace.org/index.php/events/race-for-grace>.

\*\*\*Once you register, please complete this google doc so that we can all meet on race day (<https://forms.gle/F6Nm5sFkWBvMqnBE6>).

We hope to see you all there! If you have any questions, please contact Alysia McCray, mom to Amelia in the 3's, at [alysia.mccray@gmail.com](mailto:alysia.mccray@gmail.com).

If you are interested in joining the Community Service Committee, please contact Kim Yetter at [kyetter@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:kyetter@andrew.cmu.edu).

### Rise Against Hunger

Mrs. Stilinovich, Ms. O'Neill, and Quinn O'Neill participated in CMU's Rise Against Hunger on Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup>. They helped the CMU volunteers package 100,000 meals. They highly recommend the organization and event as a family experience with volunteering, so watch for similar events in your community.



## Women's History Month

March is Women's History Month. This celebration is a time to recognize all the wonderful contributions of women throughout history. Below are some links to help you in celebrating Women's History Month with your family. March also happens to be National Reading Month, so it's a great time to read some books about amazing women! Here at school, we will have a display of books in the hallway for teachers to use that highlight the many strengths and contributions of women in our world.



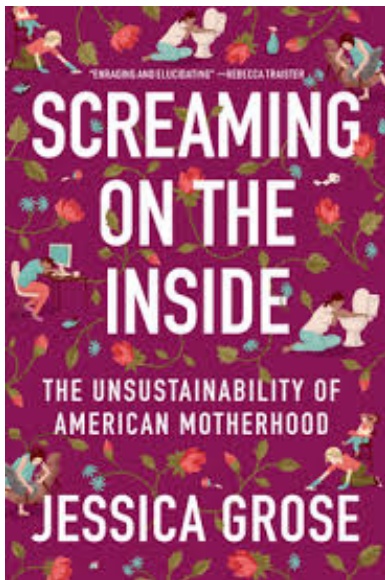
<https://www.parents.com/kids/education/how-to-celebrate-women-s-history-month-with-kids/>

This article gives some background about the origin of Women's History Month and talks about how to recognize Women's History Month in ways that are developmentally appropriate for young children.

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/childrens-books-to-celebrate-womens-history-month>

If you are looking to add some books to your collection that highlight the many great accomplishments of women and girls, this site is a great place to start!

## CS Parent Discussion Group



The Parent Discussion Group met on February 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9:30 am until 11:30 am. We discussed the introduction and first chapter of Jessica Grose's book "Screaming on the Inside: The Unsustainability of American Motherhood", and we also shared stories of the struggles and rewards of stay-at-home motherhood.

*The New York Times* essayist's book "is equal parts memoir, journalism, cultural criticism and manifesto..." Here is a link to a review by Elliot Haspel, which begins, "As a man, a husband and a father, it turns out reading a book about motherhood could hardly be more valuable".

"Screaming on the Inside: How Modern Motherhood Explains the Child Care Crisis"

<https://earlylearningnation.com/2022/12/book-review-screaming-on-the-inside-how-modern-motherhood-explains-the-child-care-crisis/>

Our next meeting will be on March 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9:30 am until 11:30 am. We will be discussing chapters 2 & 3 of Grose's book, and we will also explore how to read books to preschoolers on sensitive topics, such as race, gender, and economic class. The location is TBD. If you would like to join us, please email Maggie Rosenblum at [rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu).

## Parking in the Margaret Morrison Visitor Lot

If you are coming to the Children's School, you may park in the Margaret Morrison Visitor Lot. However, please park in one of the spaces in the lot marked with a "V" for visitor or an "S" for staff. **Please do not park in the spaces in the upper lot marked with an "L" as they are for the Psychology Department Laboratories. Unauthorized cars parked here will be ticketed.**

The Visitor spaces are available for families to park while at The Children's School only so please do not park there for other campus errands. Please use the East Campus Garage on Forbes Avenue or the metered spaces along Margaret Morrison and Frew Streets if there are no "V" spaces available.

Thank you for your cooperation!

## Greeting & Dismissal Reminders

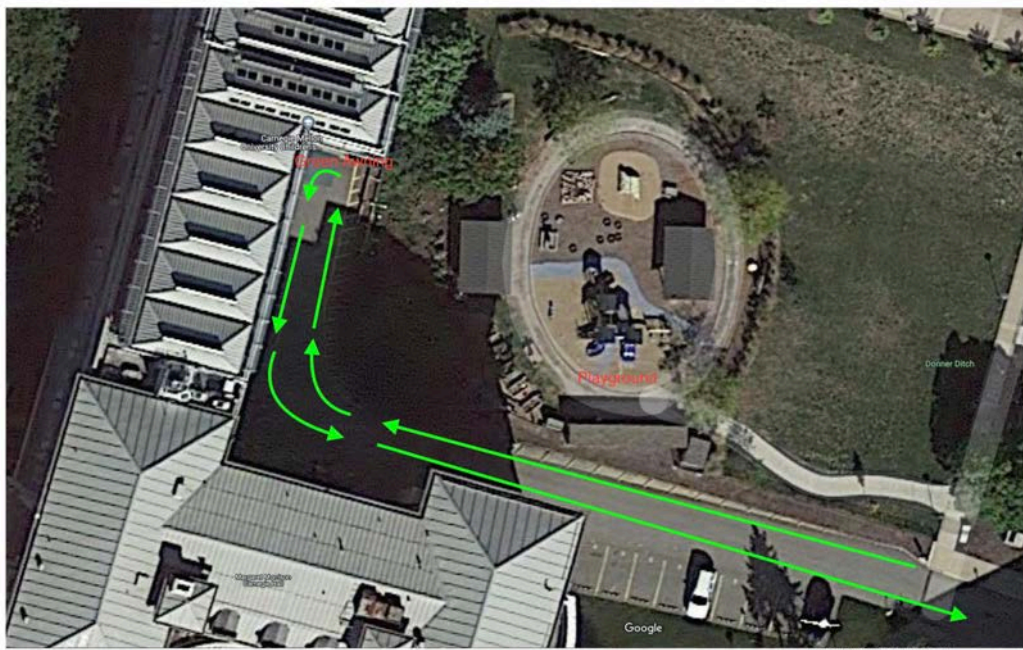
### All Families:

Please place your Name Card on **the visor** of your car or hold it up for staff to read from the window. Clearly displaying this sign will help the teachers to quickly identify your car, thus making dismissal a smooth process.

*Remember that greeting time is 8:30AM.* Please strive to arrive on time as children who arrive late miss a valuable portion of the school day.

### If you greet or dismiss from the Green Awning:

Please wait until the greeting / dismissal spaces beside the wall and under the awning are free before pulling into these spaces. **DO NOT BACK INTO THESE SPACES.**



If we work together, then the system will run smoothly for all!

## Family Spotlight: Family Roots in Showbiz

Hello Children's School families! We are the Jordan Family - Eileen, Patrick, and Pepper. Pepper is an enthusiastic classmate of the friends in the Green Room Preschool 4's! When we pick Pepper up from school every day, we ask her how her day was. The response is *always*, "AMAZING!". While she's often trailing something home from her adventures in the infamous Mud Kitchen, Pepper also has enthusiastically embraced everything the school has to offer. She enjoys circle time, music class, the Make Shop, and most of all, she loves expressing herself through storytelling by way of the many creative outlets offered by the Green Room teachers. As parents, we have been overjoyed to watch her thrive under the careful supervision and creativity of The Children's School team.



Patrick is a Pittsburgh born-and-raised actor, writer, director, and producer. He is the founder and the artistic director of "barebones productions" (<https://www.barebonesproductions.com>). The critically acclaimed theater, now located in Braddock, PA, is celebrating a milestone 20 years this year! Patrick is also a recipient of Pittsburgh Post Gazette's Performer of the Year recognition. You may have seen him in film and television roles like *The Dark Knight Rises*, *Mindhunter*, *She's Out of My League*, *The Next Three Days*, *American Rust*, and *Mysteries of Pittsburgh*. Eileen is a founding partner of Revive Marketing Group, a boutique marketing, public relations, and brand-strategy firm in Pittsburgh. In her formative years, she was a vocalist who studied with Carnegie Mellon's own beloved Dr. Robert Page.



We met when we were 8 years old at a performing arts camp, and the rest, as they say in showbiz, is history. We have a profound love of the arts and of Pittsburgh, and we have proudly served on non-profit boards in recent years. Most weekends, we support our favorite organizations and explore our city together as a family. In fact, Pepper can give complete and *very* detailed tours of the Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History and can also direct you to some of the best local eateries in town! In addition to enjoying (and, we hope, contributing to!) the endless arts and entertainment options in our fair city, we're especially looking forward to Pepper's first dance recital this year!

Our family is so grateful for the connection we feel to The Children's School community and the amazing families and friends we've met here. We hope to see you around town!

## Spring 2023 Swimming Lessons at CMU

It's that time of year again to start thinking about the Tartan Swimming Lesson Fundraiser! This spring, the team will be offering lessons for interested swimmers, aged 3 years and up. Their lessons are one-on-one, in a group setting, taught by members of the Carnegie Mellon University Varsity Swimming & Diving team. They welcome all ages and ability levels; from total aquatic novices to experienced lap swimmers. Enrollment is open and will continue until all classes are full. Information regarding dates, prices, and times is included below:

The team had a lengthy wait list in their first year back after the COVID hiatus! To serve more families and streamline the schedules for instructors and parents alike, we are putting the swimmers into uniform groups rather than selecting times a la carte. All participants will choose either a Monday/Wednesday time slot or a Tuesday/Thursday time slot, for a total of up to 5 lessons per participant.

**Times** (*There will be a M/W and a T/Th group for each time slot.*)

4:20-4:50  
5:00-5:30  
5:40-6:10  
6:20-6:50

**Dates:**

*Participants will attend every other day for a max of 5 lessons.*

March 27-30 (Monday-Thursday)  
April 3-6 (Monday-Thursday)  
April 10-11 (Monday-Tuesday)

**Pricing:**     *Pro-rating is available upon request*  
                    \$150 for five 30-minute, individual lessons  
*Family Discount:*  
                    \$125 for 2<sup>nd</sup> family member  
                    \$100 each for additional children

If you are interested in signing up for lessons, please e-mail James Koval ([jkoval@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:jkoval@andrew.cmu.edu)) with the date/time slot you would prefer, as well as the name of the swimmer(s), age(s), and a brief description of their current ability level. You will receive a reply to confirm your spot and give you additional information regarding your lessons, including waivers that will need to be completed and submitted or brought with you on the first day of lessons. After spring break, expect an email from James with more detailed information; including your instructor, directions to the pool, payment, greeting/dismissal procedures, etc. James is also happy to answer any questions you may have via the email provided above.

Go Tartans!

**James Koval**

**Assistant Coach, Men's & Women's Swimming, Assistant Director of Aquatics  
Carnegie Mellon University**



## Undergraduate Spotlight

Undergraduate Employees enrich the Children's School program by sharing their diverse perspectives and talents with us.

### • Student Employee Jasmine Dong (Preschool 4's)



*My name is Jasmine Dong, and I am currently a sophomore studying Business Administration at the Tepper School of Business. I am originally from New York, NY. This is my second semester working at The Children's School, and I'm with the Preschool 4's. I am someone who likes children and enjoys playing with them, so working at The Children's School is a perfect fit. It is always so nice to hear the children say hello to me,*

*and the teachers are always very welcoming! Overall, I really enjoy working here and will continue to do so next semester.*



### • Student Employee Lily Hazam (Preschool 4's)



*My name is Lily Hazam, and I'm a second-year undergraduate studying Decision Science at CMU. I'm from a small town in Massachusetts, right near Boston. In my free time, I love watching movies, baking, and spending time with friends and family. I've been working at the Children's School for almost a year now! This semester, I'm working with the Preschool 4's in the Green Room but have worked with the Preschool 3's in the past. I love showing up to the school every day with a warm greeting from both students and teachers. It hardly ever feels*

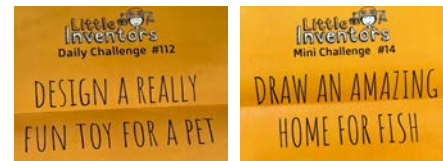
*like work when I step into the classroom, and we sing, dance, learn, and play. Every day is something new and exciting at the Children's School, which is what I enjoy most about it.*

*In these photos, Lily is discussing and demonstrating Irish Dance as part of our unit on Performing Arts.*



## Graduate Research Methods for Design Class

At the beginning of February, our Kindergarten educators collaborated with a Design Department instructor to connect their students for a mutual learning opportunity inspired by the Little Inventors challenges (<https://www.littleinventors.org/mini-challenges/list>). Each kindergarten pair received three challenge options and together chose one to put into a TOP SECRET envelope to open with their graduate student partners at the start of their first workshop time together.



### Graduate Student Perspectives from Instructor Kristin Hughes

The graduate students thoroughly enjoyed the co-design session with kindergartners, and the experience proved to be a memorable and valuable lesson. Firstly, the students described how the session challenged them to suspend their disbelief and push the boundaries of their imagination. The innovative and imaginative solutions proposed by the little inventors encouraged the grad students to think outside the box and see design challenges from a fresh perspective. Additionally, students added that the session helped them to better identify and understand people's needs and wants by learning to ask the right questions. The students learned that by engaging with the children and co-creating with them, they were able to gain a deeper understanding of their needs and aspirations, which helped them prototype quick and effective design mockups to communicate their ideas and take feedback. Overall, the co-design session with kindergarten students proved to be a transformative experience for the design grad students, providing them with valuable lessons that will undoubtedly inform their design practice in the future.



### Kindergarten Perspectives from Mrs. Opferman

It was a great experience for the kindergarten. When we discussed what we would be doing the day before and picked the invention challenge, the children immediately started brainstorming ideas that they were going to share with the graduate students. After the first meeting, we talked as a group about the experience, and they mentioned what they liked: building the model using various materials and drawing their ideas. After returning from the first meeting, everyone was excited to draw their idea for daily work. During our reflection group time that day, I asked what their favorite part of their day was and most answered "being with the college students". Leading up to the "reveal" day, they were excited to see what their invention would be and cheered when I announced the "magnificent makers" were coming to our classroom to show them their inventions.

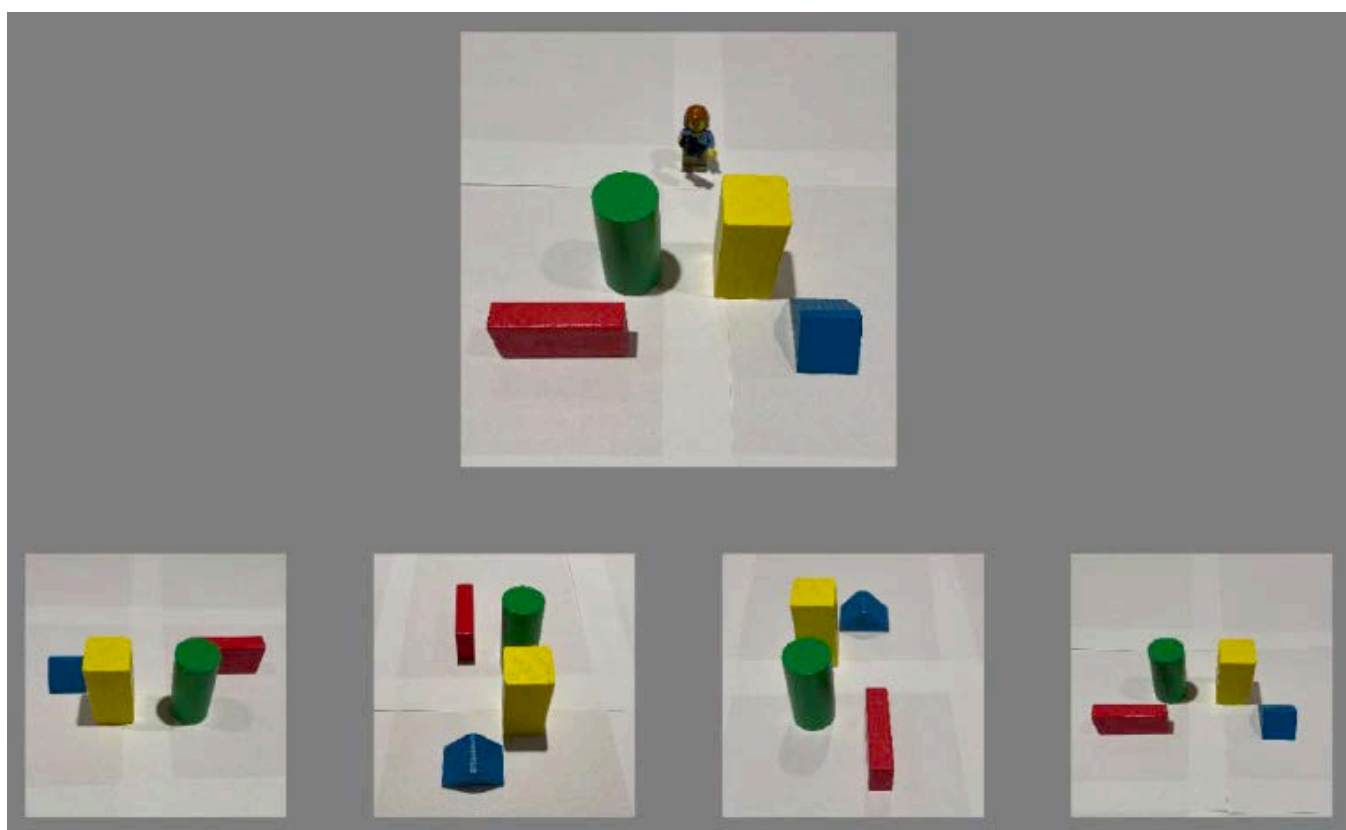
The day after the invention reveal, we put all the inventions out during Free Choice so everyone had more time to look at all the inventions, play with them, and even add additional details to their invention. The inventions are on display in our classroom and are available for the children's play.

# Research Spotlight

## The Picture Taking Game

Karen Sabol is a senior cognitive science major working on her thesis with Drs. Jessica Cantlon and Lauren Aulet. In the **Picture Taking Game**, Karen is investigating how children develop spatial perspective-taking skills. Spatial perspective-taking is a three-dimensional spatial skill that allows you to imagine what something would look like from a different viewpoint.

This task consists of a short spatial perspective-taking task presented on a touchscreen computer. In the task, the children see an image of a LEGO figurine holding a camera and “taking a Picture” of another toy or set of toys. The children are then asked to select which picture the LEGO figurine took (see example below).



Previous research has indicated that spatial perspective-taking is a consistent predictor of math abilities, at least in children between first and eighth grade. The results of this study will help Karen learn how spatial perspective-taking skills vary in younger age groups (Preschool 4's vs. Kindergarten), as well as by gender. Future analyses using these data will also shed light on how the development of spatial perspective-taking skills relates to the development of other spatial and math skills being studied in the same lab (see November 2022 and January 2023 newsletters). Ultimately, these results may contribute to educational interventions to help children improve their math abilities.

## Director's Corner: Learning & Growing



In *When You Wonder, You're Learning* (2021), Behr and Rydzewski named their chapter on learning and growing with a quote from Fred Rogers' song "You've Got to Do It". "It's you who have to try it and it's you who have to fall (sometimes)". Like Calvin Coolidge, they go on to claim that talent, genius, and education are never enough for success without persistence, but they go deeper to recognize that not everyone has the same conditions of permission and privilege that make persistence possible. Fred Rogers reflected that "part of his success had come from pursuing different interests without having to worry about where they led or whether they'd become a career" (p. 137).

Many of the conditions for effective learning and growing begin with relationships that provide a sense of safety and nurture that is a necessary context for persistence, or what some researchers and educators are calling "grit". Learning scientists have found the best learning comes under conditions of "desirable difficulties" with just the right amount of productive struggle (i.e., not too much or too little). Similarly, learners are most motivated to push themselves to achieve when they have a "growth mindset" rather than a "fixed mindset", meaning that they view their abilities as not set in stone but rather malleable with consistent effort to embrace challenges, learn from mistakes, attend to feedback on performance, etc.

At the Children's School, some of our *Discovery & Exploration* objectives relate to fostering children's self-directed, engaged learning with a growth mindset. We explicitly support children's focus and concentration, planning, learning from mistakes, etc. as they strive to master new skills. Our *Self-Esteem & Independence* learning objectives encourage each child's growing willingness to risk trying new things, regulate their bodies and emotions, and ask for help appropriately. As young children develop from age 3 to 5, they develop increasing competence in caring for their own bodies, as well as confidence in managing the routines and activities at school and home. They gradually shift from describing themselves with only physical features to understanding themselves as having particular interests and acquiring new abilities. That's why it is essential that our explicit and implicit messages to them reflect the approaches to learning described here.

To support children's effective learning and growing, educators model a growth mindset regarding their own learning, explicitly acknowledging our mistakes and efforts to improve with help from others. As children strive to learn new skills that require lots of practice, we help them use the words "not yet" to talk about tasks they cannot yet accomplish on their own. As Lisa Cox and Lori Hockema say in their children's book *Not Yet*, "Are they there? Not yet. They'll get there, you bet." Taking a growth mindset approach also means that we offer lots of low-pressure opportunities to practice important skills with our minds, our words, and our bodies. By focusing first on building trusting relationships, we aim to build the "kind of community that enables difficult work" (p. 168) and then support all the learners here in striving for the next level, whatever that may mean for them.

Many of the same strategies can be used at home to support learning and growing. In addition, Behr and Rydzewski suggest trying "Saturday experiments" (p. 170), which are "deliberate yet pressure-free opportunities to try something new". Our **Family Performing Arts Adventure** is just such an opportunity for families to try singing new songs together, making ribbon dancers to use in a dance party with varied music, creating puppets for telling original stories, etc. We hope to see you there!

# March

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
			1	2 4:30PM Family PERFORMING ARTS Adventure  3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter Ends	3 NO SCHOOL: Educator Professional Development Day	4
5	6 NO SCHOOL Spring Vacation	7 NO SCHOOL Spring Vacation	8 NO SCHOOL Spring Vacation	9 NO SCHOOL Spring Vacation	10 NO SCHOOL Spring Vacation	11
12 Daylight Saving Time Begins: Turn Your Clock Ahead 1 Hour 3's: Author Study Margaret Wise Brown 4's: Dinosaurs Roamed the Earth K: Ancient Greece	13 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter Begins  March Safety Week	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 Dr. Carver & Mrs. Sweet attend N4C Annual Conference & Professional Institute	23 9:30 Children's School Discussion Group	24 NO SCHOOL Conference Preparation Day	25
26	27	28	29 School Photo Day	30 Music w/ Mrs. Hraber	31	



## Children's School

[CMUChSch@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:CMUChSch@andrew.cmu.edu) [www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs/index.html](http://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs/index.html)

412-268-2199

2023