

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Continuity of Education Plan

Carnegie Mellon University Children's School
PA Private Academic School: Nursery / Kindergarten
AUN: 203020012

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Goal of Plan: The CMU Children's School will provide continuity of education primarily through connecting with children and families for enrichment & review, with additional instruction available for families to utilize as they choose. The plan was initiated on Monday, March 16, 2020 and will continue through Thursday, May 14, 2020, which is the last day of school on our academic calendar.

Overview of Plan:

- Since our approach to nursery / kindergarten education is developmentally appropriate, play-based, inquiry learning, our 9-week plan involves supporting parents and other caregivers by providing asynchronous enrichment and review suggestions that can be implemented at home with common materials. For seven of the weeks, classroom educators will provide the materials to their specific age groups of children (see below re: teaching and learning). For two weeks while educators prepare for and conduct parent-teacher conferences, administrators and substitute educators will plan multi-age recommendations related to NAEYC's Week of the Young Child and the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. Throughout the 9 weeks, one of the substitute educators will prepare a daily blog entry on play-based learning for families who need additional guidance.

- In addition, to maintain educator – child and peer relationships, educators will invite children and their families to participate in synchronous Zoom gatherings, some of which will be run like traditional circle times, and others will take different formats, such as shared meals or snacks, shared play times, show & tell sessions, and scavenger hunts. These sessions are primarily designed for enrichment and review, but they may include new instruction, especially related to the themes we had planned to study at this time in the year (Art & Artists and Transportation for Preschool; Ancient Egypt and Birds & Flight for Kindergarten)
- Most of our planned instruction related to the various developmental domains and to our themes will be provided asynchronously via videos that the educators are making themselves or links to instructional videos that our educators have found on the internet. Our biweekly music classes will also be done via video by our music educator.
- In some cases, educators will engage with individual families via FaceTime as requested or as needed to meet the IEP goals of the child. For children who are more or less advanced than their peers, families will have access to recommendations from educators at all levels.
- For all families, educators will prepare spring conference reports with information from before our closure related to the four key aspects of each of our six domains of developmental objectives: Self-Esteem & Independence, Interaction & Cooperation, Communication, Discovery & Exploration, Physical Capabilities / Health & Safety, and Artistic Expression and Appreciation. For the time period after our closure, educators will gather data from Zoom interactions, plus anecdotes, photos, and videos submitted by families.
- Because of our school's mission as a laboratory school at CMU, we also have high school, undergraduate and graduate student learners to support. The high school interns cannot do their internship work remotely, so they will be served by the continuity of education plans for their home schools (Pittsburgh Public's SOS Program and City Charter High School). Students in the undergraduate "Principles of Child Development" course had already completed their first observation project prior to the school's closure, and the instructor will shift the second project to a different topic that could be done without observing children. We will work with CMU's Institutional Review Board for permission to conduct remote research sessions so that the graduate students can continue their projects. These learners will not be considered further in this plan.

Expectations for Teaching and Learning:

NOTE: Samples of Family Communications related to the whole group opportunities are included in the Appendix.

- Preschool 3's (four half days per week) <https://cmuthreesprogram.webs.com/apps/blog/>

Asynchronous Learning will include a daily email with a different focus each day.

Monday: Arts (Music, Visual Arts, Dance)
Tuesday: Health & Nutrition
Wednesday: Outdoor Adventures
Thursday: Stories & Science

Synchronous Learning will occur as listed on the schedule below.

Zoom Circle Time Schedule:

(all Zoom meetings will be 20-30 minutes)

Mrs. Armbruster: T, Th 9:30 am

Mr. Salinetto: M, T, W, Th 10:00 am

Ms. O'Neill: M, T, W, Th 2:00 pm

Individualized Synchronous Learning will occur as needed / requested for individual children who may not respond well to the Zoom context or may need unique approaches to support learning.

- Preschool 4's (five half days per week) <https://cmugreenroom.weebly.com/am-4s-learning-at-home>

Asynchronous Learning will include a daily email with a different focus each day. See explanation below.

As we all adjust to a new normal, we hope that this website can be a place of connection to the Children's School that you can visit often with your children.

- See all of the content of Daily Emails on the AM 4's Learning At Home Page. You can now comment and share ideas here!
- Revisit memories of the year in school and see photos of what friends are doing at home now.

Music Monday
Dramatic Play Tuesday
Artful Wednesday
Story Time Thursday
Science Friday

Synchronous Learning will occur as listed on the schedule below.

Zoom Circle Time Schedule:

(all zoom meetings will be 20-30 minutes)

Mrs. Yetter: T, Th 10 am

Mrs. Bird: T, Th 11 am

Mrs. Cherin: T, Th 1 pm

Mr. Allen (all Green Room friends): M 11 am

Mrs. Bird & Mr. Allen's Lunch Chat: W 12 pm

Individualized Synchronous Learning will occur as needed / requested for individual children who may not respond well to the Zoom context or may need unique approaches to support learning.

- Kindergarten (four full days and one half day per week)
<https://cmukindergarten.weebly.com/today-at-home-in-kindergarten>

Asynchronous Learning will include a daily email with a structured routine for the day that mirrors the school routine. See explanation below.

Hi Kindergarten Families,

We will be starting a daily blog post with ideas on how to implement a few of our daily routines into your new daily realities. Please take them all as suggestions, not requirements by any means. You know what your child needs best. This is simply a way for us to stay in contact, continue the relationships we have with the friends, and provide you with some inspiration on how to keep your child engaged (if you need it!). Below is a breakdown of what will be included, instructions for certain elements, and our rationale on why we think they are important.

With that being said, they will be posted on the blog and sent out in a daily email blast starting tomorrow. We would love to make the blog a two-way communication platform: *comments are enabled and encouraged!* Feel free to share feedback on what we provide, other resources/tips & tricks that you've found helpful, and notes of general encouragement and camaraderie. While we are staying physically at a distance, this is a great way to keep our relationships healthy.

Lastly, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to ask. While there is a great burden on you to help support your child(ren), we also want to make sure you are supported as well. While this is not what any of us could have predicted, we look forward to making the most of this opportunity to slow down, take care of ourselves and each other, and strengthen our family ties - we hope you will take advantage of this silver lining too.

All the best,
Donna Perovich, Krissy Opferman, and Grace Dzina

Blog Post Format

Question of the Day: We start every day with our question of the day and there's no reason we can't make it happen remotely too. We will be making the questions more action-based; so instead of graphing the yes/no answers of the class, your child will have to do something to answer the question.

Challenge of the Day: Learning does not have to be limited to the walls of the classroom. This time at home will provide an abundance of opportunities for your child to learn how to help out at home and be an even more productive member of the family.

Get Outside: Perhaps you might feel it is best to avoid the playground, but that doesn't mean you should stop taking advantage of fresh air and sunshine. Give [Dr. Carver's Director's Corner articles from the 2017-2018 school year](#) a read (they're all about animals in the wild and all we can learn from nature). We will encourage you to find time to be outside daily and provide some sort of direction if you're looking for suggestions on what to do once you get outside.

Move it and Groove it: A little music and dance to help get those endorphins pumping and keep spirits high. We'll be sharing some new songs as well as some of our favorite classroom songs and dances that the friends can even teach you!

Math: This will have two components: an idea on how to implement math into your daily home routines (math is all around us, take advantage of all the opportunities that provides!) and a more explicit math-based activity, concept, video, etc.

Journal: A constant in our Kindergarten routine is journal time, which is composed of a story followed by time to draw a character/the setting/something from the story. In addition to drawing, the friends are encouraged to write about their drawings in "kindergarten spelling" (invented spelling). Learning to read is a developmental process; all children do not begin to read at the same age. Literacy milestones appear along the way as children develop a basic oral vocabulary and understanding of the alphabetic principles before beginning to read. Learning how to read is a complex cognitive process that requires enriching and enjoyable experiences with books. As educators, we strive to create a comfortable and stress-free learning environment that promotes an understanding of the function of reading, while developing a positive attitude towards it. In kindergarten, we focus on emergent literacy and gradually progress to what is developmentally appropriate for each child at that time. Research has proven that reading and writing develop in parallel for young children and are interrelated. As students begin to explore kindergarten spelling, they reconstruct their knowledge of reading and books as well. We encourage you to

create your own journal time at home. We will provide daily book recommendations with drawing suggestions but feel free to take the concept and use your own family favorite books!

Book Making: This is a class of authors and illustrators. Fold and staple a couple of pieces of paper together. Give your child an opportunity to creatively express themselves while also providing opportunities to practice letter formation and kindergarten spelling. While we will have suggestions of topics to make books about, the principle of making books is what's beneficial.

Did You Know?: The world is full of so many incredible things - let's learn about them! This will simply be a place to share videos of how things work, cool resources to enhance exploration, and opportunities to be in awe of the wonders that this world possesses.

Individualized Synchronous Learning for all children and families will ensure that each one is supported in home learning at an appropriate level for progress toward their transition to elementary school.

Synchronous Learning will occur on Fridays, using two groups based on family time preference so that children can stay connected with their peers.

- Music (one lesson every other week)

Our biweekly music educator will create YouTube lessons as similar as possible to those she led at school.

- Week of the Young Children (April 13-17)

Asynchronous Learning multi-age family resources will be sent each morning, with opportunities to share anecdotes, photos, and short videos for compilation into a slideshow sent to all families. The daily focus is established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) as Music Monday, Tasty Tuesday, Work Together Wednesday, Artsy Thursday, and Family Friday.

- Earth Day -> Earth Week (April 20-24)

Because our Whole School Theme for the year was Planet Earth, we will broaden Earth Day to Earth Week. Asynchronous Learning multi-age family resources will be sent each morning, with opportunities to share anecdotes, photos, and short videos for compilation into a slideshow sent to all families. Our team chose the daily focus (with some parallel to NAEYC's themes) as Music Monday, Tasty Tuesday, Walking Wednesday, Thankful Thursday, and Fun Friday.

Communication Tools and Strategies:

- Email will be our primary tool for initiating family communication, with whole school emails from the administration frequently at first and then several times per week throughout the closure (see samples in Appendix). The primary content of these emails will relate to our closure timeline, broad recommendations for talking with children about the virus, general enrichment and review suggestions, guidance on tuition refunds, etc. One administrator will also send an email related to parent self-care every Friday,

another will send the whole school messages about online resources, and a third will handle the individual communication related to refunds and other unique logistics.

- The educators' daily suggestions for enrichment and review will be sent each morning via email and posted on the class blogs (see links above).
- All synchronous interactions between educators and their classes will be conducted via Zoom, with appropriate settings to protect against Zoom-bombing. Zoom invitations will be sent to families via email.
- Instructional videos created by the educators will be posted on the Children's School YouTube Channel.
- The substitute educator's blog, "Engaging in Play Every Day", will be done via Weebly.
- Two of the whole school monthly newsletters (April and May) will be sent via email to families.
- All of the Children's School resources will be publicly available via one central portal on the Children's School web site (see links and screenshots in the Resources section below) so that educators and families from other early childhood centers can utilize them.
- Teaching and Administrative Teams will also communicate primarily via email, with Zoom calls at least weekly. The whole staff communications and weekly staff memo will also come via email and Zoom meetings every Fridays. Individual communication may be via email or phone, with occasional Zoom sessions for individual technology tutoring. For sharing documents, CMU requires us to utilize Box.

Access (Devices, Platforms, Handouts):

- Prior to the closure, the administrative team ensured that every staff member had access to appropriate technology at home. After the closure, additional technology, backup drives, larger monitors, etc. were moved from school to home as needed. Depending on prior technology skill levels, educators will participate in online training, webinars, and individualized technology tutoring as needed to learn to use Zoom, Box, make YouTube videos, etc.
- Educators were responsible for connecting with each of their children's families to assess their technology access. No families needed us to provide additional devices.
- CMU's technology support team will be available to help educators and administrators navigate the transition to remote work and teaching. We have one dedicated technology consultant and several educators and administrators will be available to help their colleagues.

Staff General Expectations:

- All educators and administrators will continue to work their specified number of hours throughout the closure and document their work via an online learning log stored in a private Box folder. The school owner and director will have access to the logs, and the owner will review and comment on teacher progress daily.
- Educators will be responsible for working with their teaching teams to provide all of the teaching and learning resources listed above, as well as to post them for families' future use.
- Educators who serve as lead teachers will be responsible for preparing and conducting parent-teacher conferences, including writing conference reports using the Children's School format, sending .pdf files via email to parents, and scheduling virtual meetings to dialogue about children's developmental progress and plan strategies for partnering to support future growth.
- All staff members will be responsible for submitting schedules to an educational administrator for inclusion in the weekly staff memo, as well as reviewing the weekly memo so that they are aware of events for which they are responsible as leaders and/or participants.
- Flex time will be permissible because many staff members are caring for children or elderly relatives while working remotely. Staff members may shift their hours during the day or spread them throughout all seven days of the week as long as they attend all scheduled staff and class meetings.
- All staff members may take PTO according to the existing policies and procedures.

Student Expectations:

- Because children ages 3-6 need support for all online activity, and many of our children have parents working from home or parents serving as essential workers, all of our emergency remote enrichment, review and instruction will be optional. Families can engage their children in as much or as little of the recommended learning experiences as they wish. Families will have the opportunity to share anecdotes, photos, and short videos of their learning experiences with their teachers, who will then post them to the private part of their classroom blog, but they are not required to do so.

Attendance/Accountability:

- Educators will monitor family participation so they can support families as needed, as well as communicating any concerns to administrators for extra contacts. Attendance will not be required in any way, but we will contact families who are not engaged to determine whether other forms of contact or support are needed.

Good Faith Efforts for Access and Equity for All Students:

- Educators and administrators will make every effort to connect with all children and families to offer continuity of education through the synchronous and asynchronous methods detailed above. Family input will be encouraged frequently, and educators and/or administrators will respond to all positive and negative feedback, with attempts to resolve any concerns raised.

Special Education Supports:

- The Children's School serves five children with therapeutic support in one or more of the following areas: developmental, speech & language, occupational, and hearing.
- Children's School educators and administrators will make efforts to be in touch with Early Intervention (EI) therapists from the district and document communications. Our goal is to support and encourage the good faith efforts of EI to provide a continuity of services to children at our school with IEPs and or IFSPs, as well as to support and monitor progress with EI therapists for the duration of the school closure. We will also work with incoming or continuing EI therapist to support smooth transitions of services for children with IEPs and or IFSPs when school resumes in the fall.
- Our educators will also work with individual families to provide specialized interaction and instruction strategies where the group Zoom interactions are not meeting the children's unique needs.

EL Supports:

- About 1/3 of Children's School families are bi- or tri-lingual, but all have at least one parent who speaks fluent English. All children participate in school in English.

Gifted Education Supports:

- All of the enrichment resources provided for families will encourage open-ended learning experiences that are extendable for gifted children.
- In addition, all families will have access to the resources provided for all age groups, so families can easily utilize resources intended for older children to enhance gifted children's learning.


Resource Links:

- Initial Website Message re: Coronavirus Closure on Home Page

Carnegie Mellon UniversitySearch☰

Children's School
Department of Psychology, Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences

[About Us](#)[Program](#)[Our Educators](#)[In the News](#)[Giving](#)



Coronavirus Pandemic Closure:

Due to the government social-distancing and stay-at-home orders, as well as CMU's decisions to move instruction online and close campus, the Children's School closed on March 16th and will remain closed for the rest of the Spring 2020 semester. Our educators are supporting young children and families with a variety of developmentally appropriate resources to promote new routines, continued connections, and broad learning opportunities.

- Resources for Families (Photo as of April 18, 2020)

<https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs/resources/for-families/index.html>

Young Children at Home During Coronavirus Closures:
We miss all of the Children's School children and families being together in Margaret Morrison Carnegie Hall, and we welcome hearing from you so that we can stay connected and support each other. We hope that these resources will help families while we all do our part to help slow the community spread of the coronavirus.

Learning at Home


[Preschool 3's](#)
[Preschool 4's](#)
[Kindergartners](#)

[Children's School YouTube Channel](#)
[Engaging in Play Every Day \(For Children 2-6\)](#)

- YouTube Channel (Photo as of April 18, 2020)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtb1JaytFLYRwKIlqgZHorQ/playlists>

YouTube Search SIGN IN



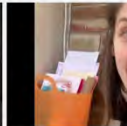








Carnegie Mellon University Children's School
24 subscribers

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HOME VIDEOS **PLAYLISTS** CHANNELS DISCUSSION ABOUT

Created playlists SORT BY

 <p>Science Updated yesterday VIEW FULL PLAYLIST</p>	 <p>Music and Movement Updated yesterday VIEW FULL PLAYLIST</p>	 <p>Art Updated yesterday VIEW FULL PLAYLIST</p>	 <p>Outdoor Activities Updated yesterday VIEW FULL PLAYLIST</p>	 <p>Cooking Updated yesterday VIEW FULL PLAYLIST</p>
 <p>Dramatic Play Updated yesterday VIEW FULL PLAYLIST</p>	 <p>Story Time Updated yesterday VIEW FULL PLAYLIST</p>	 <p>Kindergarten Conversations VIEW FULL PLAYLIST</p>	 <p>About Carnegie Mellon University Children's School VIEW FULL PLAYLIST</p>	

- Engaging in Play Every Day Blog
<https://slowdownandplay.weebly.com>

Engaging in Play Every Day

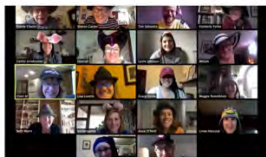


I am Leslie Johnson, an educator at the CMU Children's School. I created this site as a way to help the parents at the Children's School explore ways to build on their child's play during this time of change. As we all try to balance our roles as parents and employees, I know having one thing a day that fully engages my children makes for a new routine and keeps peace in our house, as much as it can in this season of life.



- Newsletter Posting (Photo as of April 18, 2020)
<https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs/news/index.html>

School Family Newsletters



Children's School April
2020 Family Newsletter



Children's School March
2020 Family Newsletter



Children's School
February 2020 Family
Newsletter



Children's School
January 2020 Family
Newsletter



Children's School
December 2019 Family
Newsletter



Children's School
November 2019 Family
Newsletter

Appendix

• Weekly Staff Memo Sample



Thursday, April 9 4's Story Time Thursday

- 8:00 **K Team Meeting**
- 9:00 AM Young 4's Zoom Circle with Mrs. Yetter
- 9:30 AM Young 3's Zoom Circle with Mrs. Armbruster
- 10:00 AM Older 3's Zoom Circle with Mr. Salinetto
- 11:00 AM Older 4's Zoom Circle with Mrs. Bird
- 12:00 **PAUS Lunch Zoom Meeting (SMC, LH, BMy, MR)**
- 1:00 PM 4's Zoom Circle with Mrs. Cherin
- 2:00 PM 3's Zoom Circle with Ms. O'Neil

Friday, April 10 4's Science Friday

Happy Birthday, Anne!!

- 8:00 **K Team Meeting**
- 9:00 4's Zoom Show and Tell
- K Zoom Show and Tell
- 10:00 K Zoom Show and Tell
- 10:30 **3's Team Meeting**
- 11:00 **Whole Staff Meeting** (via Zoom) An invitation will be sent closer to the meeting. If you have any items you want to include in the agenda, please email them to Sharon.

April 13-17 Week of the Young Child

Monday, April 13 **WOYC MUSIC MONDAY**

- 8:00 **K Team Meeting**
- 9:00 **4's Team Zoom Meeting**
- 10:00 AM Older 3's Zoom Circle with Mr. Salinetto
- 10:30 **3's Team Meeting**
- 11:00 4's Zoom Play Time
- 2:00 PM 3's Zoom Circle with Ms. O'Neil

Tuesday, April 14 **WOYC TASTY TUESDAY** BMy PTO

- 8:00 **K Team Meeting**
- 9:00 AM Young 4's Zoom Circle with Mrs. Yetter
- 9:30 AM Young 3's Zoom Circle with Mrs. Armbruster
- 10:00 AM Older 3's Zoom Circle with Mr. Salinetto
- 11:00 AM Older 4's Zoom Circle with Mrs. Bird
- 1:00 PM 4's Zoom Circle with Mrs. Cherin
- 2:00 PM 3's Zoom Circle with Ms. O'Neil

Wednesday, April 15 **WOYC WORK TOGETHER WEDNESDAY** BMy PTO **May Family Newsletter Deadline**

- 8:00 **K Team Meeting**
- 10:00 AM Older 3's Zoom Circle with Mr. Salinetto
- 10:30 **3's Team Meeting**

12:00 Mrs. Bird's Zoom Lunch
2:00 **Admin Team Meeting** (via Zoom)
PM 3's Zoom Circle with Ms. O'Neil

Thursday, April 16 **WOYC ARTSY THURSDAY** *Video Music Class with Mrs. Hraber*

8:00 **K Team Meeting**
9:00 AM Young 4's Zoom Circle with Mrs. Yetter
9:30 AM Young 3's Zoom Circle with Mrs. Armbruster
10:00 AM Older 3's Zoom Circle with Mr. Salinetto
11:00 AM Older 4's Zoom Circle with Mrs. Bird
1:00 PM 4's Zoom Circle with Mrs. Cherin
2:00 PM 3's Zoom Circle with Ms. O'Neil

Friday, April 17 **WOYC FAMILY FRIDAY**

8:00 **K Team Meeting**
9:00 4's Zoom Show and Tell
10:30 **3's Team Meeting**
11:00 **Whole Staff Meeting** (via Zoom) An invitation will be sent closer to the meeting. If you have any items you want to include in the agenda, please email them to Sharon.

LOOKING AHEAD 😊

April 17-24 **Remote Parent Teacher Conferences – teachers will schedule with families**
April 19 *Happy Birthday, Caitlin!!*
April 20-24 Earth Week
April 22 Earth Day

• Family Email Samples

March 11, 2020

Dear Children's School Families,

Below is the email President Jahanian shared with the Carnegie Mellon community this afternoon.

As you can see, the CMU leadership team has made the difficult decision to shift undergraduate and graduate education to an online format beginning right after spring break, to suspend domestic travel, etc. We are awaiting guidance from the administration about the ramifications of these decisions for the Children's School's operations. We will communicate with you as soon as possible about whether we can resume school on Monday. We appreciate your patience as we seek to determine how to best follow CMU's lead in balancing our educational mission with protecting the health and well-being of our educators, children and families.

Warm regards,
Dr. Carver

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For Week beginning Monday, March 16th
Dear Children's School Families,

The Children's School aims to stay connected with you while we need to stay "socially-distant" during the coronavirus pandemic. Though the children will not be learning in school, there is still so much learning potential while they are staying at or close to home. During the first days of our educators' remote work, each team will be developing a communication plan to share with you soon.

Meanwhile, remember that you are your child's most important teacher and play is children's best context for learning. Your calm approach and efforts to maintain family routines will reassure them that the changes we all face are designed to keep everyone safe. Protecting them from hearing or seeing news reports will also help reduce the stress associated with these changes.

With this email, I am reminding you of the articles I wrote for early newsletters this year about the importance of play. The first article in the series reviews our school's learning goal categories and others give ideas for outdoor and indoor ways to facilitate play without needing special materials. At this point, the recommendations about play dates and public playgrounds don't meet the social-distancing guidelines for our current context, but otherwise the ideas should apply.

In addition, I'm including here some recommendations for "snow days" that were written last year when we were preparing for our Whole School Unit on Healthy Mind and Body. You don't have time to plan ahead for these, but the emphasis on focusing most on your family's health and well-being are well worth repeating. Cooking, playdough, board games, and books are opportunities for learning, and our care for others via physical or digital communication will help friends and families stay connected.

Please let us know if you have ideas for how we can best support you during this challenging time for our community.

Warm regards,
Dr. Carver

**From January 2019 (Just before our Healthy Mind & Body Unit)
Snow Day Ideas for Healthy Minds & Bodies**

A little planning ahead will go a long way to helping you and your family have positive and constructive snow days this winter. Here are a few ideas for creatively using snow days to reinforce important lessons about Healthy Minds & Bodies.

- **Rest** – Let everyone sleep in, lounge in pajamas, and have a slower pace to the day.
- **Healthy Body Care** – Take a leisurely bath or open a new toothbrush, practice brushing and photograph each others' smiles.
- **Nutrition** – Freeze leftover vegetables, rice, potatoes, etc. in advance so that you have lots of ingredients to make a warm and healthy vegetable soup to enjoy together.
- **Exercise** – Make playdough together (see recipe below) and then play with it to strengthen small muscles, exercise large muscles by dancing to music, and allow children to play dress up with adult clothes and shoes.
- **Mental Challenge** – Play board games together or start a family puzzle (available with 3 sizes of pieces so that family members of all ages can participate).
- **Stress Reduction** – Share a book or a song, and practice the breathing techniques and yoga positions children have learned.
- **Giving** – Focusing on others and the ways that we can encourage and support them helps children have a healthy perspective. Make pictures or cards for friends and family, or sort clothes, books, and toys to select ones to share with others.

Children's School Playdough (NOTE: We usually double the recipe.)

1 cup White Flour	1 cup Water
½ cup Salt	1 tablespoon Oil
2 teaspoons Cream of Tartar	1 teaspoon Food Coloring

1. Combine flour, salt, and cream of tartar in a saucepan. Mix water, oil, and food coloring in a separate bowl and stir them gradually into dry ingredients until the mixture is smooth.
2. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until a ball forms.
3. Remove from heat and when the mixture is just cool enough to handle, knead until smooth.
4. Also, you can add vanilla, instant coffee, etc. to add aroma, or glitter to enhance the visual sensation. Be creative!
5. Store in a Ziploc bag in the refrigerator when not in use.

Friday, March 20, 2020
Dear Parents,

This is a weird and hard and sad and mad time in our lives. But something extraordinary happened today. I smelled spring in Wilkinsburg. That old fashioned hyacinth, muddy rain on warm concrete smell, that I as a Pittsburgher only ever seem to smell when I leave the city. The exhaust and pollution caused by lots of people and vehicles have long covered the true freshness of spring in the city. But the fresh breath of today took me by surprise and I realize that a new part of me has opened up to possibility. This is the time that we can look into ourselves and push back the layers of old ways and ideas, but it won't be easy. To sustain this hopefulness, we need each other, and I can't do it without all of you. I miss you. I miss the comfort, listening, laughs, and eye rolls that we share in the office at The Children's School. To continue to encourage these simple acts, I would like to write to you each Friday in hopes of continuing that exchange of connection that I look forward to each day.

This week, I offer the invitation to explore a free online yoga practice by Adriene Mishler. She has been a helpful and humorous guide to me for many years. And BONUS, she has a dog named Benji who is often

in the practice, too!

<https://yogawithadriene.com>

Love, Miss Drash

Tuesday Evening, March 31st or Wednesday Morning, April 1st

Dear Children's School Families,

Attached is the Children's School April newsletter, some of which is a reminder of the fun we had together at the Planet Earth Family Festival, but most of which relates to our new unwelcome reality. Based on parent input, we share information about what our teachers are doing, advice for work / life balance at home, and the offer of a 75% tuition refund for the second half of the semester. We hope you'll take the time to review it and share the photos with your children. We miss you all!

We've also learned that we have a "Goldilocks" problem. We are providing too many ideas and opportunities for some families, too few for others, and just the right amount for most. Remember, that we only offer options and never requirements. Full days of open-ended play in a loving home with bedtime stories galore will help children learn well and be "ready" for their next level of schooling. At the same time, utilizing some of the ideas we offer will enrich your children's days and perhaps broaden the range of their learning through play. If you are seeking additional input, you can now check the Children's School web site (<https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs/>) and follow the Coronavirus Closure link to access the ideas shared by the 3's Team, the 4's Team, the Kindergarten Team, and Mrs. Johnson for all teams.

Lastly, if you scroll down on the home page, you can now see a new video about the ways that the Children's School is a learning laboratory on Carnegie Mellon's campus. We worked with a professional from CMU's Media Relations team to produce this video in preparation for the International Association of Laboratory Schools conference where five of our educators were supposed to present workshops in late April. Though the journey to Toronto for the conference has been canceled, we completed the video project anyway and are pleased with the outcome. The children might enjoy seeing their school and teachers even though the content is more adult oriented.

Warm regards and best wishes for your family's health and wholeness.

Dr. Carver

April 8, 2020

Hello Families,

Megan Kenny (mom of John and Mary in the Kindergarten) has made a very generous offer. She has fabric and a sewing machine and is willing to make masks for anyone in the Children's School community. Megan is able to make adult, child or toddler size masks. Orders are on a first come, first served basis and she will sew until she runs out of fabric. Attached is an order form.

Thank you, Megan, for your willingness to share your talent!!

Linda Hancock | Educational Administrator

April 18, 2020

Good morning everyone!

Mrs. Hrabar has sent us another terrific Music Class. Here is the link:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=tZ31LLyleuw>

Have a wonderful weekend,

Linda Hancock | Educational Administrator

• Class Blog Samples

Preschool 3's

March 16, 2020

Good Afternoon Red Room and Blue Room Friends,

We hope you had a great Spring Break! We were hoping to see your smiling faces today, but as you know things have changed. The days ahead may bring some challenges as families try to find a work-life balance. To help, we are going to be piecing together ideas of activities (books, building, cooking, getting outdoors, science, and more) to share with you. Remember you are your child's best teacher, and that play is the best learning tool. But, when you are in need of activity ideas, keep an eye out for emails or be sure to visit our three's program website.

Included in the email is the link to our program website, when you have free time, look back at pictures with your child from our school year so far, and revisit our previous unit newsletters. Reviewing these items might help spark ideas for activities and encourage your little ones to start something new! We have also included and will add a link to our resource page, for the live cam of the Pittsburgh Bald Eagles in Hays. The children enjoyed viewing the live cam each day at school before break, and we are sure that they will be interested to see the babies hatch (which should occur on this Thursday for the first egg and possibly Sunday for the second.)

If at any time you have questions, concerns, or comments, please reach out to any of the three's team teachers. We are glad to help and are here for you in our days of social distancing.

**Three's program website: <https://cmuthreesprogram.webs.com>

**Pittsburgh Bald Eagles in Hays: <http://www.aswp.org/pages/hays-nest>

Warm Wishes,
The Three's Team

April 1, 2020

Good Morning Three's Families!

As we turn our wall calendars to the month of April, I hope you are finding time to enjoy signs of spring with your family!

While on outdoor walks with my family, I see many signs of the season. The trees are freshly budding, grass is turning green, more birds are chirping, and daffodils are blooming.

While in the kitchen, my daughter Quinn, pointed out a Robin hopping around in our backyard with a large clump of dried grass in its beak. I then checked the light fixture outside of our back door where Robins had built a nest in previous springs. Sure enough, two Robins have started to build another nest! I hope to capture their nest building periodically through photographs to show you the amazing progress they are making. You can check out the progress by looking at the "Robin's Nest" album on the "PICTURES" page on this website.

I have started an April journal to document signs of spring that I notice on walks and through our windows. Keeping a journal is a fun way to document observations and to express thoughts and feelings in a meaningful way. Feel free to start a journal with your child at home There is no "right" way to journal together. Simply follow your child's lead.

Below are links for more information on the American Robin and their nest building plus a sweet sounding Robin song:

National Geographic Kids, American Robins:

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birds/american-robin/>

Robin Building a Nest Timelapse

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBAAvS2A6P4>

"Sweet Little Robin-a Song for Spring" Song by Dany Rosevear

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cx_YkcpoHKg

Hoping for a great day!

Three's Teachers

Preschool 4's

March 17, 2020

Greetings to the Green Room AM Families!

For the last several days, the Children's School educators have navigated a lot of uncertainty in the face of COVID-19 and the efforts taken to help keep our community safe and healthy. All of us have faced a rapid shift to remote communication and are coping with learning how to navigate the different paths, all while juggling changes to work and family life schedules. It has impacted all of us. Please know we think of every one of you often.

The Green Room Teaching Team is discussing the ways that we can continue connecting with you and your children throughout our time apart and hope to have something interactive ready to launch next week.

Here is the Weather Song to sing along to:

<https://youtu.be/uLIp8lQ0beY>

Remember you are your child's best teacher, and play at this age is the best learning tool. But, when you are in need of activity ideas, keep an eye out for our news emails, go to our website to look through photos, and look for our new way of connecting next week! Please share your ideas with us too!

For something new, and in case you don't know, the first Bald Eagle egg in Hays is scheduled to hatch on Thursday, and the second possibly on Sunday. The friends may enjoy watching the webcam! <https://www.aswp.org/pages/hays-nest>

If you have questions, concerns, or comments, please reach out to us. We miss you and are still here for you in our days of social distancing.

The Green Room Teachers

April 3, 2020

Today's Science Friday is all about Exercise.

Our bodies are designed to move - to run and jump and climb and dance!

So, what's so good about exercise? Exercise can help to keep your body working at its best. It can make you strong, help you feel good about yourself, and help fight off germs. Exercise can also be fun!

Before you exercise it is good to warm up to wake up your body and prepare it for action.

1. Warm up along with me and the song *Stretch It Out Simon*. We use this one at school to warm up before playing in the gym.

[Mrs. Bird Warms Up With Stretch It Out Simon](#)

2. Now get some exercise by learning some new dance moves!

(This is a new one to me. It's loud and a little wild.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpD9kRyBn8o>

Or revisit The Hoppity Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mohwAAGi55U>

(We have hopped along to this one many times in school.)

3. Watch the attached movie to see how Mrs. Armbruster and her children Kiley and Addison make a game with chalk to exercise their bodies and brains.

4. Enjoy some cool down time while listening to this fun story. It is long, but you can listen a little at a time if you want to.

https://stories.audible.com/pdp/B002UZI57I?ref=adbl_ent_anon_sc_pdp_pc_0

Have fun trying some ways to exercise today!

Mrs. Bird

(If you want to just listen to the song, and try the stretches without video, *Stretch It Out Simon* can be found on Apple Music or here on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVRyaRji7Xk>)

Kindergarten

March 17th, 2020

6 COMMENTS

Question of the Day: Can you write your last name 5 times? Do it!

Challenge of the Day: Set the table for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Get Outside: Happy St. Patrick's Day! Go for a walk and look for clovers, especially the four-leaf clovers!

Move it and Groove it: "[Kindness is a Muscle](#)"

Math: Roll a dice, count the dots, and write the number. Repeat 10 times.

Journal: [Clark the Shark](#) by Bruce Hale, read by Chris Pine; draw an underwater school for the sea creatures; use kindergarten spelling to write, "shark."

Book Making: Write and illustrate a book about the best part of your spring break.

Did You Know?: "[Why Do We Get Sick?](#)"; [Pepper and Water Science Trick](#) - a little science experiment to stress the importance of using soap when you wash your hands.

Remember, [our blog](#) is now a place for two-way communication. We'd love to hear from you all in the comments and give you a place to share with one another what's been helpful while you're at home. Stay healthy!

April 1st, 2020

5 COMMENTS

Question of the Day: Can you make an instrument that you can tap using things you have at home? Do it.

Challenge of the Day: Learn a new joke and tell it to your family members. Don't forget to call your family members that do not live with you to share your joke! Need some ideas? [Watch this!](#)

Get Outside: Can you build a bird nest? Get outside and gather sticks, twigs, mud, and anything else that you may need to try and make a bird nest. Find a level spot or use something flat such as a piece of wood, cardboard or flat stone as your base. Give it a try. I bet it is harder and than you think! Now try it by just using your beak...JUST KIDDING! Birds are pretty amazing! Here is a book: [Amazing Bird Nests](#).

Move it and Groove it: "[Funky Chicken](#)"

Math: Today is a new month...create your April calendar. There are 30 days in April, so you will need to write numbers 1-30 on your calendar.

Journal: [The Book with No Pictures](#) by B. J. Novak. Draw a picture of something that makes you laugh. Use kindergarten spelling to write, "laugh."

Book Making: Use your imagination and sense of humor to write (not illustrate) a book with no words!

Did You Know?: Many of you drew a cardinal in your bird watching journals. Did you know that cardinals LOVE sunflower seeds. Learn about these beautiful red birds in, "[All About Cardinals](#)."

Extra Resource: [Headspace](#) (for kids & adults)

We will be doing our group Zoom sing-along on Friday. Please let me know if you're interested so we can determine whether we'll need 1 or 2 sessions, depending on the number of friends we're expecting. Looking forward to it!

• Zoom Invitation Samples (*note: actual links & phone numbers removed*)

Preschool 3's

March 26, 2020

Hello Blue Room Families!

Please help your child join me for a group meeting today at 10:00 AM. This is completely optional, so please do not feel pressured to join if you are unable to work it into your daily schedule. I'm guessing we'll trickle in starting at 10:00 and then we'll get things rolling at 10:05. If you are a few minutes late, that is ok! This will be my first time exploring zoom with a large group of children, so I am asking for patience as we will all be learning on the job! It may be a little chaotic, but we will do it together.

Click the link below to join... and I believe it is set up so that 10:00 is the earliest time to join the meeting...

Join Zoom Meeting

The plan:

- say hello
- talk about the mute button, so everyone can hear others
- sing a song or two ("Rum Sum Sum" and "Love Grows")
- say goodbye until next time!

I hope to see everyone soon!

Mr. Salinetto

Good Morning Red Room Friends!

Today's circle time is an exciting one....we are going to do a little SHOW AND TELL!! Please bring an item that is extra special to you to our online circle time. When it is your turn, you can show the item and if you are feeling comfortable, you can share why it is special! Don't worry if you are a little uncertain about sharing your item, a grown up can share for you or you can simply choose to just watch...there is no wrong way to participate in our circle time.

I am looking forward to seeing you all again today at 9:30am for Online Circle Time!

Click the link to join:

See you soon!

Mrs. Armbruster

April 15, 2020

Greetings 3's families!

I hope you can join us for our Zoom meeting today at 2:00. I hope you can bring a toy bird or cat...or both for our time together today!

Can't wait to see you all!

Ms. O'Neill

Join Zoom Meeting:

April 15, 2020
Hi PM 3's friends!

I hope you enjoyed singing, "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush" with me! It's fun to make up motions to a song.

It was so nice to read, "Feathers For Lunch" by Lois Ehlert. The book is one of my favorites! I am glad you enjoyed it and showed me with a thumbs up!
Thank you for bringing your real cat to Zoom Araad.

Thanks again and see you tomorrow!
Ms. O'Neill

Preschool 4's

April 6, 2020
Hello Families!

First: **HAPPY BIRTHDAY HENRY!!!!** 🎂

This is a reminder that I will be hosting two Zoom meetings for our group on Tuesday and Thursday at 11AM. You can join the meetings by clicking here:
Meeting ID:

For our Zoom Circle Times, let's do something silly each time we meet.

Tuesday, April 7 - Different Hair Day - Join us with your different hairstyle!

Thursday, April 9 - Backwards Clothing day - Wear your clothing backwards!

Tuesday, April 14 - Favorite Color Day - Wear your favorite color!

Thursday, April 16 - Glasses or Goggles Day! - Find a pair of sunglasses or goggles to wear!

Question of the Day for Tuesday, April 7

Do You Like Ice Cream?

Bring 2 pieces of paper and some tape to Circle Time.

Coming Up:

• ***Monday Zoom Play Time with Mr. Allen 11am***

• ***Wednesday Zoom Lunch Chat - 12 noon-12:30pm***

Bring your lunch and join Mrs. Bird's group for informal conversation.

Join Zoom Lunch

Meeting ID:

• ***Friday Zoom Show and Tell***

Just a reminder, your child is welcome to participate in as many or as few Zoom meetings as they like and siblings and other family members are always welcome! If your child is more comfortable just observing rather than talking on Zoom, that is OK too.

Please contact me to arrange a FaceTime call for me and your child. This has been a great way to have one on one interaction. My phone number is: 412-xxx-xxxx

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions about any of the remote learning activities we have been providing, we would love to hear your thoughts.

I look forward to seeing you!
Mrs. Bird

Hi Friends- **JAMBO!**

Thank you for greeting my friend Mrs. Capps with a friendly JAMBO hello at our ZOOM meeting.
EARTH DAY IS APRIL 22 THIS YEAR -

Mrs. Capps also sent us her version of THIS PRETTY PLANET the link is included below. I think the children will remember the song when they listen to it! The song was one of the children's favorites when we studied the planet EARTH in February!

It has been wonderful seeing friends on ZOOM! ☺

For our next Zoom Circle,

- **Thursday, April 16 - Glasses or Goggles Day! - Find a pair of sunglasses or goggles to wear!** 🕶️
- **My friends are always welcome to bring something that they would like to share. I have noticed that it is something important they enjoy!**

If you are planning to join us on Thursday, please reply to this email with your child's answer to the question and I will share the results with the group.

The Question of the Day for Thursday, April 16th...
Did you ever see a spider?
Yes or No?

There are other renditions that you can find by Googling **THIS PRETTY PLANET**, by Tom Chapin.
This Pretty Planet
<https://youtu.be/muwa129pVXA>

Join in on this favorite hand rhyme. The book is fun!
THE EENSY-WEENSY SPIDER, Adapted by Mary Anne Hoberman
If you have a pretend spider at your home, it will be fun to bring it to our meeting!

I hope to see you at 1:00 on Thursday.
Take care everyone!
Mrs. Cherin

Join Zoom Meeting
Meeting ID:

Kindergarten

April 6, 2020
Hi Kindergarten,

This Friday, April 10th we will be hosting 2 Show & Tell meetings via Zoom: a 9 am and a 10 am.

If you are interested in participating, please let me know at which time you'll be joining us. We're limiting each meeting to 12 friends, availability is first come first serve. We want each friend to have enough time to share their item and a smaller group will allow for more productive interaction between the friends. Zoom meeting link and number will be sent out once we have our two groups finalized.

Show & Tell will be sharing bag style! Please bring your item wrapped/in a bag/hidden somehow and have 3 clues prepared. You will present your clues, the other friends will have a chance to guess, and then we'll have the big reveal! We are so excited to interact with you and see what special thing you bring to share!

See you Friday,
The K Team