Whole School Celebration

Please have your entire family join us on Friday, May 17th from 11am to 1pm on the Children’s School playground (or inside in case of rain) for our Whole School Celebration of the 2018-19 school year. This event is scheduled immediately after the Kindergarten Graduation, which will be held in the Cohon University Center’s 1st floor Connan Room at 10am.

We will have pizza, salads, watermelon, fruit popsicles, ice cream sandwiches, and bottles of water. Please follow this link to volunteer for or donate to this event:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1H82e8cFfT3jH-EMbUb1EyoFsmKH3-qPQoLxXTDyAec/edit?usp=sharing

The Children’s School would like to thank the Baylassin family (Aras, AM 4’s), co-owners of Gino Bros Pizzeria in Sharpsburg, for donating the pizza for our picnic! We appreciate you!!

Lost and Found

We have quite a collection of lost and found items. Please check the hallway cabinet for misplaced items or send a description of the missing item so we can check for you before May 17th. Unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity at the end of the school year.

May Dates:

Thursday, May 16th - Last Regular Day for ALL Programs
Friday, May 17th - Kindergarten Graduation at 10:00am
in the Cohon University Center’s Connan Room
Whole School Celebration at 11:00am on the Playground
Monday, May 20th through Friday, May 31st – Professional Development for Educators
Monday, June 3rd – First Day of “Water” Camp
2019 Summer Camp: Water

There are still places available in our June “Water” Camp so please contact Mrs. Rosenblum at rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu if you would like to enroll your child. The camp staff this year will be Mrs. Bird, Miss Dzina, Mrs. Loomis, Mrs. Mack, Mrs. Opferman, Mr. Salinetro, and Miss Zhao. If your child is registered for camp, please make sure Mrs. Rosenblum receives your final payment by May 17th. We will be greeting the children at the front of the Margaret Morrison Building and taking them directly to the playground after a stop in the bathroom for toileting and hand washing. Also, please recall that the greeting time for camp is 8:45 am until 9:00 am. Children will need to bring a lunch, sunscreen labeled with their full name, and their bathing suits and towels. We also suggest hats because there is little shade on the playground. Remember a jacket for cool summer mornings.

Garden Tending for Spring and Summer

During July and August, our garden will continue to grow but needs some friends to help with watering and weeding. If your family would be interested in adopting our garden for a week in July or August, please contact Miss Hancock at lh37@andrew.cmu.edu or 412-268-2198.

Classroom Year in Pictures

Children’s School educators are collecting classroom photos into a Year in Pictures slide show as a gift for families. The jump drive you will receive containing the slideshow and photos is designed only for the personal use of families in private media contexts. Please remember that during the enrollment process, all parents & guardians signed an agreement that you will not post photographs of other people’s children or of adults besides yourselves on the web or in social media venues. You can find more detail on our social media recommendations in your Family Handbook. Please watch the backpacks during the last week of school for your gift!

End of Year Gift Giving

As the school year comes to an end, please consider donating to the Children’s School. Your generosity makes an impact on the life of a child. Gifts to the Children’s School can be designated to support our general fund or be directed to scholarships. Please visit https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs/giving/index.html or contact Miss Hancock at 412-268-2198 for more information.
Family Social Organization Fun for Families

Many thanks to Sarah Hummel (Cecilia, K) for chairing our FSO Committee this past year! If you would be interested in helping with this committee for the 2019-2020 school year, please contact Mrs. Rosenblum.

• About 10 friends gathered at the Hatch Art Studio on April 5th to be creative. Ms. Shannon started the class by reading a book. Afterwards, friends were free to explore different stations, including using watercolor paint sticks, playing play dough, exploring colors by shuffling crystals and looking at the reflection on a laser disc, as well as using tweezers to pick up colorful cotton balls from “grass”. Friends also painted colored shaving cream on card board and decorated it with various small objects. Everyone had a great time!

• On Sunday, April 28th, the friends had a great time learning from Pastry Chef of Lorelei, an East Liberty restaurant owned by the Kurzweg Family (Emeline, K). The friends enjoyed creating and eating their own fruit necklaces, yogurt dip, and edible sunbutter bird’s nests. They also listened to “Kalamata’s Orchard Adventure” about the magic and joy of cooking.

• On Monday, April 29th, families packed snack bags and took a tour of the Squirrel Hill Community Food Pantry. Thanks to all the families who donated snack supplies and to Alexis Tuckfelt (Ruthie, K) for coordinating the service event.

May FSO Opportunity Canceled

Sadly, the Just Ducky tour planned for May 10th has been canceled. Tours are not happening by that date since they are still securing insurance. If you have already sent a payment, it will be returned to you. We will try to reschedule!
CMU’s Carnival Inspires

On Thursday, April 11th, many of our children had opportunities to explore a tradition that started at CMU in 1920 – the building of buggies to race in Schenley Park. The increasingly innovative designs are tightly kept secrets, but some buggies from prior years were available for children to observe before they had opportunities to build their own Lego vehicles to run on the provided tracks. Some families attended the weekend carnival to watch the buggy races in person, as well as to visit the creative booth designs based on the theme, “Planet Earth”. The educators were so inspired by the focus on sustainability that we chose “Planet Earth” as our whole school theme for the 2019-2020 school year!

CMU’s Arbor Day Tree Planting

On Monday, April 29th, our AM preschool friends got to watch CMU’s Arbor Day Tree Planting near the Children’s School playground as a visible sign of our commitment to care for the environment.
Week of the Young Child Celebration

On the morning of Tuesday, April 16th, our Preschool and Kindergarten friends walked to the Cyert Center for Early Education’s playground for a collaboratively planned Week of the Young Child Celebration. The children enjoyed pretzels and clementines for snack, did yoga, played with bubbles, enjoyed the playground equipment, and made nature collages and pinwheels together.

Observing the Kindergarten Chicks

During the Kindergarten “Birds” Unit, the class waited patiently for 6 chicks to hatch and then spent time observing their behavior and development, as well as introducing them to the preschoolers. Everyone took good care of the growing chicks, observed them eagerly, and gently touched them.
Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day

On Thursday, April 25th, the Children’s School PM Preschool friends hosted ten 8 to 11-year-olds as part of Carnegie Mellon University’s Staff Council sponsored “Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day”. The children worked together to build “bug hotels”, shared snack, and interacted in learning center activities.

Pennsylvania Private Academic School License

On April 16th, we received the good news that our PA Private Academic School license has been renewed for another year (through April 25, 2020) based on the annual report we submitted.
Family Spotlight: Father-Daughter Pair at CMU

Hello Children's School Friends! We are the Laurent Family: Mélodie (AM 3’s in the Red Room this year), Adeline and Jonathan. Jonathan and I were born in France, and we met during our undergraduate studies in Paris. Soon after Mélodie joined our family, Jonathan was admitted into several PhD programs in the US. We both chose Pittsburgh as a perfect place to work, live and raise our daughter.

Since our first days here, we have been amazed by the beautiful city parks that surround our neighborhood. We go there to play, hike and picnic as often as possible. While our families in France picture us living amongst a sea of buildings and neon lights, we are enjoying Frick Park's trails and chasing deer.

When we are not playing outdoors, Jonathan is doing research in Computer Science at CMU, and I am preparing weekly French lessons that I will be giving at Pittsburgh’s French Saturday School, starting next fall.

We only speak French to Mélodie, so she did not speak a word of English when she started school. Now, she comes home every day singing and mumbling in a language of her own that sounds more and more like English! Also, she likes to borrow English idioms when speaking French at home.

We really enjoy reading the school’s Daily News emails as we often find Mélodie’s rare accounts of her mornings at school somewhat questionable. For example, she recently mentioned Mrs. Armbruster organizing night trips at the playground and playing on a “tiny, red, foldable piano that sounds like a trumpet”.

We are very happy that Mélodie is getting her first school experience in such a joyful atmosphere, with brilliant people around her. I am sure she will cherish the memory of her preschool years at the Children’s School for a long time.

Giant Eagle Apples for the Students Update

Thank you to all of our Giant Eagle Apples for the Students supporters. Giant Eagle AFTS converts the earned reward points into cash. For the 2018-19 school year, our 255 supporters helped us to earn $388! These funds will be allocated to the Children’s School “50 for 50” Anniversary Campaign.

It is not too soon to register to support us for the 2019-20 school year! Here’s how:
1) Register your Giant Eagle Advantage Card® at GiantEagle.com/AFTS
2) Enter our School ID #0151.
3) Shop with your Giant Eagle Advantage Card®.

Be sure to invite other family members and friends to support us too!!
Imagination Library Book Gifting Program

With support from The Benter Foundation, Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto’s administration plans to launch Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, a monthly free book program for children from birth to age five. Since starting in 1995, this program has sent more than 113 million books for free, to children in the United States, Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Tiffini Simoneaux, manager of the City’s Office of Early Childhood in Mayor Peduto’s Bureau of Neighborhood Empowerment said, “Research shows that early literary experiences, including access to books in the home, are fundamental ingredients for academic success. This program will enable young children throughout the city to build a home library of up to 60 books.” Bill Benter (Henry, PM Preschool), president of the Benter Foundation stated, “We’re pleased to partner with the City of Pittsburgh and other community allies to help children develop a lifelong love of reading. Having your own books at home unlocks a new world of learning and language that can help Pittsburgh’s children thrive.” Online registration for children under 5 is coming soon at the Imagination Library main web site (https://imaginationlibrary.com/).

N4C Conference in Hilton Head, SC

From March 28th to 30th, Mrs. Rosenblum and Dr. Carver attended the annual conference of the National Coalition for Campus Children’s Centers with over 200 educators from campus-based early childhood programs. In our presentation, we shared strategies, culled from our year-long emphasis on Healthy Mind & Body, for promoting health and well-being for all of the diverse learners at the Children’s School, starting with the educators and continuing with the children, families, undergraduates and researchers.

Mrs. Myers’ Leadership Training

Being a part of the University of Pittsburgh’s Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) Program has been an exciting and multidimensional experience that has energized both my professional and personal life. I observed and participated in a variety of settings including Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh’s LEND clinic, NICU and Child Advocacy Center, as well as UPMC’s MERCK clinic where I learned about the ADOS (Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule). I also gave a number of presentations, including Parenting in a Family Including a Child with Multiple Disabilities. There is no doubt that what I have experienced in LEND will be applied to my everyday approaches at home, at school, in the community and beyond to the public health, education and welfare systems. The most meaningful element of LEND for me was forming relationships with my cohort, faculty and many of the specialist speakers who lead our instruction sessions. I have been honored to serve as a Family Trainee to inform an array of professionals, including medical, health and rehabilitation, psychology, behavioral and mental health, social work and early intervention, on the family perspective of disAbility.
Undergraduate Spotlight

• Shalaya Minor

I am Shalaya Minor. I was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I am a bright, energetic, conscientious student with a passion for learning, and educating others. My desire to bring awareness has led me to Carnegie Mellon University. I am currently a sophomore psychology major. Through my department, I have worked at the Children’s School for the past two years. In addition to my regular duties at the Children’s School and the help of the compassionate educators, I was able to implement my own black history lesson to teach the PM Preschool class. Here is what educational administrator, Mrs. Rosenblum, has to say about my lesson:

On April 3rd, Shalaya Minor ran a group time and arranged activities for the PM Preschool class about well-known African Americans. She introduced the friends to Jackie Robinson (first African American professional baseball player), Martin Luther King, Jr. (minister and peace activist), and Madame C.J. Walker (inventor of hair care products and entrepreneur), and the friends talked about how to have a “peaceful” classroom. The friends put their hand prints on a “We Are All Equal” poster, used various skin-toned crayons to color pictures, and greatly enjoyed dramatic play in the “Walker Hair Salon”.

![Image of Shalaya Minor reading to children](image1.png)

![Image of Shalaya Minor and children creating a poster](image2.png)

![Image of Shalaya Minor arranging activities](image3.png)
Research Spotlight

• The Geometric Shapes Game

Dr. Marie Amalric and Dr. Jessica Cantlon are investigating how children understand and visualize shapes. This research has two parts: 1) a game in which children follow a robot as it makes several different patterns and 2) a simple game in which they tap the shape when it appears on the screen. In the first game, the robot moves in either the pattern of a shape (e.g., a rectangle) or a pattern that is not a shape but is equally as difficult (e.g., a figure 8). If children are better attuned to shape patterns than irregular patterns, we should see them do better on the shape pattern portion of the robot game. In the second game, the children see a series of shapes and must tap each one when it appears. We do this because previous research has found that if given the chance to touch anywhere on a shape, adults will overwhelmingly touch along what is known as a “shape skeleton” (see below for the shape skeleton of a rectangle). If the children do not follow these shape skeletons as closely as adults do, this test will illustrate that our understanding of shape structures is in some part learned as we develop. We will also be conducting this part of the experiment with non-human primates to discover the evolutionary origin of this phenomenon. In addition, after the shape tapping game, we will conduct another round of the robot game in order to examine whether being explicitly shown and asked to interact with shapes causes any change in the children’s performance with the patterns of a geometric shape.

• The Number Knowledge Game

Within two weeks of children completing “The Geometric Shapes Game”, researchers working with Drs. Amalric and Cantlon are testing whether children’s performance is related to other cognitive processes, namely number ability and memory. They already know that the ability to distinguish numeric sequences is related to math and number ability. Now they are testing the relation between a child’s ability to distinguish non-numeric sequences (like the ones they saw in “The Geometric Shapes Game”) and their ability to understand number. In this case, researchers had the children count how many paper cookies they had, and then the children fed Oso Eduardo, a stuffed bear, different amounts of the cookies so the researchers could assess their understanding of number words.

Another aspect of cognition that the researchers tested is their memory capacity. Knowing the general memory capacity of a child will help them distinguish between two possible explanations for their performance on “The Geometric Shapes Game”. They are investigating whether the harder patterns to recognize were simply too difficult, or because they required remembering more information to give a good guess. The researchers used ‘The Digit Span Task’ where they gave the children increasingly longer lists of numbers and had them repeat the list as best as they could.

All of these tasks provide the researchers with context when they analyze their results from “The Geometric Shapes Game”. This context allows them to be more confident about the validity of their results and provides additional grounding for building a theory of development shape visualization.
Research Methods Project Results

• The Tricky Boxes Game

The students in Ron Ziai and Patience Stevens’ Developmental Research Methods class investigated one aspect of social learning known as “over imitation”, which is when we imitate a procedure the way we’ve seen someone else do it, even though we don’t know why they did it that way. For example, as a child you might have instinctively put up the little flag on the mailbox after placing a letter inside because you’d seen adults do it that way, even though you didn’t know the purpose of the flag. It’s clear that over-imitation is a useful behavior; we can progress as a society much more quickly if we can transmit culture without needing to explain exactly why everything is done the way it is. What’s not clear is what motivates us to over-imitate each other. Do we really think those extra details are causally necessary? Do we want to impress the person we’re imitating? Perhaps, as we’ll look at in this study, it has to do with fitting in with the group.

This experiment investigated the possibility that humans imitate as a way of conforming to the group. Would children be more likely to over-imitate if two different demonstrators performed an action the same way, instead of one demonstrator doing the action twice? We demonstrated two procedures to all participating children, one that was performed by a single demonstrator and one that was performed by two different demonstrators. The two procedures were (1) opening a latched box by brushing the top of it twice with a paintbrush (unnecessary) and then lifting the latch (necessary) to get out a Jacob’s ladder, and (2) opening a box with a sliding lid by removing and re-sticking a peg attached the outside with velcro (unnecessary) and then pushing open the lid (necessary) to get out a light-up top. After the child saw a demonstration twice (either the same demonstrator repeated or two different demonstrators), they got a turn to try getting the toy out of the box. Researchers counted the number of unnecessary actions the child performed before retrieving the toy.

The first thing worth noting about the results is that the percentages are all above 50%. Even though the first actions the demonstrator performed were clearly not necessary and several children asked why the demonstrator did them, the majority of children copied them before opening the box and retrieving the toy.

Regarding the main question that this study aimed to test, the number of demonstrators did not significantly affect the amount of over-imitation, perhaps because many other factors, such as personality of the demonstrator and speed of the demonstration, impacted participants’ behavior and added to the noisiness of the measure. One effect was marginally significant: the five-year-olds appeared to imitate slightly less than the three- and four-year-olds in the one-demonstrator condition, which is the reverse of what is usually found in studies of over-imitation with this age range. One potential explanation for this finding is that the context of testing at a school might have made children suspect that the experimenters were evaluating them and that there was a “correct” way to respond. The five-year-olds, who are more advanced in their social and causal reasoning, would be most likely to spot the “trick” and only do the necessary actions to open the box. Prior imitation research suggests that older children (7- and 8-year-olds) interpret demonstrators’ intentions very differently depending on social context (Marsh, Ropar & Hamilton, 2014), and this could be the case for five-year-olds at the Children’s School as well. Further studies on this topic will be necessary to understand the complex role of social pressures on children’s decision to over-imitate.

Director’s Corner: Self-Directed, Engaged Learning

The final skill on Ellen Galinsky’s list of “seven essential life skills every child needs” (Mind in the Making, 2010) is self-directed, engaged learning. All of parents’ and teachers’ educational efforts are geared toward children becoming motivated, lifelong learners who have mastered the other six life skills that support effective learning (focus and self-control, perspective taking, communicating, making connections, critical thinking, and taking on challenges).

Galinsky offers seven principles necessary for self-directed, engaged learning, each of which both parents and teachers can intentionally foster and collaboratively support.

• In the context of environments where young children experience safety, security, and appropriate structure, they are highly motivated to imitate adults and learn from their conversations, both of which accelerate their learning.

• Children are most engaged and self-directed when they are encouraged to identify goals that are meaningful to them and then to plan ways to meet those goals via exploration and discovery.

• Children cannot learn without remembering, and memory is best when young children have multiple direct experiences with concepts, both in verbal and visual forms, in real-world contexts.

• Memory, language, and understanding all benefit from adult support to elaborate and extend children’s experiences in ways that challenge them to appropriately stretch their capabilities.

• Long-term retention and application of what children learn depends on their practicing and explaining new concepts and skills in ways that help them consolidate and generalize them.

• In order to focus their learning, children need clear expectations, guidance in utilizing their strengths to improve weaknesses, and affirmation for effort rather than innate intelligence.

• Finally, children learn best from parents and teachers who are themselves learning more about children and about learning, from adults who are practicing what they are preaching, and from leaders who involve children in contributing to the learning community from the beginning.

As we prepare to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Day, I share my gratitude for the amazing team of lifelong learners who create the warm and caring learning environment that we offer to researchers, university students, children, families, practicing and pre-service teachers. I appreciate the opportunity to share the learning journey with you all, value the ways that you support and challenge my learning, and eagerly anticipate the new adventures ahead.

Though the school year ends for our students in mid-May, our educators have 9 days of professional development time to reflect on their progress and document their program characteristics according to the NAEYC standards of excellence, as well as explore the themes for the upcoming school year. The educators also begin working two weeks before the students return in the fall. We spend time in seminars targeted to areas flagged for improvement, in refresher courses related to health and safety, and in collaborative groups planning thematic units and other program enhancements. The summer months offer the opportunity for both educators and parents to read more about children’s development, perhaps starting with Mind in the Making. Feel free to share interesting resources with me as you discover them!
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<tr>
<td>Preschool Theme</td>
<td>April / May: Bugs</td>
<td>Kindergarten Theme</td>
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<td>May Safety Week</td>
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<td>11am –1pm Whole School Celebration Picnic</td>
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<td>Memorial Day Office Closed</td>
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<td>&quot;WATER&quot; Camp begins Monday, June 3rd!!</td>
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Children’s School
CMUCHSch@andrew.cmu.edu  www.cmu.edu/dietrich/psychology/cs/index.html
412-268-2199
# The Children’s School Snack Menu

*Subject to change based on birthdays & special events*

*Gluten and dairy free options available*

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<td>Mini Bagels and Cream Cheese</td>
<td>Oranges and String Cheese</td>
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<td>Ritz Crackers w/ Grape Jelly</td>
<td>Bananas w/ Sun Butter</td>
<td>Carrot Sticks and Wheat Thins</td>
<td>Milk/Water</td>
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<td>Goldfish Crackers</td>
<td>Tortilla Chips &amp; Salsa</td>
<td>Children’s School Mix</td>
<td>Fruit Popsicles</td>
<td>Whole School Celebration</td>
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**May 2019**