Beginning the school year was a very exciting time for the AM 4’s and teachers in the Green Room! It was a busy month of meeting familiar and new peers for the children and the teachers. Our main focus during the first month of school together was to become comfortable with the new spaces, new teachers, new routines, new rules and new transitions. This time helped provide our friends with the security of knowing what to expect every day.

Friendship and Community

Our Favorite Theme Books

Circle time is a great time to hear stories that help friends learn more about our theme. This month our favorite books were:

- *The Best Part of Me* by Wendy Ewald
- *The Family Book* by Todd Parr
- *My Friend Is Sad* by Mo Willems
- *The Littlest Family's Big Day* by Emily Winfield Martin
- *My Mom Is A Firefighter* by Lois G. Grambling
- *Tortoise Brings the Mail* by Dee Lilligard

Mango Monkey Says…

You may have heard your child talk about “Mango Monkey”. He is a puppet we have begun to use at circle time that helps to teach young children that we are all friends at school and we can learn and play together. The teachers began with talking about and using pictures of how we can be kind to one another at school. We discussed three Friendship Rules:

1. **Use kind words.**
2. **Keep your hands and feet in your own space.**
3. **Everyone is a friend and everyone can play.**

The teachers asked the children in their circle groups, “What do you think a friend is?” All the children had thoughtful ideas to contribute to the discussion. We followed up with the book *Know and Follow the Rules*, a book in the Learning to Get Along Series. The Green Room teachers will continue this theme throughout the year, using the different puppets in scenarios to help the children learn how to respond effectively in social situations.
Week 1

Me In The Green Room

During the first week of school, the children had the opportunity to discover the different centers in the Green Room. The **DRAMATIC PLAY CENTER** was popular for housekeeping, taking care of baby dolls in a doctor’s office and a post office. The **DISCOVERY AREA** is where we go to explore water, sand, light and magnets. These tables create opportunities for problem solving, cooperation, and collaboration. The children have also been painting and exploring various art materials on the tables. Puzzles, sorting by colors or shapes, and comparing a variety of sea shells and rocks and feathers with magnifying glasses are favorites in the **MATH and SCIENCE CENTER**. The **LIBRARY CENTER** is where we go to enjoy a story. The **BLOCK CENTER** is open most days for constructing with wooden Unit Blocks. All of these centers are for the children to experience joy, creativity and curiosity.

Week 2

Me And My Friends

During the second week, we focused on learning about each other. Friendship Finger Painting, Friend Bingo and several group games such as Bowling and Snail’s Pace Race allowed the children to experience collaborating and sharing. Each friend began work on a multi-step personal project. The first step was for each child to identify the first letter of their name and then use golf balls to roll paint colors on it in a box. For the next step, the children looked in a mirror and sketched the shape of their face with a pencil, followed by choosing a paint color to match their skin. They added features and hair, and decorated clothing. Everyone then had an opportunity to tell what they liked best about school. The project will be displayed for everyone to see at our **OPEN HOUSE** on October 23rd.
Me and My Family

The *Family Collage* projects began at home. Friends worked with their family to select photographs to include on their page. The collages were all displayed as locker tags in children’s individual lockers. All of the children were proud to sit in the teacher chair and share their collages with their peers at circle time! At the end of September, the collages were put in a binder that lives in the Circle Time areas for everyone to review until the end of school when they will be sent home. This week, the friends also continued to learn about the materials available in the ART AND WRITING CENTER and how to use them. Scissors, glue sticks, paper punches, and various writing implements were some of the tools explored.

Me And My Community

During the fourth week, our focus was how a *community* is a group of people living or working together in the same area. We talked about how people in the same communities might go to the same schools, shop in the same grocery stores and do the same things. They also help each other solve problems together. During Circle Time, we talked about jobs people do in our community and how we help each other. All the children have rotating *classroom jobs* such as the pet helper, weather helper and mat passer that help them become involved in our Green Room community to develop greater *self-esteem and responsibility*.

The Green Room Post Office and Firefighting Station were places where friends could pretend they were real community helpers. All of the children wrote a letter to their families that we mailed at the CMU Post Office.
Make Shop Experiences

The **Make Shop** is a space for hands-on building and tinkering. Here the children can play with ideas, making things, and experiment with tools, techniques and materials. They investigate how things are used and learn new processes and skills. The **Wood Working Center** is part of **The Make Shop**. Using LEGO bricks and Theraputty were perfect opportunities in September for building fine motor skills, cooperative play and having a sense of accomplishment by solving problems. The children also experimented with the flannel board (classic hair curlers stick really well!) and 3-D magnets on metal magnet boards.

Music Experiences with Mrs. Hraber

Mrs. Lauren Hraber (pronounced like “Harbor”) comes to the Children’s School every other Thursday. This month’s music and movement concentration is learning how to keep a beat. The children were introduced to **Pete the Metronome**, a musical tool, and practiced keeping time with different instruments.

Center Spotlight:
The Dramatic Play Center

**Dramatic play** allows children to practice new situations or events. The Green Room friends are able to express themselves, be creative, develop their imaginations, and try new tools as they play. Dramatic play can also be used to introduce new concepts and reinforce others. It is a great way to build **cooperation and communication** between children while extending and building language arts, math, reading, writing, social skills, fine motor and gross motor skills. In September, the friends took care of baby dolls by feeding them and preparing tasty meals in a housekeeping setting, pretended to be doctors, and worked as postal workers.