

Augustin Children's Center Parent Newsletter

Message from the Director

Welcome to the start of an exciting new school year! For me, as a child, nothing marked the start of a new school year like the fresh, new box of crayons that I would choose as part of my back-to-school supplies. I always loved the waxy smell and the rainbow of colors sharpened to perfection. The box represented a fresh start, all the promise of the rainbow with no broken crayons.

The beginning of this school year is full of rainbow promise and excitement for all of the staff at CP Rochester's Augustin Children's Center. It is my pleasure to inform you that Augustin Children's Center is being recognized by the Awards Committee of the Cerebral Palsy Associations of New York State to receive the Program Innovation Award for the development of our outdoor classroom space! The purpose of this award is to recognize an affiliate that has provided an exemplary program to individuals with disabilities that has enhanced the independence and self-esteem of its participants. Susan Fisher will accept the award for Augustin Children's Center at the NYS CP Conference in Albany in October. Susan was the catalyst behind the development of our outdoor classroom which is located adjacent to our building and allows our students to play and interact with nature in a supervised yet unstructured manner. This space is truly "one of a kind" and we are one of only two preschools in the area with a space designed to address the need for children to play in a natural setting.

You may have already noticed the work that is happening on the roof of our building. For the next 2 months, workers will be working to replace our roof with increased insulation and solar panels. This may result in some temporary inconvenience as materials are stored on the property. Thank you for your patience as we "go green" at CP Rochester.

Our very enthusiastic Parent Council has already met! We are still looking for parent representatives for our Early Intervention classroom, Miss Laurie's afternoon classroom, Miss Leslie's classroom, and Miss Karen's afternoon classroom. If you think you may be interested in participating in Parent Council, please contact me. We plan fund raising, social and staff appreciation events and have a lot of fun doing them. It is a great way to get to know the other parents here, so join us! Our first activity is Walk About on October 24 at Marketplace Mall to raise money for parent scholarships. Look for the Parent Council table at Open House on October 5 at 6pm for more information. Our next Parent Council meeting is October 28 at 6pm.

I am excited to begin a new school year and to get to know your family. If you need to contact me for any reason throughout the year, feel free to call me at 334-6000 X1200. Welcome to a new year of rainbow promise!

Pat Graff

****Mark Your Calendars****

~Preschool Open House Tuesday: 10/05/2010 @ 6pm

Come meet your child's team, explore the classroom with your child, meet some of the other students and parents, and see the fun we have been having!

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**~WALKABOUT      Sunday: 10/24/2010**

This is our major fundraiser for our scholarship fund and we hope that you will participate! You can walk and get sponsors, sponsor another walker or just walk. All money raised by our team stays with our program and goes directly into our scholarship fund. This scholarship fund helps us fill our spaces by assisting families who have three year old students who are willing to come in the afternoon but have limited resources. Once we finish funding this year, the remainder of the money will be used to reduce the Children's Program deficit. Additional information will be available at the OPEN HOUSE.

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~Food Drive Tuesday: 10/26/2010

This is the third year that we have partnered with the Calkins Road and Hylan Drive Wegman's for Make A Difference Day. These two stores provide volunteers who organize a fun Fall Festival for our students. In return, our staff and students bring in food which is donated to the food cupboard here in Henrietta. It is nice to have people make a difference for us and nice for us to make a difference for someone else. We will collect non-perishable food items starting on Monday, October 18. You can send in items in your child's book bag if they ride the bus. Just let them know what it is for and the teacher will help them put it in the box themselves. Please help us Make A Difference in our community!

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**~Parent Council Meeting      Thursday: 10/28/2010 @ 6pm**

Come join us as we plan our fundraising, staff appreciation, and social events

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~Bake Sale Thursday: 11/02/2010

This is our annual Election Day bake sale. We are a polling place and the voters look for us and love buying the wonderful treats that we have for sale. We need parents to bake their best goodies [We only sell homemade goodies] and a few volunteers to help at the tables. More information will come home closer to the bake sale.

****Mark Your Calendars****

~Monthly Parent/Caregiver Informational Meeting

The monthly Parent/Caregiver Informational Meeting is a great opportunity to connect with other parents, share experiences and gather new information related to child development. Meetings will be held (usually) the third Wednesday evening of each month. Each meeting focuses on a different topic related to your child's development. A notice of each month's meeting will be sent home in your child's bag at the beginning of that month. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Julie Johnson, Social Worker, at 334-6000 ext. 1211.

Hope to see you there!

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Do you have an old CD/Walkman?

Carrie Webster, our music therapist, would greatly appreciate the donation of a CD/Walkman to the preschool.

Are you interested ...

in connecting with someone who can help you access various community supports and services? Be an advocate for you and your child? Help you to navigate the many systems that provide services to individuals with disabilities? If so, please contact Julie Johnson, Social Worker in the Augustin Children's Center. She can be reached at 334-6000 ext. 1211. She can help you get connected to a service coordinator who can assist with theseplus many more!

Back by Popular Demand.....

Celebrate Home will once again be one of the Parent Council fundraisers! Be on the look out for more information in early November.

Remember.....

If you are dropping off, or picking up your child from program any time other than the typical drop off and pick up times, you must sign them in or out at the office window.

Visitors to the building must sign in and out at the Children's office window or at the front entrance to the building.

Welcome

Your preschool Parent Council would like to welcome new and returning preschoolers and their families to Augustin Children's Center. We are looking forward to another exciting new year! The main focus for the Parent Council is to increase parent involvement at the Children's Center and to foster more support and interaction amongst the parents. Take time to stop by the Parent Council table at the preschool open house to see how you can participate in making your child's school year a memorable one. We are looking forward to working together with you!

Please...

We have a number of staff and children who are allergic to perfumes, scents, and flowers, and a number of children whose asthma is triggered by these things. We would ask that you not use perfumes and scents on your children. Please check with your child's teacher or the nurse if you have other questions.

"Apple Tree Song" action song/fingerplay

(from Miss Lisa's classroom)

Way up high in the apple tree (hands up high) (can also do a "tall kneel")

Two red apples smiled at me (form hands into circles or fists)

I shook that tree as hard as I could (shake with arms and hands)

Down came the apples (bring both arms/hands down to floor)

MMMMM! They were good! (rub tummy)

News from Early Intervention:

Our big boys and girls are all getting used to riding on a bus and coming to school. We enjoy learning songs, playing with new and different toys and meeting friends. Playing with other children is a new experience for some of us. We got outside to play in the "Outdoor Classroom" on Wednesday. We counted pumpkins, touched the leaves of plants, climbed the big hill and played in the playhouse.

Early Intervention tip of the month:

Find an empty shoebox and put a toy inside. Shake it and talk about what could be inside. Let your child open the box and use the words "open", "in", "close" over and over. Open the box many times so your child can see that the object is still in there!

SAFETY REMINDERS

Recently, we have had several unsafe situations with parents dropping off and picking up their children in our bus loop. This includes parents and children walking between parked buses, parents nearly colliding with buses while attempting to leave the bus loop, confusion over when to drive past a parked school bus, or driving the wrong way through the one-way bus loop.

Please be aware that parents are not permitted to park in the bus loop while dropping off children. There are 10 spaces clearly marked with 15 minute parking signs in the area of the parking lot closest to the entrance for Children's Services. We have designated a cross walk so that parents and children can cross the parking lot safely. While we realize that this distance can be difficult when carrying or maneuvering several children into the building, however, it seems to be the safest alternative to our parking dilemma. If those 10 parking spaces are filled, parents are welcome to park anywhere in the parking lot, except in the bus loop. There are also handicapped parking spaces along the side of the building which families with handicapped parking passes are encouraged to use.

I realize that this may be somewhat inconvenient since it is farther for parents and children to walk, but it is imperative in order to keep our children and families safe. I appreciate your commitment to the safety of the children at Augustin Children's Center.

Top Ten Things to Consider When Buying Toys for Children with Disabilities:

1. Multisensory appeal: Does the toy respond with lights, sounds, or movement? Are there contrasting colors? Does it have a scent? Is there texture?
2. Method of activation: Will the toy provide a challenge without frustration? What is the force required to activate? What are the number and complexity of steps required to activate?
3. Where toy will be used: Can the toy be used in a variety of positions such as side-lying or on wheelchair tray? Will the toy be easy to store? Is there space in the home?
4. Opportunities for success: Can play be open-ended with no definite right or wrong way? Is it adaptable to the child's individual style, ability and pace?
5. Current popularity: Is it a toy most any child would like? Does it tie-in with other activities like T.V., movies, books, clothing, etc?
6. Self-expression: Does the toy allow for creativity, uniqueness, and choice-making? Will it give the child experience with a variety of media?
7. Adjustability: Does it have adjustable height, sound volume, speed, level of difficulty?
8. Child's individual characteristics: Does the toy provide activities that reflect both developmental and chronological ages? Does it reflect the child's interests and age?
9. Safety and durability: Consider the child's size and strength in relation to the toy's durability. Is the toy and its parts sized appropriately? Does the toy have moisture resistance? Can it be washed and cleaned?
10. Potential for interaction: Will the child be an active participant during use? Will the toy encourage social engagement with others?

Websites:

<http://enablingdevices.com/catalog>
www.ableplay.org
<http://www.newhorizontoys.com/>
<http://especialneeds.com/home.php>
<http://www.beyondplay.com/>
<http://www.step2.com/special-needs/>
www.onestepahead.com
www.adaptivemall.com
www.primobaby.com
www.fisher-price.com

Music Notes

By Carrie Webster

It has been an exciting start to the school year in Music! We have been getting to know each other through greeting songs and sharing instruments. We sang a song about the first letter in our names this Month! We played drums, tambourines, bells, and shakers! Coming up soon, we will be singing about apples! Don't forget to ask your child what instrument they played each week!

When is music group?

Classroom A: Friday
Classroom B: Wednesday
Classroom C: Tuesday
Classroom D: Thursday
Classroom E: Monday

Carpooling:

If you wish to talk with other families about carpooling please complete the form below and send it in to Martha. She will distribute a list of all interested families to those families so that they can contact each other. If you do work out carpool arrangements be sure to stop in the office and add those new adults to your pick-up lists! I am interested in carpooling. My child is

_____ and he/she comes to school in the Morning/
Afternoon [circle one].

My name is _____

and we live at _____.

I can be reached at _____.