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Visit us at www.easternct.edu/cfdrc



CFDRC

Investigation >>> Balls

Teachers have been meeting regularly to plan the upcoming *Investigations* topic of study. The Investigation curriculum was developed by blending ideas of some of the best thinkers in the field—Bodrova, Helm, Gandini, Katz, Leong, Meisels, and Vygotsky—with current research, including studies conducted by faculty at Eastern Connecticut State University.

The planning process is time intensive, thought-provoking, and often causes teachers to pause and reflect on teaching practices. After careful consideration teachers selected the topic of **Balls** to help stretch children's thinking and engage them in a topic of interest. Teachers did their own research on the topic and gathered specific information to present and discuss weekly staff meetings.

Using a teacher-created web to visualize the possibilities for developing the Investigation., teachers brainstormed activities and experiences to complement key content standards and benchmarks. After the web was completed, teachers selected several content goals for the Investigation. Content goals are related to the recommended standards of national organizations for each academic discipline. Additionally, teachers se-

lected performance standards (see attached) and on t content goals. Teachers will individualize instruction to meet the needs of individual children identified through assessment data.

The topic, Balls, opens the door for so many science and math concepts in particular: the investigation naturally lends itself to physics, for example. Please refer to the webs the teachers worked on for detailed information on standards and goals. Below are the content (subject) standards from our Curriculum that we will focus on along with the Connecticut Pre-school Framework Assessment.

Please read more about our curriculum at <http://www.easternct.edu/cfdrc/curriculum.htm>

Investigation: Balls Content Standards

Oral Language 8: Describe properties of objects and relationships among them.

Math 6: Understand relationships and positions of objects in space; "near to", "under", "over", etc.

Science 10: Objects move at different speeds and following different paths; motion can be altered by different forces.

Continued on Page 2

Balls >>>



Below are a few Math and Science ideas. Please note that literacy and writing are incorporated into these as well while children are encouraged to write predictions, through shared reading/writing, etc. The standards are noted in parenthesis (see next page for detailed explanation of the standards). Just a short sampling. . .

- Counting and sorting balls (cog 6)
- Sorting hard vs. soft balls (also sensory) (cog 6)
- How many rolls will it take to reach the _____? (cog 1,6,7)
- Hypothesizing what type of ball is heaviest/lightest and testing on balance scale (cog 1, 6)
- Sorting balls by size, texture, color, weight 5)
- Sequence smallest to largest ball (cog 5)
- Measure how far different balls can roll using standard and non-standard units of measurement.
- Ball scavenger hunt – younger children find exact match, older children find different shaped balls
- Sort balls that are spherical from non-spherical (ex: rugby ball, football)
- Do they roll/bounce/throw as easily as round balls? (cog 5)
- Examine a gumball machine (cog 1)
- Which ball type will roll the farthest/fastest down an incline plane? (cog 1)
- Guessing and charting how many pumps it will take to blow up various balls (cog 1, cog 6)
- Materials balls are made of, dissect ball (cog 1). Compare/Contrast
- Rubber balls, other materials, other items made of rubber (Cog 1)
- Does the ball roll easier on sand, carpet, tile, etc. (cog 1)
- Constructing marble tracks (phy 2, cre 1, cog 1)
- Compare/contrast properties and uses of different ball types (cog 1)
- Which ball (vary size, shape, weight, texture) will bounce highest? Lowest? More? Less? (cog 1)
- Suspend a light weight ball from a string to use as a pendulum.
- Explore ramps (cog 1, cog 2)
- Make ramps steeper and steeper; observe what happens (cog 1)
- Tube tracks – use small balls that can roll through a

tube (cog 1)

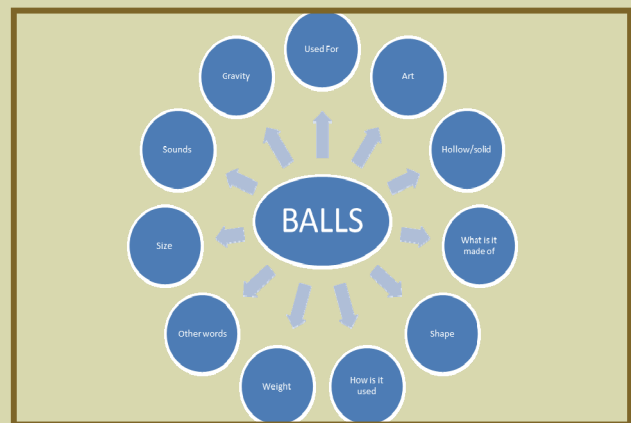
- Compare gravity on different balls or different objects (cog 1)
- Drop balls at the same time; predict which will fall first. (cog 1)

Cooperative Activities

- Create a ball (sketch, gather materials) (cre 1, ps 7)
- Work with a partner to carry/move a ball from point a to point b; vary ball size (ps 7)
- Four squares game
- Varied pass the ball to a partner (toss, roll, bounce) (ps 7, phy 1)
- Make a recipe that incorporates a round finished product (cog 6, cog 14, ps 7)
- Holding yarn while passing the ball across to a partner (whole group in circle) and trying to do it in reverse when reaches the end (ps 7)
- Sort cooperatively (math)
- Refer to science sheet; can be adapted to cooperative activity
- Roll/pass ball together (ps 7,8)
- Balance ball on spoon (vary item)
- “marble” paint; different sizes, shapes

Writing

- Shared writing while each child contributes to a ball story “mad lib” (also cooperative) (cog 14)
- Can do illustrations as well (cre 2)
- Rhymes with “ball” (cog 12)
- Word wall, words describing ball and ball movement
- Sounds of balls: onomatopoeia



Connecticut Preschool Framework

Below are the Connecticut Preschool Standards we use to plan and assess development over time. They are divided into four domains: Personal Social (P&S), Physical (Phy), Cognitive (Cog), and Creative (Cre).

- P & S 1.** Shows self-direction with range of materials
 - P & S 2.** Sustains attention to task or goal set out to accomplish
 - P & S 3.** Participates in teacher-led group activities
 - P & S 4.** Manages transitions, follows routines and rules
 - P & S 5.** Uses words to express emotions or feelings
 - P & S 6.** Shows empathy and caring for others
 - P & S 7.** Interacts cooperatively with peers
 - P & S 8.** Works to resolve conflicts
 - P & S 9.** Recognizes similarities and appreciates differences
-
- PHY 1.** Uses coordinated large-muscle movements
 - PHY 2.** Uses coordinated small-muscle movements
 - PHY 3.** Cares for self independently
-
- COG 1.** Engages in scientific inquiry
 - COG 2.** Uses a variety of strategies to solve problems
 - COG 3.** Sorts objects
 - COG 4.** Recognizes and makes patterns
 - COG 5.** Compares and orders objects and events
 - COG 6.** Relates number to quantity
 - COG 7.** Demonstrates spatial awareness
 - COG 8.** Uses complex sentences and vocabulary to describe ideas and experiences
 - COG 9.** Understands and participates in conversations
 - COG 10.** Shows understanding of stories
 - COG 11.** Displays knowledge of books and print
 - COG 12.** Recognizes similar sounds in speech
 - COG 13.** Identifies printed words
 - COG 14.** Uses writing to convey meaning
-
- CRE 1.** Builds and constructs to represent own ideas
 - CRE 2.** Draws and paints to represent own ideas
 - CRE 3.** Represents experiences and fantasies in pretend play
 - CRE 4.** Sings and responds to music

New Staff & New Roles>>>

Cynthia DeJesus



You may know Cynthia from her previous role as the Teacher Associate for the Green Room. We are thrilled to now call her Lead Teacher of the Green Room! Cynthia completed her B.A. degree and Certification in Early Childhood Education at ECSU. She is currently a graduate student in Reading and Language Arts. Her talent and passion for the field have been, and will continue to be, an asset to the Center. Congratulations, Cynthia!

Julie Garceau

Please join us in welcoming Julie Garceau to the CFDR. Julie has very excitedly accepted



the University Assistant position in the Toddler Room. She will be in the classroom on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings and early afternoons. Julie has had several years of experience in working with young children, in addition to having two young children of her own. She has also obtained her Bachelor's degree here at Eastern Connecticut State University in Psychology of Children and Youth. We are very happy to welcome her as the newest member of our team.

Angelica Booker



Hello my name is Angelica Booker and I am a University Assistant. I was born and raised locally in Willimantic and have accomplished graduating from Eastern Connecticut State University receiving a Bachelor's of Science in psychology for children and youth. Being first to graduate from college in my family, I have set positive models for the younger members of my family and anticipate on being a positive role model for the children in the classroom as well. I enjoy spending every moment that I have available interacting and playing with children in many settings and have found interest in the ways that children learn on an individual level.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Movie and PJ night that was held on Tuesday, December 13. The children really enjoyed eating the pizza and watching the movies in their pj's. A special "Thank You" goes out to Domino's Pizza who generously contributed more than half of the pizzas. We look forward to offering this event again next year.

While looking forward to the upcoming months, we see several opportunities for other PTO sponsored events. We need the help from parents/ caregivers and teachers to plan, organize, and execute these events. **Our next**

PTO meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 18th from 5:30 -

6:30PM. Everyone is invited to attend. Childcare will be provided during this time as well. We look forward to 2012!

— Kelly, Your PTO President



Car Seat Safety

On Tuesday, January 11th, Marisol Feliciano of Safe Kids, Connecticut and Sargent Hamilton from ECSU Police Department conducted a one hour session on vehicle safety seats for children. They provided families with information surrounding the most current laws in the state surrounding age/ height/weight and type of safety seat. They



stressed the importance of proper installation citing that 4 out of 5 car seats are improperly installed. Ms. Feliciano and Sargent Hamilton shared provided each attending family with a voucher for new safety seats sponsored by Safe Kids CT.

The Following are fitting stations in the area. They will help you determine the appropriate seat for your child as well as proper installation.

ECSU Police Department

44 Charter Oak Road
Willimantic, CT 06226
Phone: 860-465-0286

Putnam Police Department

[189 Church Street](#)
Putnam, CT 06260
Phone: 860.928.6565

Windham Hospital

Safe Kids Windham County
112 Mansfield Avenue
Willimantic, CT 06226
Phone: 860.456.6978

Please call ahead for an appointment.

Child Passenger Safety

LAW: Infants must remain rear-facing until they are a minimum of both 20 pounds and one year old.

Further recommended: Babies should be kept rear-facing until they are 2 years old or meet the maximum height or weight limit for their car seat when it is rear-facing.

LAW: Toddlers must be in a car seat.

Further recommended: Children should remain in a car seat until they reach the weight or height limit of their car seat (usually 40 pounds or more). Additionally, don't use a car seat that has been in a crash or has expired.

LAW: Children should ride in a car seat or booster seat until they reach 7 years old AND 60 pounds (they must meet both requirements). Children who ride in a booster seat must use a lap and shoulder belt.

LEY: Infantes deben permanecer mirando hacia atras por el minimo de 20 libras de peso y un año de edad.

Recomendacion: Mantenga infantes mirando hacia atras hasta que lleguen a la altura maxima o el peso necesario del asiento de seguridad cuando estan mirando hacia atras a lo menos de un año de edad y 20 libras de peso.

LEY: Niños pequeños deben estar en un asiento de seguridad.

Recomendacion: Niños deben permanecer en un asiento de seguridad hasta 40 libras de peso. Adicionalmente, no use el asiento de seguridad si a estado en un accidente o tiene mas de 6 años.

LEY: Niños deben permanecer en un asiento de seguridad o asiento elevado hasta el minimo de 7 años y 60 libras de peso. Niños que pasean en un asiento elevado deben usar un cinturon para el hombro y la cintura.

Recomendacion: Niños deben seguir usando un asiento elevado hasta la altura de 4'9"

For more information, please visit:
ctsafekids.org

Para mas informacion, por favor comunice con: ctsafekids.org
1-860-545-8815

Old-Fashioned play...

Excerpts taken from an NPR story, "Old Fashioned Play Builds Serious Skills".

In a recent story on NPR, "Old-Fashioned Play Builds Serious Skills", Alix Spiegel talked about the adverse effects of changes in children's play...



Children engaged in pretend play as the sofa becomes a car.

"...For most of human history what children did when they played was roam in packs, large or small, more or less unsupervised, and engage in freewheeling imaginative play. They were pirates and princesses, aristocrats and action heroes.... They improvised their own play; they regulated their play; they made up their own rules....

"But during the second half of the 20th century... play changed radically.... Children were supplied with ever more specific toys for play and predetermined scripts. Essentially, instead of playing pirate with a tree branch, they played Star Wars with a toy light saber....

"A growing number of psychologists believe that these changes in what children do has also changed kids' cognitive and emotional development. It turns out that all that time spent playing make-believe actually helped children develop a critical cognitive skill called executive function. Executive function has a number of different elements, but a central one is the ability to self-regulate. Kids with good self-regulation are able to control their emotions and behavior, resist impulses, and exert self-control and discipline.

"We know that children's capacity for self-regulation has diminished. A recent study replicated a study of self-regulation first done in the late 1940s, in which psychological researchers asked kids ages 3, 5, and 7 to do a number of exercises. One of those exercises included standing perfectly still without moving. The 3-year-olds couldn't stand still at all, the 5-year-olds could do it for about three minutes, and the 7-year-olds could stand pretty much as long as the researchers asked. In 2001, researchers repeated this experiment... but the results were very different.



Today's 5-year-olds were acting at the level of 3-year-olds 60 years ago, and today's 7-year-olds were barely approaching the level of a 5-year-old 60 years ago...

"...Self-regulation is incredibly important. In fact, good executive function is a better predictor of success in school than a child's IQ. Children who are able to manage their feelings and pay attention are better able to learn.... Self-regulation predicts effective development in virtually every domain.

"...Essentially, because children's play is so focused on lessons and leagues, and because kids' toys increasingly inhibit imaginative play, kids aren't getting a chance to practice policing themselves."



Children engaged in play at the block center.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=19212514>

Notes from the nurse...

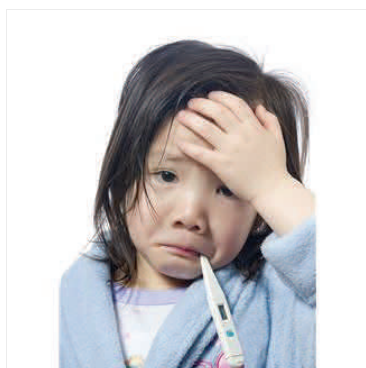
With cold and flue season ahead, you may notice increased illness. While we do our best at school to ensure proper regular hand washing, it is still inevitable that sickness may arise. Below are some helpful guidelines to help assess whether your child should participate in school:

When is my child too sick to go to school?

Your child should not go to school if it could make them sicker. They should also stay home if they could make others sick.

Your child should stay home if:

- They are too sick to do their school activities.
- It might make other children, teachers or workers sick.
- They need more care than the school can provide.



What are examples of reasons to stay home?

Your child should stay home, or may be sent home, if they:

- Could make others sick. This is called “contagious”. Examples of contagious illnesses are chickenpox, measles, and the flu. Strep throat is also contagious until your child has been on an antibiotic for 24 hours. After 24 hours, your child may return.
- If they have a temperature of 100 or higher or 99.4 under the arm. Children may return when they are fever free for 24 hours (without the aid of a fever reducing medicine).
- Are too sleepy (lethargic).
- Have an eye infection with a lot of pus coming from one or both eyes.
- Have a sore throat that makes it hard or painful to swallow.
- Have frequent vomiting or diarrhea (2 or more episodes in a 24 hour period), or blood in their vomit or diarrhea.



- Have sudden problems breathing. If your child has bronchitis or asthma, they may need to take medicine to help their breathing. If the medicines are not working, your child should not be in school.
- Have a new rash with a fever.
- Have open sores that are draining and cannot be covered by bandages or clothing.
- Have a severe headache, seizure, hit their head, or get hurt, and need medical care.
- Have head lice that have not been treated. Your child may return one day after they have had treatment and all nits removed.

Call your doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if you have special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

Outdoor Play >>>



Coordination:
Pedaling and steering

In the Investigation Curriculum, two outdoor play experiences are planned—one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The primary purpose of outdoor play is to promote physical and mental health. Motor play activities and teacher interactions are planned so that all children engage in active physical play for at least half of the time spent

outdoors. Quiet activities or spaces are also provided to allow children rest periods and/or moments of respite from active playground play.

Teachers are involved and planful in creating a safe outdoor play environment. Their primary goal is to facilitate active play among all children on the playground. They carefully monitor each child's activities and en-

gage those who are passive or uninvolved in order to achieve this goal.

Outside physical activity also helps to improve children's emotional well-being, cardiovascular health and helps maintain a healthy body mass index. In addition, outside time is one of the favorite parts of the day for many of the children.

In closing, please remember to send in snow pants, mittens and winter boots so your child may enjoy outside time in the winter months. We play outside every day unless it is below 26 degrees. In case of inclement weather, please call the ESCU Weather Hotline at 860-465-4444.

Climbing, stretching, balancing.



*By: Claudia Ahern and Sue Mehalick
Purple Room*

Physical Activity

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education suggests that preschoolers engage in 60 minutes of structured physical movement daily and 60 minutes of unstructured (free) movement each day. In other words, the activity does not have to be all at once but rather spread out over the course of the day to roughly add up to the recommended times.

AGE RANGE: 2 through 5

APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES

Toddlers and preschoolers are learning how their body works and everything it is capable of doing, and so you should encourage activities that promote free play, fun, and exploration.

- * Tag
- * Running bases
- * Simon Says
- * Climbing on the playground
- * Throwing or catching
- * Tumbling or gymnastics
- * Splashing in a pool or swimming

Possible Challenges

The obstacle: Safety is a concern, because young children don't yet know their limits.

What to do: Stand nearby and always within viewing distance. Actively participate in the game or play -- not only will you get more exercise, but your child will enjoy it.

The obstacle: Some children find TV more interesting than going outside.

What to do: Put limits on the amount of TV your child is allowed to watch, telling him that he can choose one or two shows to watch before the television is turned off. The AAP recommends that parents limit their kid's media time to no more than one to two hours per day, and that it should be restricted to programming that is informational, educational, and nonviolent.

The obstacle: Your child gets frustrated because he can't do certain things, such as reach the monkey bars.

What to do: Encourage free play and lead her to those activities he can do, such as climbing steps and going down slides. When buying toys, you can also look for those that are age-appropriate and encourage activity, such as a ride-on toy or a tricycle.

Excerpt from: *The National Association for Sport and Physical Education*

<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/>

2012 Spring Holiday Schedule

<i>Holiday</i>	<i>Observed On</i>	<i>Status</i>
New Year's Day	Monday, January 2, 2012	Child Center CLOSED
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Monday, January 16, 2012	Child Center CLOSED
Lincoln's Birthday	Friday, February 17, 2012	Child Center CLOSED
Washington's Birthday	Monday, February 20, 2012	Child Center CLOSED
Good Friday	Friday, April 6, 2012	Child Center CLOSED
Memorial Day	Monday, May 28, 2012	Child Center CLOSED
Independence Day	Wednesday, July 4, 2012	Child Center CLOSED
Center Closed for Staff Professional Development	August 27-31, 2012	Child Center CLOSED
Labor Day	Monday, September 3, 2012	Child Center CLOSED
Columbus Day	Monday, October 8, 2012	Child Center CLOSED
Thanksgiving Weekend	Thursday? Friday November 22 & 23 2012	Child Center CLOSED
Christmas Holiday	Tuesday, December 25, 2012	Child Center CLOSED

We close at 12:30 for Staff Development the last Friday of each month

Weather-Related Closings

As we head into the winter season, the Center would like to remind you about our closing policy due to inclement weather. In the event of a closing, the Center follows the Eastern Connecticut State University closing schedule. The ECSU weather hotline is 860-465-4444 or 1-800-578-1449. Please call this number for any information related to winter weather closings. You can also find this information by tuning in to WCTY FM 97.7, WDRC AM 1360, WDRC FM 102.9, and WHCN FM 105.9 or watching WVIT channel 30, WFSB channel 3, or WTNH channel 8.

From the Desk of the Director

Happy New Year Friends and Families of the Child and Family Development Resource Center. May the New Year bring you and your family, peace, joy, and good health! The last few months as Director have been both exciting and challenging. I am enjoying getting to know each and every family so please do continue to stop in and visit.

As you may have noticed, we have had some staffing turnaround and change. Ms. Ashlee's departure to raise her family has left an opening for a Lead Teacher position in the Teal Room. Along with a hiring advisory committee composed of early childhood faculty, I am weeding through some impressive resumes and arranging interviews. This position is a very competitive one. Our Center sets the bar very high for Lead and Associate Teachers exceeding the minimum requirements put forth by licensing agents. We do this because working at a University laboratory school has a different set of demands requiring teachers to manage and juggle aspects above and beyond (i.e. hosting practicum students, participating in research, continuing their own professional growth, working with children of diverse backgrounds, etc.). We want to make certain the teachers we hire possess the education, experience, and work ethic to meet the needs of children and families while simultaneously moving the Center towards becoming a model program for the state. I assure you we are getting closer to finding that special person. In the meantime, the classrooms are all well within and above ratio and in compliance. Licensing regulations call for a 10:1 ratio and we surpass this on any given day.

With this said, please join me in welcoming Cynthia DeJesus to her new role as Lead Teacher at the CFDRC. Cynthia meets and exceeds the qualifications outlined in the description of Lead Teacher. The Advisory Committee and myself concluded that her skills, leadership quality, unwavering work ethic, solid working knowledge of child development, implementation of the Investigations Curriculum, experience, and interpersonal communication skills are a few of the many things that make her a perfect fit for the role of Lead Teacher.

I will continue to keep you all posted on developments for new hires as we continue the search process. As always, please do not hesitate to drop in and visit!

—*Niloufar*

January 2012

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Safe Kids 5:30-6:30	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 12:30 Dismissal Professional Development	28
29	30	31				

Please note ALL children must be in their classrooms ready to begin the day at 9:00 a.m. daily. Please refer to the Family Handbook for detailed guidelines as it will be enforced.

Ellas' Nook

The Librarians at Ella's are there each Thursday morning (8:00 to 9:30) and afternoon (3:30 to 5:30). They are a wonderful resource for finding books, resources, and materials to extend children's learning. There are many titles in Spanish as well. Please stop in and visit with your child. There is a family resource shelf with many useful books and brochures for you to peruse through as well. Enjoy!

In Next Month's Issue >>>

- The CFDRRC hosts a professional conference for the educators from around the state.
- Skyp-ing with Kenya

Are there any topics you would like to read about? Please send suggestions to rezain@easternct.edu or call 860-465-5225.

University Connections>>>

The CFDRRC collaborates in so many different ways with the ECSU community.

- Last month, in conjunction with the Office of Student Engagement, we collected food to offer to the Widham community during the holiday season.
- Cara Bergsstrum-Lyunch's Sociology of Gender course brought 15 students who observed children during play-times. They used their observations to further enhance their study of race
- The ECSU Police Department along with Safe Kids provided a car seat information session.
- Next week, we will host four practicum students (one in each preschool class) as part of their training towards becoming early childhood educators.
- Along with Dr. Stoloff, we have been skyping with a pre-school in Kenya (full story next

Food Drive a Success

As many of you know, our Thanksgiving food drive was extremely successful! Thank you to all the CFDRRC families that donated food to help families in our community. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Additionally, the CFDRRC holds a weekly food donation drive every Friday for Dress Down Day. Staff members can bring in a non-perishable food item to dress down. Together with the Center Food Drive and Dress Down Friday, the Center has raised many boxes of food for families in our community. Thank you for all your help in making this holiday season a bit warmer for those who need it most.