

# UNITY SCHOOL

MAY

2016



580 N. Garden Way ♦ Eugene, OR 97401

PH: (541) 484-0107 ♦ Fax: (541) 484-6944

## PROGRAM DIRECTORS

How about this weather! Welcome to the joys of spring and summer in Oregon. With one more month left until summer we are noticing longer days outside, warmer temperatures and enjoying more outside activities.

Thanks so much for taking the time to meet with your child's teacher for conferences! Setting goals for your child with their teacher and discussing their development is such an important part of their early education experience. If you missed your conference and would like to reschedule, please see Susanne or Jessica in the office.

Teacher Appreciation week is coming up the first week of May, the 2nd through the 6th. We are blessed with such wonderful and amazing staff here at Unity and want them to know what a great job they do. Please feel free to surprise your child's teacher or other staff member with a nice card, treat, or a big thank you! This is a great time to let them know how much you appreciate their hard work.

Mothers and grandmothers are invited to join us for a Mother's Day luncheon on Friday May 6th. Please sign up if you plan to attend so we know how much lunch to prepare for your special day!

The children had so much fun celebrating Earth Day at Unity School. We had so many earth-based activities for the kids to do as they moved from one class to the other. The weather even cleared for us to enjoy the garden and hunt for butterflies.

We will also be starting our annual plant sale on May 6<sup>th</sup>, which will go through until the end of the following week, May 13th. Alongside the plant sale, we are hosting a Barefoot Books Book Fair. These are high quality, multi-cultural books that you won't find anywhere else! You can check out one of the catalogs that are sitting on the table by the offices.

Congratulations to Tara and her family as they welcomed baby Sam (7 pounds 6oz.) Mom and baby are doing great!

Happy Spring,  
Susanne & Jessica



## PANDA CLASS

Hello Panda Families,

Well, spring is definitely here! We have had some very warm and sunny days as well as rain. Please remember to have a variety of clothes in your child's cubby to help keep them comfortable no matter the weather

outside. Both long and short sleeves shirts, as well as, pants and shorts. And, don't forget the sunblock if you haven't already done so.

This month we extended our Vacation web to include the beach and ocean. We painted blue oceans, and made jellyfish, octopus and rainbow fish. We also webbed "Spring" and talked about all the different signs we have been seeing this month. The kids have gotten to go to the garden to plant and water seeds, the lilacs have bloomed on the playground, as well as many of the different flowers out front, and of course the weather changes.

Our school-wide Earth Day celebration was a blast. The kids had a great time exploring the activities in all the different classrooms. The snail race and earth worm exploration were the most popular choices though.

Thank you for joining us for Parent-Teacher conferences. It's always nice for us to all just sit and chat leisurely for a little bit.

We can't believe it is already May!!  
Cherri, Celia & Cori



## CATERPILLAR CLASS

Hello Caterpillar Families,

April has been an exciting month!

The Caterpillars spent the beginning of April exploring friendship, teamwork, and sharing. We discussed ideas like "What it means to be a friend" and practiced team building exercises that promoted taking turns, cooperation, and using words to express our needs. The children also loved using puppets to play out various problem-solving techniques with their peers.

The Caterpillars are enjoying the wonderful weather and all the new life it brings. We have noticed new blossoms in the garden and different critters on the playground that has stirred an interest in life science. We have been learning and exploring animals, their habitats, and their life cycles. On Earth Day we provisioned a sensory tub with night crawlers and observed the night crawlers movements with magnifying glasses. The children loved documenting their results on note pads and sharing their findings with friends. We have become a large group of scientists! In early May we will begin raising our own little caterpillars and begin learning about the life cycle of butterflies!



In late May we will be having a local acoustic band visit our school to play an outdoor concert. Keep your eyes peeled for more details on the parent information board in the upcoming weeks!

Gentle Reminders:

- Please take home and wash your child's nap blankets every Friday
- Check your child's art file weekly
- Please bring sunscreen that can stay at school all summer
- A jacket for those chilly mornings

Happy May!

Caterpillars Teachers

## LADYBUG CLASS



Hello Ladybugs, April showers bring May flowers, and boy are they in bloom! In all different colors, smells, and lots and lots of pollen. Hopefully we've made it through allergy season!

The Ladybugs have been very busy finishing the alphabet and grouping items together with different attributes. Our school completed an evacuation drill with success and we filled our classroom goal jar. Our "pom-pom" party was a blast. With pajamas, popcorn and new play dough! Yah!!!



Thank you to all parents who participated in parent teacher conferences. Michelle and Dorothy always enjoy sharing in your children's learning. Conferences are always a sign of growth and we will miss everyone as they move on to new adventures next year.

Keep an eye on your mailbox, looking for upcoming field trips and celebrations. Thank you for remembering sunblock and warm weather clothes. We hope everyone has a wonderful May.

Your Ladybug teachers,  
Dorothy Michelle and Mandolin.

## BUTTERFLY CLASS

Hi There! I hope this finds you all well! Spring sure has shown her pretty face around here, hasn't she? Even in our classroom with all of the beautiful art work that the children have been creating! When you have a chance, take a peek at the art gallery above our cubbies....the paintings are **AMAZING!** See if you can find the two paintings that (completely by chance) were painted and then hung up creating what looks like a beautiful African mask!

Parent/Teacher Conferences went really well...thank you! It's always a pleasure getting together with you parents to chat about the little's. One of my favorite things to do is to brag about how ready your children are for their next big move up to kindergarten this coming fall! We are so proud of how mature, kind, generous and **SMART** your children are!

FOR BUTTERFLY FAMILIES ONLY: Every year in Butterfly Land, we have a very special activity for the children who are moving up to kindergarten. It's called the "Parent Play Night". This Friday evening event is, what we do in lieu of a graduation celebration. On Friday, May 20th, from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm, the parents of the Butterfly class (no siblings please) are invited to enjoy a "day in the life of your child"! There will be more information coming to you, so please mark this date and time on your calendars, and schedule a sitter for the siblings! You will NOT want to miss this super fun night and your children are VERY excited about it too!



Also, May is the Butterfly classroom month for pet care. The kids love to do this so sign up today for your turn.

With the weather getting warmer, please make sure that your child has sunscreen (lotion only), and a weather appropriate change of clothes in the cubbies. Thank you! Well, that's about it for this month.



## OTTER CLASS

Dear Otter Families,

The weather is getting hot and the Otters are enjoying spending a lot more time outside. With the time in the sun and heat, it would be good if the Otters had a water bottle to help keep them hydrated. Also, with summer field trips coming up, Otters should have good hiking footwear, Water bottle, and hat for nature outings.

Hugs and Smiles,  
Pammie and Kelly



The Otters have been getting more active in the garden. We have been doing a lot of watering and working with compost. They also love to have free time to explore the garden and see what rocks and organisms they can find.

We are also continuing to work through the habitat connections curriculum from the Cornell lab of ornithology. This curriculum is designed to connect students to habitats and birds, while introducing students to citizen science. We have completed one of seven lessons and we are excited to see the Otters start applying what they learn out on nature hikes.

Sincerely,  
Teachers Josh & Sarah

Happy Mother's Day!





Eco-Healthy Child Care® helps early childhood learning environments to be as healthy, safe and green as possible by reducing children's exposure to toxic chemicals.

# Pesticides

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## Health Concerns

Children may be exposed to pesticides by playing on floors, lawns, and play areas; eating pesticide-treated foods; or by handling treated pets. When pesticides are applied indoors as a spray or aerosol, vapors often linger in the air. Small droplets from the sprays can end up on carpets, floors, desks, toys and other surfaces with which children may come into contact either by crawling or mouthing objects. Pesticide sprays used outdoors can drift into child care facilities and homes through ambient air or ventilation systems.

The health effects of pesticides are dependent upon the chemical class and formulation of each pesticide, the level and length of exposure, and the age of exposure, with children being more vulnerable. Pesticide poisoning incidents are most often associated with accidental ingestion of a pesticide or improper application, i.e. not following label instructions. Acute poisoning to pesticides can cause breathing difficulty, chest tightness, vomiting, cramping, diarrhea, blurred vision, sweating, headaches, dizziness, and loss of concentration. Long-term exposure to pesticides may lead to asthma, cancer, reproductive harm, kidney/liver damage, birth defects, nerve tissue damage and neurobehavioral problems.

## What Is a Pesticide?

A pesticide is any substance used inside or outside to prevent, control, repel, or kill insects, plants, fungi, and other pests. Therefore, bug spray; weed killer, insect repellents, flea and tick collars and disinfectants are all forms of pesticides. Of main concern is children's exposure to pesticides because of their small size and developing nervous system. Many chemical pesticides can spread through the air when sprayed, and seep into soil and water.

## Pesticides and the Developing Child

Even low levels of some pesticide exposure are a threat to young developing bodies. Many pesticides can take a very long time to break down. They persist indoors for weeks on furniture, toys and other surfaces and can persist for years in household dust. Research indicates that pesticide levels in indoor air are often higher than those found in outdoor air.

## Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is an effective and environmentally sensitive way to control pests and weeds. IPM does not prohibit pesticide use but uses the strategy of 'least toxic methods first.' IPM uses techniques that pose the least hazards to people, property, and the environment. It is also cost-effective.

Think twice before buying or using any chemical pest control products. Usually there are non-chemical solutions that work just as well. Determine whether the pest is a real or perceived problem. Not every living thing that doesn't "belong" is a pest that needs to be eradicated using chemicals. For example, dandelions may be "weeds", but these plants can be uprooted by hand if necessary or simply tolerated. Be

a "pest detective" - look for and eliminate the root causes of pest problems (i.e., standing water, food crumbs). The only way to successfully and sustainably control pests is to eliminate the conditions that allow them to enter and thrive in the buildings where they live. This summarizes the IPM approach.

## Examples of IPM:

- Clean up food and drink spills right away.
- Don't leave dishes standing in the sink.
- Do not allow children to eat food other than in designated areas (that can be cleaned up immediately after the

meal/snack is over).

- Limit use of food items for crafts and always store food items in tightly sealed glass or metal containers.
- Fix all leaks promptly and remove standing water.
- Seal or caulk cracks and holes (insect entry-ways).
- Remove clutter so pests have fewer places to hide.
- Keep trash in a closed container and take it out frequently; don't let trash pile up.
- Remove empty trashcans from inside the building at the end of the day.
- Use environmentally friendly strategies to deter pests: cedar chips or fragrant herbs.
- Work with local institutions to adopt an IPM policy. Aspire to limit the use of chemical pesticides.

### **If You Must Use Chemical Pesticides**

- Notify families and staff in advance about the timing and location of applications and what product(s) will be used.
- Make certain that the individual applying pesticides is a licensed professional. Choose a pest management professional (PMP) that practices IPM. See resource box below for finding a Certified PMP.
- Ensure that pesticides are not applied when children are present. Follow label instructions for the allotted time between application and children's re-entry.
- Do not apply pesticides in places where children sleep and play (as pesticide residues can linger for a long time).
- Read and follow the label instructions on the pesticides.
- Choose pesticides of low toxicity first, such as boric acid (be sure products are EPA registered).
- Use of bait traps is preferable over spraying. En-sure baits/traps are not accessible by children.
- Do not use flea bombs or other "bug bombs" or "foggers." (A pesticide product that releases a spray, fume, smoke, or aerosol.)
- Store pesticides out of children's reach. Place child-resistant latches on container lids and cabinet doors.
- Keep all pesticides in their original containers, with their original cap securely in place.
- Keep the National Capital Poison Center telephone number handy: 1-800-222-1222.

### **Pesticide and IPM Resources**

#### **\*Healthy Child Care —US Environmental Protection Agency- IPM Training**

*[www2.epa.gov/childcare/training-and-cirriculum-resources-healthy-child-care-providers](http://www2.epa.gov/childcare/training-and-cirriculum-resources-healthy-child-care-providers)*

#### **\*IPM Toolkit for Early Care and education Programs (Free!)**

*[cerch.org/research-programs/child-care/integrated-pest-management-a-toolkit-for-early-care-and-education-programs/](http://cerch.org/research-programs/child-care/integrated-pest-management-a-toolkit-for-early-care-and-education-programs/)*

#### **\*Look for Certified PMPs at one of thses sites:**

**Green Shield Certified** ([www.greenshieldcertified.org/](http://www.greenshieldcertified.org/)), **Green Pro** ([www.npmagreenpro.org/](http://www.npmagreenpro.org/)), or **Eco-Wise** ([www.ecowisecertified.org/](http://www.ecowisecertified.org/))

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Call: 202-543-4033, ext.13

Email: [info@ecohealthychildcare.org](mailto:info@ecohealthychildcare.org)

Visit: [www.cehn.org/ehcc](http://www.cehn.org/ehcc)

Eco-Healthy ChildCare® (EHCC) is a science-based, award-winning national program that seeks to improve the environmental health of children by partnering with child care professional to eliminate or reduce environmental health hazards found in child care facilities. Originally created by the Oregon Environmental Council in 2005, EHCC is now managed by Children's Environmental Health Network.

# MAY 2016

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2	3	4	5 Tuition Due	6 Mother's Day Luncheon
9	10	11	12 Open house for the new Prek/Kinder class	13 Garden work day (tomorrow) 11-3pm Need volunteers
16 Overuse fees Due	17	18	19	20
23	24	25 Schedule Changes Due	26	27
30 "CLOSED" for Memorial Day	31			

Annual Mother's Day Plant Sale & Book Fundraiser May 6-12